



A PERFECT BEGINNING: Complete Well-Being

1. God created man an innocent physical being with 5 senses (sight, taste, touch, smell, hearing) that:
 - Gives us a unique and distinct identity
 - Allows us to interact with the physical world.
 - Our body defines our total self.
2. God breathed life into man and he became a living soul with a mind, a will, and emotions.
3. God made us spiritual beings.
 - Sets us apart from the animal kingdom.
 - Most directly relates to God's image in us.
 - Gives us the capacity to be aware of ourselves.
 - Allows us to willfully fellowship and interact with God.
4. Created to be totally God-centered.
5. Then by trusting and obeying God we have the hope of living in a state of increasing well-being characterized by 7 desires of every human heart being satisfied, to be:
 - **Heard and Understood:** Listened to, i.e., thoughts, feelings, needs, struggles, & opinions.
 - **Affirmed:** Approved of who we are and what we do.
 - **Blessed:** Special because of who we are; loved for who we are.
 - **Safe:** Free from fear and anxiety. Free to explore the world.
 - **Touched:** In healthy ways that communicates affection, security, and safety without confusion between sexual & non-sexual physical touch.
 - **Chosen:** Selected, chosen for a special relationship. Accepted, desired.
 - **Included:** Belonging; Broader than chosen we long to belong, to be in community.

These were all fulfilled in Eden in a perfect state of well-being before the desires were even known or identified.

**GREAT EXCHANGE #1:
GOD'S GLORY EXCHANGED FOR LIES
Pain and Suffering Begin
and a Natural Sense of Well-Being is Lost**

1. Because of the sin of Adam and Eve we are all born with a sinful nature which affects all areas of our being and lives.
2. Man exchanges God for self, truth for lies & a sound mind for distorted thinking.
3. Now humans, left to themselves, are prone to use their mind & will to exploit their body and other people to feel good through the senses of sight, taste, hearing, smell, & touch. (See Romans 1)

Now the 7 benefits of a perfect world instead of being the outcome of a state of spiritual well-being as the result of trusting God and obeying Him, all these become sought after as the goal, often using sinful ways even if only to leave God out the picture.

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. Galatians 5:17

“Sarks”, the Gr. Word for “flesh”, “is generally negative, referring to making decisions (actions) according to self - i.e. done apart from faith (independent from God’s inworking). Thus what is ‘of the flesh (carnal)’ is by definition displeasing to the Lord - even things that seem ‘respectable!’ In short, flesh generally relates to unaided human effort, i.e. decisions (actions) that originate from self or are empowered by self. This is carnal (“of the flesh”) and proceeds out of the untouched (unchanged) part of us - i.e. what is not transformed by God.”

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

“the active process in performing (accomplishing) a deed, and implying what is done as a regular practice - i.e. a routine or habit”

will not inherit the kingdom of God. Galatians 5:19-25

SINNING ULTIMATELY INVOLVES 1 OR 2 CHOICES:

- A. I don't believe that what God wants for me is good, acceptable, and perfect (Romans 12:2), and, therefore, I choose to go my own way, or
- B. I believe God's ways are good, acceptable and perfect, *but I simply choose out of my own rebelliousness to refuse to obey His ways.*

**We are not robots or puppets,
but humans with the free will to make one of 2 choices:**

- A. I can choose to trust myself (or someone/something else) and go a different way than God's.
- B. I can choose to trust God and go His way.

**GREAT EXCHANGE #2:
in exchange for OUR sin, God offers forgiveness & The
only Pathway to begin to Recover a Sense of Well-being**

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

Positively Stated:

But with faith it is possible to please [God], for

- A. **Whoever believes that he exists and**
- B. **That he rewards those who seek him**

They can draw near to Him.

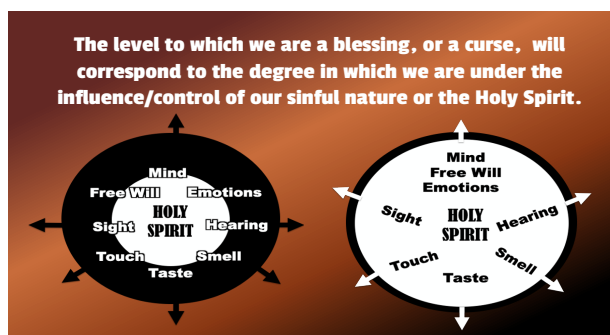
¹⁷And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.

*¹⁸My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.
Isaiah 32:17-18*

1. When a person receives Jesus Christ as Savior & Lord, a spiritual division begins when, as a part of salvation, they are given as a gift the sealing and indwelling Holy Spirit.
2. But the good news is now we can in faith use our mind, will, and body to be yielded to God's Spirit, empowering us to deal in godly ways with life and our bruises, brokenness, and bondages.
3. Then by trusting and obeying God, we have hope of living in a state of ever-increasing well-being characterized by increased satisfaction in the 7 desires of every human heart.

Being transformed from a life dominated by the sinful nature is not a quick or instant change and will only be completed when we see Christ.

The more we are transformed to be like Christ the greater blessing we will be to others.



