

CREATED TO BECOME LIKE CHRIST

(Romans 8:28,29) And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

QUIZ TIME: True or False? Someone who is Christ-like:

1. Shows unlimited patience.
2. Does not get angry.
3. Refuses to confront wrong.
4. Tells all the truth, all the time.
5. Has a smile for every occasion.
6. Responds alike to all.
7. Avoids the company of unbelievers.
8. Speaks well of everyone.
9. Avoids conflicts.
10. Is at peace with all.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

(Genesis 1:26) *And 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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

(Ephesians 4:24) *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

- 1. In all of God's creation, only human beings, are made in God's Image.**
 - a. Like God, we are spiritual beings
– (Gen. 2:7; 1 Thess. 5:23).
 - b. We are intellectual beings (Mark 12:30).
 - c. We are relational beings
– capacity to love and to be loved.
 - d. We have a moral consciousness, discerning (Rom. 2:15).
 - e. We are shaped beings with a purpose (Ps. 139:14)

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

2. Sinful man, with distorted and damaged image restored by Jesus' death and resurrection.

- a. Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3).
- b. Jesus' character is produced in us (2 Cor. 3:18). *“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”*
- c. The kind of character is described in 1 Cor. 13; Matt. 5:1-12; 2 Peter 1:5-8, Gal. 5:22,23. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (Gal. 5:22,23).*

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

1. Fruit

a. Fruit – symbolic use, wealth of images.

- 1) Pleasant association, appealing to senses of touch,
- 2) sight, smell and taste. Belongs to the garden, to the world of beauty, fragrance, growth and maturity.
- 3) Thus the product of human nature can be beautiful, useful and satisfying.
- 4) Priority to bear fruit of good words (Mt. 12:33-35), deeds (Mt. 7:15-23) and virtue (Eph. 5:9, good, right and true).

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

1. Fruit

b. Fruit, not fruits – singular

- 1) Evil is plural (Gal. 5:19-21), at least 15 works of the flesh.
- 2) In reconciliation, the Spirit integrates and unifies the personality in Christ.
- 3) The one reality to which we response to is love (Rom. 8:39; 5:5), the other eight are graces or aspects of love; just as there is one rainbow and many colors.
- 4) There is no growth apart from the growth of all others as a whole.
- 5) However, there is place for the practice and exercise of each if each has already been received as gift from God.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

2. Working with Holy Spirit

- a. Attention: We must establish the habit of attending to the things of God (Rom. 8:5).
 - 1) Set our minds (Col. 3:1, 2) – attitude of the mind.
 - 2) Run the race, with eyes fixed on Jesus (Heb. 2:2).
 - 3) Keep on exposing self to light of God's glory (2 Cor. 3:18).

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

2. Working with Holy Spirit

b. Devotion: Practice His Presence, by recollection, private prayer and public worship.

- 1) Near to beginning and end of day, set aside time to read Word and pray (Acts 4:13).
- 2) Mini-times in the day: Stop, Focus, Be silent, Song or Scriptures.
- 3) Celebrate with God's people in small groups, fellowship groups and church services.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

2. Working with Holy Spirit

c. Restraint: Between the old man and the new man, there is tension, conflict (Col. 3:9,10).

- 1) Die to self daily
(1 Cor. 15:31).
- 2) Yield members of body to Him
(Rom. 6:13)
- 3) Be controlled by the Holy Spirit
(Eph. 5:18; Gal. 2:20).
- 4) Believe and thank Him
(Gal. 3:14; Rom. 14:23; Luke 11:13)

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

2. Working with Holy Spirit

- d. Practice: Exercise is necessary to physical as well as spiritual growth and health.
 - 1) Love grows by means of intentionally doing good, like Jesus (Acts. 10:38).
 - 2) God supplies the garments, the armour and we must put them on. To become a Christian, is to enter into fellowship with Christ and community, for comfort, strength and accountability (2 Tim. 2:22).
 - 3) The tree on which the nine aspects are produced is the community.
 - 4) How we related to others is the supreme test of our character.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

4. True love – Agape

Four Loves of Life

- 1) Eros, a desire, intense and passionate, to possess and enjoy for own satisfaction.
- 2) Sorge, a natural warm affection between parents and children and between siblings.
- 3) Philia, friendship love, warm and steadfast, based on mutual respect and trust.
- 4) Agape, the sacrificial love of God for man, springing from His own eternal nature.

The natural loves are not replaced, they are transformed and fulfilled by agape.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

4. True love – Agape

a. As personified by our Lord Jesus Christ

1) Unconditional and free

(Romans 5:8) *But God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

2) Volitional

(Ephesians 1:6,7) *To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace;*

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

4. True love – Agape

a. As personified by our Lord Jesus Christ

3) Intense and Unending

(John 13:1) Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

4. True love – Agape

a. As personified by our Lord Jesus Christ

4) Unselfish and Purposeful

(Ephesians 5:25-27) Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word,
That He might present it to Himself a glorious church,
not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

4. True love – Agape

a. As personified by our Lord Jesus Christ

5) Manifested and practical

(John 10 – shepherd) Prays, protects, comforts and provides.

6) Sacrificial

(Romans 5:6) *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

4. True love – Agape

b. As produced in us by God

1) Capacity

(Romans 5:5) *And hope makes not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given unto us.*

2) Desire and ability given

(Philippians 2:13) *For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.*

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

4. True love – Agape

b. As produced in us by God

Our Responses:

- 1) Pray and claim by faith His promises. God will work both to desire and to do.
- 2) Seek His desire and obey.
(Matthew 6:33) *But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

4. True love – Agape

b. As produced in us by God

Our Responses:

3) Do what God says whether we feel like it or not.

(Matthew 5:44, 45) *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

That you may be the children of your Father who is in Heaven: for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

5. The greatest is love

a. Fifteen facets of Love

(1 Cor. 13) – look at Jesus and Him crucified.

Two affirmations are followed by eight negatives and one positive. Four descriptions of what loves does, each including the word “all”.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

5. The greatest is love

a. Fifteen facets of Love

(1Co 13:4) *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,*

(1Co 13:5) *Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh nother own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;*

(1Co 13:6) *Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;*

(1Co 13:7) *Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

5. The greatest is love

b. Four reasons for its Primacy

1) Love includes the other virtues.

There is one fruit, the love of God shed abroad our hearts by the Spirit (Rom. 5:5).

The eight virtues are aspects, ways in which love responds to God and to people.

2) Love binds everyone and everything together.

Above all, put on love (Col. 3:12-14) – to keep all virtues together.

Love corrects any distortions, complements defects and maintains proper relationships.

In context of community of various races and genders, love binds in perfect harmony.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

5. The greatest is love

b. Four reasons for its Primacy

3) Love fulfills the Law (Deut. 6:4-5; Mark 12:28-30).

Loving God and loving people go together; they are inseparable (1 John 4:20). On these two depend all the law and prophets (Mt. 22:40; Gal. 5:14; Rom. 13:9).

4) Love makes fruitful.

The gifts of the Spirit are effective when exercised in love (1 Cor. 8:1). Without love, even the greatest gifts are worthless (1 Cor. 13:1-3).

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

5. The greatest is love

c. Five ways to grow in love – taught by God (1 Thess. 4:8-9)

1) Response – Loving God is our response to His initiative in Christ. We cannot produce love for God by act of will. Looking upon Jesus, we love Him as we have love from the Spirit (Rom.5:5).

2) Indebtedness – intensity depends upon the depth of our experience of forgiveness.

As our awareness of our indebtedness increases, so does our love.

These two “a great sinner” and “a great Savior” increases and deepens our love.

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5. The greatest is love

c. Five ways to grow in love – taught by God (1 Thess. 4:8-9)

3) Presence – putting ourselves in the presence of the lovable. Love comes to and grows between people who are present to one another. The heart can grow fonder by absence only when absence alternates with presence.

4) Fellowship – the promised presence of the Lord in fellowship (Mt. 18:20; Heb. 10:24,25).

Love is produced and matures in the common life of the Body of Christ.

5) Exercise -Love grows by action, not just receptivity.

By expressing in action the love we have received, we increase and strengthen it.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

6. Speak Love languages (G. Chapman)

- a. Words of Affirmation
- b. Quality Time
- c. Receiving Gifts
- d. Acts of Service
- e. Physical Touch

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

6. Speak Love languages (G. Chapman)

a. Words of Affirmation

(Matthew 25:21) *His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

(Proverbs 18:21) *Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*

- **Focus on saying words of affection, praise and encouragement.**

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

6. Speak Love languages (G. Chapman)

b. Quality Time

(Deuteronomy 6:6,7) And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sit in thine house, and when thou walk by the way, and when thou lie down, and when thou rise up.

- **Focus on listening with support.**

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c. Receiving Gifts

(James 1:17) Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

(2 Corinthians 9:7) Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver.

- **Gifts are tangible evidence of emotional love.**

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d. Acts of Service

(Mark 10:45) *For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

(Galatians 5:13) *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*

- **Acts are to be done with loving service not just out of duty or obligation.**

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

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e. Physical Touch

(Mark 10:13) And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them: and His disciples rebuked those that brought them.

(Mark 10:16) And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them.

- **Provides sense of trust, connectedness and acceptance.**

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6. Speak Love languages (G. Chapman)

f. Love Language Review

Marriage/ family/ church is primarily a process of relationship, not a project to be completed, a problem to solve, or an event to attend.

We need to understand and accept thoughts, feelings, desires, and fears, forgive wrongs and hurts, care, support, and build lives.

How to relay to a person with this love language	Communication	Actions	What to Avoid
WORDS OF AFFIRMATION Proverbs 15:1 and 18:21 Focus on saying	Compliments Affirmation Kind words/ gentle	Send notes/ cards Affirm before others	Criticism Condemning Judgmental
QUALITY TIME Deuteronomy 6: 6, 7 Psalms 139: 1, 2 Focus on listening with support	One-to-one time Not interrupting Face-to-face conversation (self-revelation)	Take long walks together Doing things together Taking trips	Long periods of being apart More time with friends than with spouse
RECEIVING GIFTS 2 Corinthians 9: 7, 15 James 1: 17	Positive Fact-orientated information Gift especially of self-power of presence	Give gifts on special occasions and not so special occasions	Forgetting special days

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f. Love Language Review

How to relay to a person with this love language	Communication	Actions	What to Avoid
ACTS OF SERVICE Galatians 5:13 Mark 10: 45 John 13 - overcome stereotypes	Action words like "I can," "I will," "What else can I do?"	Helping with house and yard chores Repair/maintenance Acts of kindness	Ignoring spouses' requests while helping others
PHYSICAL TOUCH Mark 10: 13, 16 Can communicate hate or love	A lot of nonverbals Verbals need to be word pictures Crisis and touch	Touches Hugs Pats Kisses	Physical neglect or abuse Physically there but emotionally absent

PROFOUND CONCLUSION

Learning the primary love language of your spouse and your children and choosing to speak it regularly will greatly enhance the emotional climate in your family.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

6. Speak Love languages (G. Chapman)

g. Problems:

- 1) Hard to speak? Love is giving self. God will provide the capacity.
- 2) Do not feel like it? Do it as God commanded. (Matt. 5:44).

(Matthew 5:44) *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

6. Speak Love languages (G. Chapman)

g. Problems:

3) What if the other does not respond?

Do it for Jesus. God will bless.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

(John 13:17)

Profound conclusion:

Putting learning and choosing to act will enhance emotional climate at home, work, and church.

(1) CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

7. Reflections

- a. By which language/s do you speak to your Heavenly Father?
- b. Ask of each other what three needs to be filled up for the next three months.
- c. Please ask daily: How is your love tank like? How can I help to fill it?

(2) TRANSFORMED BY GOD, THE HOLY SPIRIT (2 Cor. 3:18)

1. It is God who is in us (Col. 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:19) that works in us and through us – “For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

a. Beware of resisting the Holy Spirit (Psa. 106:13-15)

(Psalms 106:13-15) *They soon forgot His works; they waited not for His counsel:*

But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.

And He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

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1. It is God who is in us (Col. 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:19) that works in us and through us – “For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

b. Beware of grieving Him (Eph. 4:30).

(Ephesians 4:30-32) And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

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1. It is God who is in us (Col. 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:19) that works in us and through us – “For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

c. Beware of quenching Him (1 Thess. 5:19).

(1 Thessalonians 5:16-22) Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing.

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; Abstain from all appearance of evil.

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1. It is God who is in us (Col. 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:19) that works in us and through us – “For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

d. Be being filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit
(Eph. 5:18-21).

1) Die to self and surrender every member to His control
(1 Cor. 15:31; Rom. 6:13; 12:1,2).

2) Be filled with His Word – His thoughts and will
(Col. 1:9-12; 3:16).

3) Ask and receive by faith (Luke 11:13; Heb. 11:6).

(Luke 11:13) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?

(2) TRANSFORMED BY GOD, THE HOLY SPIRIT (2 Cor. 3:18)

2. God works in and we work out – *“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”* (Phil. 2:12).

a. Obey Him by faith

(Acts 5:32; Joshua 3:13-17; Mark 5:36, only believe).

b. Choose to think God’s thoughts after Him

(Prov. 4:23; Eph. 4:23; Rom. 12:1,2).

(Proverbs 4:23) Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

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c. Cultivate godly habits to develop character -put on the new self (Eph. 4:24).

- 1) Certain sympathy in staying in old habits (Heb. 11:25, pleasure of sin)
- 2) Refusal to face the truth (James 1:23,24)
- 3) Change and growth is often painful and scary. Give up to grow up!
- 4) We are slow learners, thus we need repeated exposure (history of Israel).

(2) TRANSFORMED BY GOD, THE HOLY SPIRIT (2 Cor. 3:18)

- 3. God works in and we work out** – *“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”* (Phil. 2:12).
- c. Cultivate godly habits to develop character -put on the new self (Eph. 4:24).
- 5) We have a lot to unlearn – lots to be removed and replaced – hard work.
- 6) Habits take time to develop. They come with practices (1 Tim. 4:15).

(3) TRANSFORMED BY THE WORD OF GOD

(Matt. 4:4; Acts 20:32)

1. **Power of God's Word** – *“The Words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life”* (John 6:63).
 - a. Four course meal - milk, bread, solid food & sweet desert (1 Pet. 2:2; Mt. 4:4; 1Cor. 3:2; Ps. 119:103) – Holy Spirit's menu for spiritual strength and growth (Matthew 4:4) *But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.*
(Psalms 119:103) *How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

(3) TRANSFORMED BY THE WORD OF GOD

(Matt. 4:4; Acts 20:32)

1. **Power of God's Word** – *“The Words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life”* (John 6:63).

b. God's Word, the fountain of success (Jos. 1:8), prosperity (Ps. 1:2,3), wisdom and understanding (Ps. 119:97,100), power over sin (Ps. 119:9,11) and life (Prov. 4:4)

(Joshua 1:8) *This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

(3) TRANSFORMED BY THE WORD OF GOD

(Matt. 4:4; Acts 20:32)

2. **Abide in His Word** – (Jn. 15:7; 8:31). *If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you ... If you continue in my Word, then are you My disciples indeed.*
- a. **Study** – *“to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth”* (2 Tim. 2:15).
 - b. **Memorize** – *“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom”* (Col. 3:16a).
 - c. **Meditate** – *“But his delight is in the Law of the LORD; and in His Law doth he meditate day and night”* (Ps. 1:2).

(3) TRANSFORMED BY THE WORD OF GOD

(Matt. 4:4; Acts 20:32)

2. **Abide in His Word** – (Jn. 15:7; 8:31). *If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you ... If you continue in my Word, then are you My disciples indeed.*
 - d. **Personalize** – “If you know these things, happy are you if you do them” (Jn. 13:17; Jam.1:22).
 - e. **Harmonize** – “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18-21).

(4) TRANSFORMED BY TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS

1. Redemptive Purposes of Sufferings:

a. To make us useful in saving others (Rom. 11:14; Acts 16:25).

(Genesis 50:20) But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

b. To forge bond of divine-human suffering (Phil. 1:28,29).

(1 Peter 4:13) But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

c. To identify and comfort others (Heb. 4:15,16; 7:26,27; 2 Cor. 1:3,4).

(4) TRANSFORMED BY TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS

1. Redemptive Purposes of Sufferings:

d. To enter deeper into faith and obedience (Heb. 5:8,9; 12:2; Ps. 119:67,71).

1) To the sinner, call to his hopelessness and need for salvation

2) To the backslider, call to repentance (Heb. 12:6-8)

3) To the fruitful, more purging and fruitfulness (John 15:2,5)

(Job 19:25) *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:*

(John 15:2) ... *every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*

(4) TRANSFORMED BY TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS

1. Redemptive Purposes of Sufferings:

e. Ultimately, to become like God – in touch with His very nature

- 1) The work of obedience is the evidence that the nature of God is in us.
- 2) When He says “Come,” I simply come; when He says “Let go,” I let go.
- 3) My goal is God Himself ... at any cost, dear Lord, by any road!

(Genesis 22:16,17) And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

(4) TRANSFORMED BY TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS

2. **Respond correctly when dealing with different problems.**
 - a. If the trouble is my own fault, I should repent, be restored and learn (Jonah's storm).
 - b. If it is from others, I need to release through forgiveness (Mt. 5:23,24;).
 - c. If the temptation is from Satan, I should resist him (Matt. 4; James 4:7; Eph. 6:17).
 - d. If the trial is from God, I need to rejoice and trust God in it (Phil 4:4; 1 Pet. 1:6,7).

(Phil. 1:6) *“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”*

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

(Hebrews 12:6) *For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives.*

(Hebrews 12:7) *If ye endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chastens not?*

(Hebrews 12:11) *Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

1. **Many meanings and understanding to the word “discipline”**
 - a. Chastening, correcting, instructing, reproof, warning.
 - b. One of the Greek words has a meaning that includes “nurture” (Heb. 12:6). Discipline assists in loving and growing us up. It is driven not by anger and punishment, but by caring as sons of God.
 - c. The word “disciple” refers to one who is in the learning process. The idea is that discipline in the broadest sense is training for a person to learn self-control in some area of his life – from attitudes to relationships, from conflicts to faith struggles. We become disciplined by being disciplined.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

1. **Many meanings and understanding to the word “discipline”**
 - d. Discipline provides a structure for love. With internal discipline, God’s love flows in and through. If love is the heart, discipline is the skeleton, giving us form and protection.
 - e. Discipline is related to suffering though it is not the same as suffering. Suffering speaks more to the experience of discomfort. Discipline is more concerned with the goal of growth and self-control.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

1. Many meanings and understanding to the word “discipline”

- f. Submitting is difficult because we allow something to be done to us. We are being disciplined. It is just not inside us. We have to let it occur and then grow from it. A certain loss of control and self-protection is necessary. It takes faith (Heb. 11).
- g. Although it is a process we receive, we are to be active.
“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 cor. 9:27).

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

2. The Ingredients of Discipline

a. What we must provide:

1) Receptiveness – the more we embrace it, the more it bears fruit (Heb. 12:11).

a) Examples of David and Nathan, of Moses and Pharaoh, with truth and loving confrontation.

b) Discipline busters:

(1) Denial:

(a) keeping something hurtful away from our awareness, such as trauma,

(b) not admitting that we are responsible.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

2. The Ingredients of Discipline

a. What we must provide:

- (2) Rationalization: making excuses. “I do criticize, but it is constructive.”
- (3) Minimization – lessen the perception. “You are being over-sensitive.”
- (4) Blame – laying it on another. “You provoke me, because you are always late.”
- (5) Projection – removing a bad aspect of ourselves from us. (Mt. 7:1-5 – plank, speck)

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

2. The Ingredients of Discipline

a. What we must provide:

- 2) Confession – to agree with the truth. When we confess, we are aligning ourselves with the process of growth and repair (James 5:16), else we negate the good effects. “I have sinned” (Luke 15).
- 3) Repentance – not only to agree with the truth, but also to live out the truth – to turn around, changing what needs to be changed – the prodigal came to himself and arose and went to the father. This does not always mean fixing the problem itself immediately, else there would be no need for growth. It means an attitude of turning from what is not the best and dealing with life-style with outside help from God and friends.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

2. The Ingredients of Discipline

b. What the process will provide:

- 1) The sources God provides from the outside till we develop self-control and maturity
 - a) He chastens and corrects us directly – permanent time-out for Adam n Eve, painful but ultimately for their good (Gen. 3:23-24). Eg. of a job crisis, signal to get home in order.
 - b) People are a source. We need caring, honest and perceptive people (2 Sam. 12; Gal. 2:11).
 - c) Reality – pain of consequences – law of sowing and reaping.

(Galatians 6:7) Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

2. The Ingredients of Discipline

c. What the process will provide:

2) Empathy from others

- a) Discipline must be administered with gentleness and care. We can bear the consequences when we know that God and others are correcting us in love and not punishing us.
- b) The real need is for connectedness to God and others and to God through others. When people receive that, the power of ill-disciplined can be broken.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

2. The Ingredients of Discipline

c. What the process will provide:

2) Empathy from others

- c) Find an accountability partner, join a group for growth, assignment, correction and feedback.
- d) Others train us and then we can do it ourselves (1 cor. 4:7), “trained by it” – disciplinary agent.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

2. The Ingredients of Discipline

d. What the process will provide:

- 3) Pain – discipline generally requires pain to be effective – signal of an issue to be faced.
 - a) The kinds and dosages differ according to our needs.
 - b) Plus our attitude toward growth and accepting discipline is a key character quality, affect the amount of pain we must endure.
 - c) Joseph took 25 years from pit to palace overcoming treachery, temptation, disappointment, success and bitterness.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

2. The Ingredients of Discipline

d. What the process will provide:

3) Pain – discipline generally requires pain to be effective – signal of an issue to be faced.

d) Moses' 40 years in the desert dealt with self-worth and sustenance, significance and security, supply and schedule, sufficiency and satisfaction, and the sanctity of life.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

3. The Ingredients of Discipline

e. What the process will provide:

- 4) Time – depending on:
 - a) Our attitude
 - b) Severity and urgency of the issue being dealt with
 - c) How early in life the problem and pattern began
 - d) Spiritual and emotional resources available to help.
- 5) Internalization – process of emotional learning that means we have made the experience as a part of ourselves. We no longer need the external structure and pain.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

3. Fruits of Righteousness

a. Characteristics of these people:

- 1) They put off the old ways of doing things and turn to the ways of God (Eph. 4:22-24).
- 2) They seek more and more to understand and gain insight into what is best (Phil. 1:9-10).
- 3) They commit to the pain of discipline in order to grow.

(Ephesians 4:22-24) That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

3. Fruits of Righteousness

b. Some practical insights to the way to have life:

- 1) We see honesty, not as a virtue, but as the only way we will ever have intimacy.
- 2) We see facing pain and suffering not as something to be endured, but as the only way out of a depression or an addiction.
- 3) We see confession and ownership of our faults not as something humiliating and guilt inducing but as the way to grow and reach our goals.

(James 5:16) Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

3. Fruits of Righteousness

b. Some practical insights to the way to have life:

- 4) We see listening to feedback and correction, not as someone telling us that we are bad, but as receiving a gift that is going to give us life.
- 5) We see living a life of sexual purity not something we should do to avoid God's being mad at us but as the only way to find satisfying love.
- 6) We see forgiveness of others not as a law, but as a path to freedom, reconciliation and living the full life.

(Genesis 50:20) But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

(5) DISCIPLINE OF SONS

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Please share three blessings that you have received in the teaching. Be specific and in detail.
2. Please share three ways how you can use the session teaching in your own personal life or in your ministry. Please give examples of the issues and your plans to resolve them and to grow.