¹¹In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace. Romans 6:11-14

“For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” Philippians 2:13

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

ABUNDANT HOPE IS FOUND IN GOD ALONE.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13

WE NEED OPEN HEARTS & MINDS TO RECEIVE HIS HOPE.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. Revelation 3:20

OUR GREATEST SOURCE OF HOPE IS THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST, TRAINING US IN THIS PRESENT AGE TO:

1. **Renounce ungodliness and worldly passions (“say no to” – NIV).**
2. **Live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives.**
3. **Be zealous for good works.**

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹²training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who 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.

Titus 2:11-14

WE HAVE A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN DESIRES AND LOOK TO GOD IN HOPE TO FULFILL THE 7 DESIRES OF EVERY HEART

Desire without knowledge is not good... Proverb 19:2a

⁴Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. ⁵Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. Psalm 37:4-5

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #1

We learn that everyone experiences hurts, hang-ups and/or unhealthy habits, and that until we admit which old ways of dealing with these haven't been effective and learn how important the help and support of others is, the past keeps repeating itself in our present which guarantees the "same old, same old" trouble in our future.

BREAKING DOWN GUIDING PRINCIPLE #1

1. *Everyone experiences bruises, brokenness and/or bondages.*
2. *The past keeps repeating itself in our present, guaranteeing the "same old, same old" trouble in our future until:*
 - a. *We face and admit which old ways of dealing with these haven't been effective.*
 - b. *Learn how important the help and support of others is.*

BETTER THAN GOLD

The Life-Changing Wisdom of the Bible

<https://discoveryseries.org/courses/better-than-gold/lessons/the-need-for-wisdom/>

"At this point, my spiritual journey has run parallel to what I've learned in marriage. The greatest similarity is the emotional baggage we bring into both. My inclinations before and after marriage were also a part of me before and after I put my faith in Christ. The self-centeredness that makes it difficult for me to hear the concerns of my wife also makes it hard for me to hear the voice of Christ living in me.

"I don't mean to downplay all the wonderful parts of marriage or conversion. But I see how wrong my expectations had been. I thought salvation would make me good, and I expected marriage to make me happy. I didn't see that in both cases my own faults stacked the deck against me if I didn't learn and live the wisdom of Christ.

"... I was wrong to assume that my whole life had already changed through faith in Christ; faith didn't automatically make me good or wise.

"It took time for me to discover that in faith and in marriage, growth and maturity do not come automatically or easily. And I wasn't prepared for what turned out to be the greatest challenges of my life. I didn't realize that the biggest enemy I would ever face would be my own natural self-centeredness.

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"Yes, my thinking has changed... Life has been harder than I expected and I now see more clearly the parallel between being married and entering a relationship with Christ. Upon a couple's public confession, a minister declares a man and woman married, but not mature in their love. And when we put our faith in Christ, God declares us legally blameless but not good or wise. In both cases, there is a difference between the legal declaration and the resulting quality of life.

"...I wish I had understood sooner that believing in Christ is not the same as sharing His wisdom..."

FROM FRESH FAITH

Jim Cymbala, pp.48-49

...The very thing that delights the heart of God [is]...when we run to him and throw ourselves upon him in believing prayer, he rejoices. He does not want me out on my own, trying to earn merit stars from him. He wants us, rather, to lean into him, walking with him as closely as possible, He is not so much interested in our *doing* as in our *receiving* from Him. After all, what can we do or say or conquer without first receiving grace at God's throne to help us in our time of need (Hebrews 4:16)? And that receiving happens through faith.

Possibly there is a need in your life today to stop all the struggling with your own strength. Let it go, and call out to God in simple faith. Remember that no one has ever been disappointed after putting trust in Him. Not one person through-out all of human history has ever depended upon God and found that God let him down. Never! Not once!

Face the obvious fact that the problem or need is far too big for you to handle. Use the very fact of your inadequacy as a springboard to a new, wholehearted trust in God's unfailing promises.

AT LEAST ONE WAY THIS WEEK I WILL TRY TO PUT LESSON #2 INTO PRACTICE IS:

Weekly Going Deeper Study Guide
For Lesson #23: The Struggles are Real, but There is Hope

- **Before beginning each day simply ask God to help you see things that He would have you to see.**
- **When finished, pray again asking for the faith and the courage to follow His lead in areas He spoke to you about.**

DAY 1

1. Without rushing, read through this week's lesson.
2. Paraphrase in 2 or 3 sentences what in your mind is the main message you get out of this lesson.

DAY 2

1. Carefully read and meditate on each of the scriptures in this week's lesson.
2. Identify one that stands out to you and rewrite it in your own words.

DAY 3

1. Reread the lesson.
2. Write down any things you see that God would want you to avoid, change, or give up.

DAY 4

1. Reread the lesson.
2. Write down the most positive thing you see that you would really like to see become part of your life.

DAY 5

Pick out one verse from this week's lesson (does not need to be the whole passage) that means the most to you or some other verse that comes to mind related to this week's lesson, write it on a small card, and try to memorize it or at least read and meditate on it several times through the next days.

The verse(s) I chose is: _____

HERE IS WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE IN GROUP AS TO HOW PUTTING LESSON #2 INTO PRACTICE WENT: