



ENEMY AT THE GATE

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CHRISTIAN CENTRE

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Session 1

The Big Picture

The Christian journey begins before a person is saved. It begins in the pre-Christian stage where God is calling and the person is awakening to that call. The call will eventually lead the person to a place of revelation where they understand that God loves them and has a wonderful plan and purpose for their lives. They understand that our sin has placed an obstacle between what we are and what God wants us to become. They realize that Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and remove the obstacles by forgiving our sins. They realize that through repentance of sins and faith in Christ they can be saved thereby entering into a new way of living. They decide to follow Jesus by confessing Him and making Him Lord and Saviour.

Consequently the objective of the Christian journey is to always move forward. We are growing if we are moving forward towards God's ultimate goal for our lives. This goal is found in Christ's last command which we call "The Great Commission". It involves two things. Go and preach the gospel (Mark 16:15). Go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19). As long as we are moving towards these two goals, we are making progress. However the trap is where we exchange progress with information. Many people come to falsely believe that discipleship and Christian growth is about having knowledge and information. As a result there are numerous Bible studies and courses that Christian are busily doing thinking that the more information they have, the greater disciple they are becoming. There is nothing wrong with learning as long as it is helping you to progress towards God's goal for your life. The true assessment of Christian maturity is not found in how much one knows but in how well one is fulfilling the great commission. This can be assessed by simply asking these two questions: "How are you doing with sharing the gospel of Christ?"; "How are you doing with making disciples of Christ?"

The Big Barriers

Some people want to make progress but find that there are barriers that hinder their progress. These barriers I see as chains around people's waists that are linked to a heavy ball that is connected to a negative event in their past. Everything is fine until your progress comes to the place in the chain that puts pressure on the heavy ball. When this happens, progress is slowed down or worse still, comes to a complete halt. This ball and chain needs to be identified and released from the Christian's life so that progress may be made without any hindrance from the past.

At this point we need to identify that we have an enemy that wants to keep us bound and not allow us to progress unfettered. The Bible calls the ball and chain a weight and a sin that we need to address and break. Hebrews 12:1 *"...let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."*

The purpose of these studies is to help you address the barriers that can hinder your progress, break them from your life and help you become all that God wants you to become. This will then enable you to "run with endurance the race that is set before you."

To help us identify what are the barriers that hinder our progress and sabotage our race, we need to understand three very important Christian truths.

1 OUR BODY IS LIKE A HOUSE

The Bible tells us, *"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"* 1 Corinthians 3:16. The apostle Paul wants us to understand that we are the home (the temple) of the Holy Spirit. This house imagery is used powerfully in Revelation 3:20. *"Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me."* The picture that is painted here is of Jesus coming to our house and asking permission to come in and reside with us. We have a choice to either open the door and allow Him in or keep the door closed and leave Him out.

Salvation occurs in opening the door and allowing Jesus to come into our lives (our house) and allowing Him to be the Lord of the house. When we are saved there is a transfer of ownership. We gave our lives, our house to God and He became the rightful owner.

2 JESUS IS ALL POWERFUL AND THE ENEMY HAS BEEN DEFEATED

The next important truth to understand is that at salvation, the power of the enemy was defeated and he was evicted from your house. 1 John 3:8 tells us: *"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."*

The Bible tells us in Colossians 2:15 that the enemy has been disarmed. That word disarmed is translated spoiled in the old King James Bible. It means to strip, to remove all things, to divest of all power and authority, to deprive of power. This means that the enemy is rendered powerless over the Christian and has no legal right to ownership of your house.

When Jesus takes residence of our house and it becomes a temple for the Holy Spirit, there ought to be no room for the devil. However, he doesn't take defeat easily. The Bible tells us that he comes back to the house looking for an entrance point. Jesus gives us a little insight into what this means in Luke's gospel. *"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'" Luke 11: 24-26.*

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Prayer

Father God, I want to thank you that Jesus is all powerful and that the enemy has been defeated.
Help me to establish the Lordship of Jesus in my life and keep the enemy out of my life.

I ask this in Jesus Name.

Amen

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Session 2

3 THE ENEMY WANTS TO GAIN ACCESS TO YOUR HOUSE

The third important truth for the Christian to understand is that even though the enemy has been defeated and evicted from our house, he is looking to regain access. We need to become aware that we can give him access if we don't fully understand how the enemy operates and the tricks he uses to regain access. Firstly let us look at how he operates.

1. He is your Adversary.

He is your arch-enemy, your opponent, your nemesis. His main ambition is to take back ownership of your house and destroy God's plans and purpose for your life. The Bible tells us: *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."* 1 Peter 5:8. He is like an enemy at the gate seeking to gain entry so that he can devour, plunder, damage, and destroy God's creation.

He is your adversary and we need to understand that he is no gentleman. He doesn't play by set rules. He wants to win at any cost. It is helpful to understand that he will try to engage you in one or more of the following three strategies.

As a Liar.

Jesus tells us clearly that the devil is a liar. When speaking to a group of Pharisees He tells them: *"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."* John 8:44.

The enemy will always twist God's word to lead you astray. He did this in the Garden of Eden when He twisted God's Word with Adam and Eve. They believed his lie, disobeyed God, took the forbidden fruit and rather than becoming like God as Satan made them believe, they became sinners, the very opposite of what they were lead to believe. (Genesis 3: 1-19).

The only way to expose the enemy's lies is to hold a high view of scripture. Analyse everything with this question: "What does the Bible say about this?"

As a Lawyer.

The second strategy the enemy loves to use, is to take on the form of a lawyer. In Revelation 12:10, the Bible calls the enemy: "the accuser of the brethren". This word literally refers to a plaintiff who charges someone with an offence.

The enemy is always looking for a legal accusation against you. Jesus can defend you from any of the enemy's false accusations but not against a genuine legal accusation. If we wilfully disobey God, then the enemy has a legal accusation against us and he will use it as a means to condemn us and to hinder our progress in God. The question every Christian needs to ask is ...*"Does the enemy have a genuine legal accusation against me?"*

The apostle Paul tells us that the enemy cannot condemn us on the condition that we: remain in Christ Jesus; are being led by the Holy Spirit and that we do not give in to the temptations of the flesh. While this occurs all his accusations are false and his condemnation is invalid. *"There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus and do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."* (Romans 8:1)

As an angel of Light.

The third strategy that the enemy uses to get to us is in the form of an angel of light. The apostle Paul warns us, *"For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light."* 2 Corinthians 11:14. He transforms (disguises) himself into an angel of light and uses deception as a guise to make us believe that everything is OK when we are actually doing things that are contrary to God's will. Many people have been deceived by the enemy disguised as an angel of light.

The apostle Paul warns the Galatian Christians that the best way to discern whether or not something is of God is to align the message with the Word of God. If it aligns then accept it but if it contradicts God's Word it is a deception. (Galatians 1:8-9)

As soon as we begin to deviate from the clear meaning of what God said in the Bible, we are beginning to deviate into the paths of deception. When someone says, "God spoke to me," and there is a contradiction with what they say and what the Bible says, they have been tricked by the devil disguised as the angel of light. The apostle Paul warns us that in the latter days this will be one of the enemy's biggest strategies towards the people of God. *"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons."* 1 Timothy 4:1.

2. He is a Thief.

The enemy not only operates as your adversary who presents himself as a liar, a lawyer or as light, he also operates as a thief. Jesus calls him a thief and exposes his *modus operandi* (his method of operations) with these words: *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill and to destroy."* John 10:10. The enemy wants to steal your peace, your joy, your precious gifts from God. If you give him access, you will find that a lot of things will go missing because that's what thieves do – they steal. His ultimate goal is to steal your salvation and cause your latter state to be worse than your former state. The apostle Peter warns us about this in 2 Peter 2:20: *"For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning."*

Jesus also warns us that if the enemy regains access into our lives, he brings along another seven whose ultimate goal is to make the person's life a misery.

3. He Schemes against you.

The other operation of the enemy of which we need to be aware is that he schemes against you. Every Christian needs to understand that the enemy sets plans and schemes together to work out how he can trap you and hinder your progress. The apostle Paul tells us to put on the full armour of God that we might be able to *"stand against the wiles (schemes, tricks and traps) of the enemy"*. Ephesians 6:11.

Another good word that describes the schemes and traps of the enemy is snare. A snare is a trap that the unsuspecting fall into. If we don't understand how the enemy operates, it is only a matter of time until we fall into one of his snares. The apostle Paul warns us that one of his snares is the pursuit of riches.

"But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition." 1 Timothy 6:9.

Most people don't wake up in the morning and say "Today I will fall into the snare of the enemy." It happens by stealth, very subtly but also very effectively unless we live switched on lives. I love the way the apostle Peter puts it, *"Be sober, be vigilant..."* (1 Peter 5:8). The idea is that of a soldier who understands he is at war and goes about his business with the realization that vigilance is his greatest weapon against the schemes of the enemy. A soldier is also taught that to defeat the enemy you not only have to be able to attack but you also need to defend. Defence is all about learning how the enemy operates.

One of the saddest verses in the Bible is found in Luke 22:23: "*Then Satan entered Judas.*" This wasn't an overnight event. It was a well thought out satanic strategy where Judas gave access to the enemy with the sin of stealing funds out of the ministry fund (John 12:6). This was the foothold the enemy needed to gain access into Judas' life. When the right time came, the enemy entered Judas and the rest is history.

Become aware that the enemy wants to enter. He is the enemy at the gate. Place a guard at the gate and block his entrance.

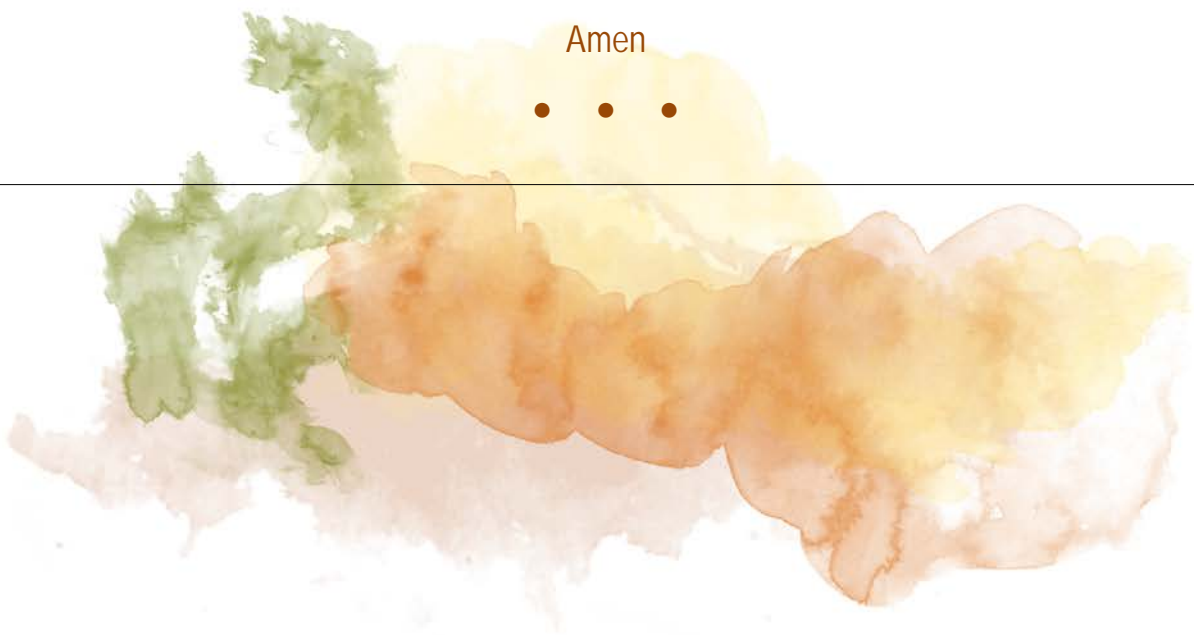
Still using the metaphor of a house, we need to understand that the enemy's first plan is to gain a foothold in our lives. A foothold is presented as something small and insignificant but it is the beginning of conquest. Paul, when writing to the Christians in Ephesus put it like this: "*nor give place to the devil*" (Ephesians 4:27). This word "*place*" that Paul uses, literally means a spot, a space, a room. In other words Paul is saying "Don't give the enemy the spare room in your house!" He is even happy with the basement or a tent in the back yard if it means he gets a foothold. Because it is from this vantage point that he will compromise you and cause you pain. He will remove your peace, your joy, your health, your intimacy with God. He wants to become a bad tenant in your house that causes havoc with the aim of eventually taking over.



Prayer

Father God, help me to be aware of the schemes of the enemy so that I may have victory over them. My desire is to live a life that honours You and keeps the enemy outside my life. Today I reaffirm my desire to make Jesus the Lord of my life.

Amen



Session 3

The enemy is lurking at the gates of your life; scheming, prowling and looking for an opportunity to enter and become a bad tenant. He cannot gain a foothold unless we give him access. We are now going to look at some of the ways the enemy gets an initial foothold in our lives **which eventually give him access to our house**. As has been said before, our objective is to help you place a guard at each of these gates.

Some of the ways the enemy tries to gain access are through these seven gates:

1. Disobedience
2. Offence
3. A Wounded Spirit
4. The Occult
5. Idolatry
6. Generational Patterns
7. The Flesh.

Let us now look at these seven gateways in more detail.

The Gateway of Disobedience

At the heart of the Bible is this central theme, those who love God obey Him. The one thing Jesus said demonstrated our love for Him was obedience. *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."* John 14:15. There is no better way for us to show love for God than by obeying Him. Every other thing we do is secondary to obedience.

Jesus made this clear with His conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

"But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." Matthew 7:21-27.

It all gets down to one thing. Will you obey or disobey God. Obedience places God first while disobedience places self or something else first. Obedience does what God wants while disobedience does what self wants. Obedience hears God's Word and does it while disobedience hears God's Word and makes an excuse to disobey it.

Jesus uses the imagery of a storm at times of difficulty and declares that at challenging, difficult times those who are obedient to God will survive. He then contrasts the life of the obedient with those who walk in disobedience stating that when challenge and difficulty come to them, they will lose everything. His conclusion is very clear: make sure you build on the solid foundation of obedience to the will of God for your life.

Satan's greatest scheme against you is disobedience. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in The Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3). Satan's first scheme against mankind was to tempt them to disobey God and as a result mankind's first sin was the sin of disobedience.

As Jesus said in John 10:10, Satan's main purpose is to steal, kill and destroy. He delights in damaging what God loves and we see all this happening to Adam and Eve. The consequences of their sin was that Satan stole their intimacy with God, he destroyed their innocence and purity, he brought death to the world and ultimately, he caused them to be cast out of the garden.

It is essential we understand that disobedience has three major consequences.

(i) It **empowers** the enemy.

It gives him legal access to your life and empowers him to block God's purpose for your life.

(ii) It **disempowers** you.

Your prayers become less powerful, you feel weak and your confidence in God is affected. Guilt is a disempowering force and when you add shame to guilt, the result is a feeling of distance from the presence of God.

(iii) It **disappoints** God

It breaks intimacy with God – you are out of the safety zone and in the danger zone. This is like the feeling a parent gets when a child walks out of the safety of the home and begins playing on the busy road. It's only a matter of time before something dreadful will happen to that child. When the parent sees the painful consequences of disobedience, disappointment and grief is the overwhelming emotion. This is how God feels when we disobey Him.

The solution is very simple, stop disobeying God and continue to live in total obedience to Him. A great motto for every Christian to have is: "Pray and Obey". Whenever we come to a crossroad in our lives we ought always to pray and ask God what is His will for our lives. The next step is to simply obey what God says. This will shut the gate to the enemy and open the door to God's abundant blessing in your life.



Prayer

Father God, today I want to reaffirm my desire to walk in obedience to Your will. Help me to trust You. Help me believe that Your way is the best way. Help me to walk in faith and not fear. Help me to overcome the enemy and not give him a foothold in my life. I ask this in Jesus Name.

Amen



Session 4

The Gateway of Offence

The Bible tells us that another one of the traps that the enemy sets for the Christian is offence. Offence is the negative emotion that takes over our lives when something negative is said about us or done to us.

Not even Jesus was immune from the temptation of becoming offended. Matthew records an interesting event that happened just after Peter declared to everyone that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16).

"From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offence to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."" Matthew 16: 21-23

The word that Jesus uses for offence is the Greek word SKANDALON. This word literally means a trap, a snare, something designed to gain control and capture you.

If we look at the background behind this story in Matthew 16: 21-23, we see that it was predetermined in Heaven that Jesus would come and pay the penalty for sin, suffer and die in the place of the human race. Satan uses Peter to rebuke Jesus and to discourage Him. He uses Peter to try and put Jesus on a path to disobedience. However, Jesus discerns it's a trap and an offence. He rebukes it and moves on.

What we need to keep in mind is that our lives are filled with opportunities to be offended. Every day there is a possible snare that we can fall into. Some people will let us down, while others will betray us, lie about us, use and abuse us, misjudge us, wrongly accuse us, show prejudice toward us, bully us, or even spread gossip against us. Allowing these things into our inner world is what causes offence. We can't stop people from offending us but we can stop becoming offended. That is a choice.

When I say offence, I'm including such things as resentment, unforgiveness and unresolved anger. These things cause a seething emotion under the surface that can be easily triggered by the slightest bump. People with these unresolved issues go through life frequently reacting to provocation rather than responding appropriately to it.

Carrying offence will do many things to you including but not limited to the following four.

Firstly, offence can give the enemy access to your life. As we have said before, the apostle Paul warns us that anger is an acceptable emotion but how we handle it is brought into question: *"Be angry, and do not sin do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil."* Ephesians 4:26 – 27. Giving place to the devil means giving him access to our lives. As I just said, we can't stop people offending us; however we can stop becoming offended. We can't stop situations that cause us to get angry; however we can control how far the rage goes. Rage is like a "smoke signal" – it attracts the enemy's attention. It signals to him and says come over; there is an opportunity here to get access. If it dissipates quickly – the enemy doesn't get access. If it sticks around, the enemy gets a free tenancy. The enemy's greatest lie is that you can't do anything about it. At best anger is an alert system that something is wrong and needs resolution. At worst, anger will take over your life and pollute all that is beautiful. We have a choice; we can either hold on to offence or let it go. If you hold on, you may as well give the enemy the key to your life because he will use the offence as an access point to gain legal right to come into your house.

Secondly, offence can open you up to torment. Jesus gives us a little insight into this by using a parable in Matthew 18: 34-35. about how offence opens us up to torment. The parable is about a servant who wanted to receive forgiveness but was unwilling to give forgiveness. He wanted to be a recipient of grace but was unwilling to become a dispenser of grace. The Gospel writer records the consequences of his unwillingness to forgive .. *"And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."*

The torturers in this parable refer to the prison keeper, the jailer, the tormenter. Unforgiveness, resentment, unresolved anger will torment and torture you. Someone once said that being offended is like drinking poison hoping the other person dies. It never ceases to amaze me that so many people keep drinking the poison not realizing that the person to whom the anger is directed doesn't seem to suffer while all along we are the one suffering terrible torment. The only way to stop the torment is to forgive (stop drinking the poison).

Thirdly, offence can cause you to fall short of God's grace. The writer to the Hebrew Christians warns of the danger of offence. He implies that it has the possibility of becoming a root of bitterness and this bitterness can cause us to miss out on the grace of God. *"Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled"* Hebrews 12:14-15.

God's grace is about receiving forgiveness, mercy and pardon. However the root of bitterness comes from not forgiving and showing mercy to others. This then blocks God from showing you forgiveness and mercy. *"But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."* Matthew 6:15. *"And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."* Mark 11: 25 – 26. These scriptures ought to confront us with the danger of carrying offence. As I said before the enemy would love to deceive you into believing that by forgiving you are saying that the offence doesn't really matter, thereby minimising the gravity of the offence. Forgiveness says no matter how bad is the sin, I chose to forgive because that is what I would want God to do for me.

Once you do this, you will literally feel something leave you and God's grace come upon you. You are at the pinnacle of godlikeness when you are in the place of ministering forgiveness to someone who has deeply offended you. God loves showing grace to those who are willing to pass it on.

Fourthly, offence can cause you trouble and defilement. Hebrews 12:15 tells us to be careful because that root of bitterness can spring up and *"cause trouble, and by this many become defiled."*

We are warned that there is a connection between bitterness, resentment and offence with defilement. We were designed to function in love, grace, and kindness. If you begin functioning in offence, resentment and unforgiveness, it will cause trouble and defilement in our lives. I have seen families destroyed through the root of bitterness. Family feuds and divisions, spirits polluted, divorce and separation. Nations have gone to war over an individual leader's offence, thus bringing grief and pain to countless others. Joyce Meyer wrote a book and I love its title...*"Do yourself a Favour and Forgive!"* You become the greatest beneficiary when you forgive others.



Here are three thoughts that will help you to forgive:

Firstly, understand that forgiveness is not minimizing the offence. Forgiveness is letting go and releasing the offence. Secondly, connect your forgiveness of others to God's forgiveness of you. Begin to say this: "Help me Lord to forgive – just as You have forgiven me". "Help me to be like You God and forgive." Then, finally, move forgiveness from the Emotional Compartment of your heart to the Decision Compartment of your will. Quit saying I'll forgive when I feel right about it and begin saying I will forgive because it is the right thing to do. Too many people never get to forgive because they keep the offence in the Emotional Compartment. Move forgiveness to the Decision Compartment and make it happen. Here is a simple prayer that will get things moving.

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Prayer

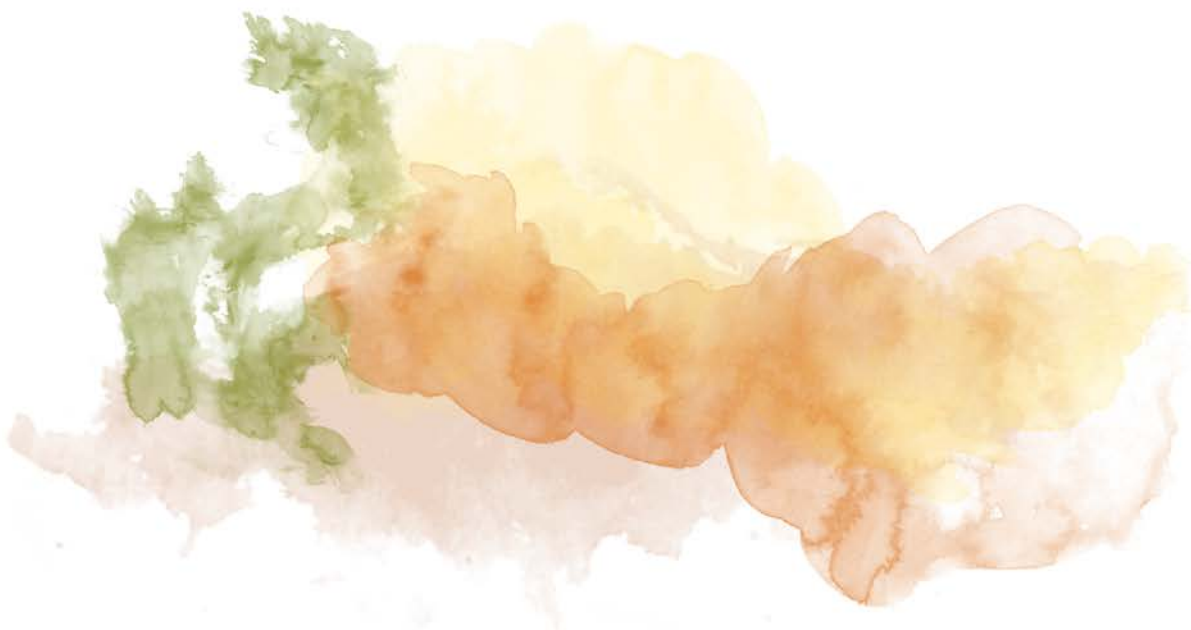
Father God, I confess I have been carrying offence. I have anger, unforgiveness and resentment towards

[say the name(s) of people you need to forgive]

Lord please forgive me for carrying the offence. I now forgive these people and shut the gate the enemy has opened to gain access into my life. I shut the gate in the Name of Jesus.

Amen

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Session 5

The Gateway of a Wounded Spirit (Part One)

A wounded spirit is an infection in our inner world that causes pain and suffering. Every time we get emotionally hurt, there is potential for our spirit to become wounded. In Proverbs 4:23, the Bible encourages us to: *"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."*

There are four key words in this verse: keep, heart, diligence, issues. *"Keep"* means to guard, to protect, to maintain and to be watchful. *"Heart"* refers to our inner world which includes our spirit, soul, emotions and thoughts. *"Diligence"* means to place a guard, a warden, a sentry, a watchman around the entrance to your inner world. *"Issues"* literally means the borders of your life and the size of your world. Another way of saying this verse is: "Be very careful what you allow into your inner world because the health of your inner world will determine the health of your outer world". There is a connection between what happens inside you and what happens around you. This verse warns us to never allow our spirit to become wounded because it impacts on so many other areas.

Two big things happen to us when our spirit gets wounded. Firstly we retreat and begin to build protective mechanisms to help us feel safe. Usually they look like thick walls that we build around ourselves which are designed to keep painful things out. However without realizing, these walls also keep a lot of good things out as well. After a while we find ourselves alone, isolated and distanced from deep, meaningful and loving relationships. The second thing that results from a wounded spirit is an infection in our inner world that makes us reactionary. All someone has to do is press a button that is connected to a painful past experience and the reaction is way above what would otherwise be normal. Again, this type of behaviour will eventually isolate us from many good things and make our world relatively small.

There are numerous ways someone gets a wounded spirit but let us look at some of the most common ways. By being aware, it also enables us to be watchful and protect our spirit from becoming wounded. I want to share with you 7 ways we can get a wounded spirit.

Firstly, we can get a wounded spirit by the **guilt** that comes from doing wrong. When we are tempted to disobey God and do wrong the Holy Spirit comes and convicts us, trying to stop us from messing up. If we ignore Him and continue regardless, there is a feeling of guilt that comes into our inner world. King David, after sinning with Uriah's wife Bathsheba and then scheming to have Uriah killed, felt the terrible consequences of guilt. He wrote about this turmoil in his inner world in Psalm 51.

*"Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to Your lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,
Blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.
For I acknowledge my transgressions,
And my sin is always before me.
Against You, You only, have I sinned,
And done this evil in Your sight—" Psalm 51: 1-4*

*"Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,
The God of my salvation,
And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness". Psalm 51: 14*

David gives us some more insight into his feeling of guilt in Psalm 38.

*"There is no soundness in my flesh
Because of Your anger,
Nor any health in my bones
Because of my sin.
For my iniquities have gone over my head;
Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.
My wounds are foul and festering
Because of my foolishness.*

*I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly;
I go mourning all the day long.
For my loins are full of inflammation,
And there is no soundness in my flesh.
I am feeble and severely broken;
I groan because of the turmoil of my heart." Psalm 38: 3-8:*

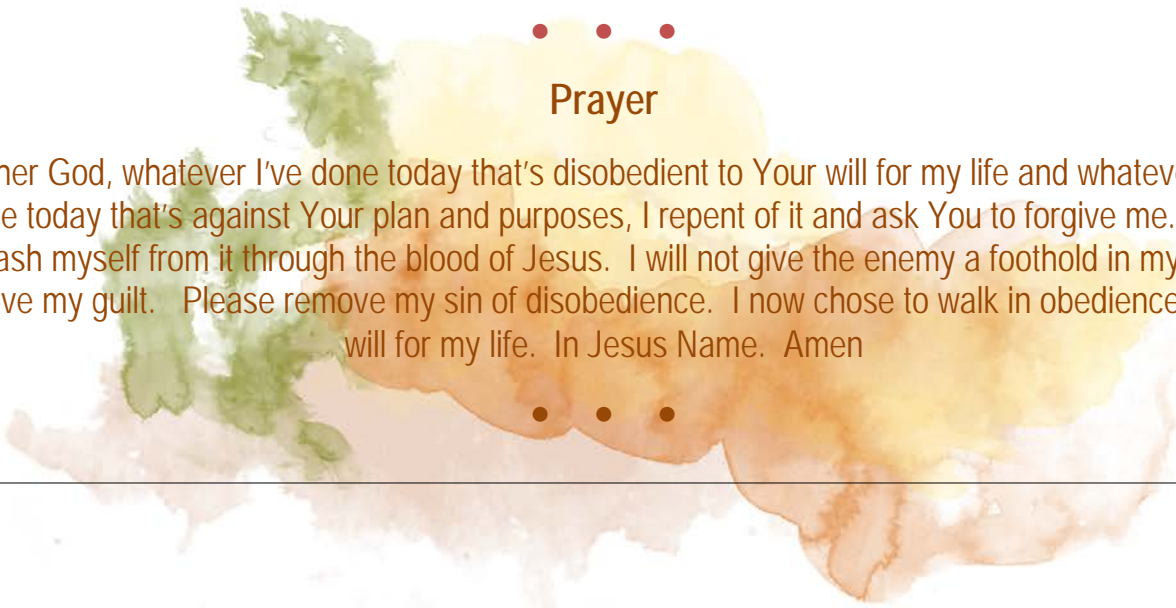
These verses reveal the varied manifestations of guilt both in spirit and in body. Repentance is God's answer to guilt, not blame shifting, rationalisation, or denial. Let me explain how these three wrong responses to guilt work.

Blame shifting is trying to remove our guilt by shifting the blame from self to elsewhere. Adam was the first to use this wrong response to guilt when he blamed Eve for his sin and then even blamed God for giving her to him. Eve then blames the serpent rather than accepting responsibility. Many politicians use blame shifting as a political ploy to take the heat off themselves and blame factors all over the globe for the problems they face. The problem with blame shifting is that it can never remove guilt because if you really believe that it's not your fault, there is nothing you can do to change the situation. As we have said previously, repentance is God's answer to removing guilt.

Rationalisation is trying to remove the guilt by creating an excuse and a reason for the behaviour thus minimising it as a sin. Many people use rationalisation to enter into sin in the first place. Examples of rationalisation are renaming lying by calling it a "white lie"; renaming stealing by calling it "borrowing"; renaming pornography by calling it "enjoying the human form"; renaming the death of civilians in war by calling it "collateral damage". As with blame shifting, rationalisation removes our individual responsibility to repent. Repentance is God's solution to removing guilt.

Denial is trying to remove the guilt by not accepting any fault or personal culpability: typically the response out of denial is "It wasn't my fault."

Guilt can be easily removed by humbly going to God, admitting culpability, asking forgiveness and deciding to follow Jesus in full obedience. Keep your heart soft before God. There is nothing that attracts the presence of God like humility.



Prayer

Father God, whatever I've done today that's disobedient to Your will for my life and whatever I've done today that's against Your plan and purposes, I repent of it and ask You to forgive me. I now wash myself from it through the blood of Jesus. I will not give the enemy a foothold in my life. Remove my guilt. Please remove my sin of disobedience. I now chose to walk in obedience to Your will for my life. In Jesus Name. Amen

Session 6

The Gateway of a Wounded Spirit (Part Two)

The second way we can get a wounded spirit is through **shame**. Shame is the feeling of unworthiness we get when guilt is unresolved in our inner world. As a pastor I don't know how many people have said to me after I invited them to come to church, "The day I walk into a church, the roof will cave in." This is nothing but a response to their feeling of shame and unworthiness in the presence of God.

Shame is the feeling of painful emotion you direct towards yourself over your own sin or the sins committed against you. Most sexual sins cause shame. There is a story in the Bible about a woman described as a sinner. Most Bible scholars over the centuries have speculated that her sin was most probably a sexual sin. The story is about her shame, her repentance, her deep need to be healed and the love that Jesus demonstrated when He accepted her, forgave her and sent her home healed. *"Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, 'This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.'"*

And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

So he said, "Teacher, say it."

"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"

Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more."

And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."

Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."" Luke 7: 36-50

The answer to all our shame is allowing Jesus to show us His love, acceptance and forgiveness. As has been said before, if we confess our sin, He will forgive us. Once He has forgiven us, we then need to forgive ourselves. Shame will immediately fall off when we allow God's forgiveness so deep inside us that we can forgive ourselves. Until this happens, shame has a tendency to linger.

Another way of getting a wounded spirit is through **sexual immorality**. The Bible is very clear that sex is pure within the confines of marriage between a husband and wife. Anything that is sexual and falls outside of these parameters is sexual immorality. The apostle Paul has a lot to say about sex. *"Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body."* I Corinthians 6:13b. *"Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!"* I Corinthians 6:15. *"Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body."* I Corinthians 6:18.

Sex was designed by God to join two spirits into one. The first mention of sex in the Bible is found in Genesis 2:24 where the word used is "joined". The literal interpretation is to cling, to cleave and to adhere together. In other words, sex was designed by God to act as a glue to join two people together and bind them into one. *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."* Genesis 2:24.

Sex outside of marriage will wound your spirit. Every time you attach and detach yourself from another person, you leave something behind. Something is emptied out of your soul and left behind. Very real attachments can be made and something of the other person can be transferred into your inner world. We call this attachment a "Soul Tie". I have witnessed people in abusive relationships who cannot leave, even though it is illogical for them to stay with their abuser because of the strength of the soul tie.

As human beings created by God we cannot go from one sexual relationship to another without wounding our spirit. Healing, again as with guilt and shame comes through humility, repentance and a decision to walk in obedience to God. One must also be aware of the powerful magnetic pull sexual sin has over our lives. Accountability to a godly mentor is very important in helping us to stay pure in this area.

A fourth way of getting a wounded spirit is through **rejection**. Rejection occurs when a significant person rejects you by either not being there when you need them or actually walking out of your life and abandoning you or by speaking negative hurtful words into your life.

Many people are wounded this way by absent fathers or mothers who didn't provide the words of affection and acceptance that every child needs in their developmental years. Others were exposed to an abusive environment rather than a caring and nurturing one. There are a multitude of examples where rejection can occur.

To receive healing in this area, we need to get a revelation that we have a heavenly Father who promised never to leave us nor forsake us. Hebrews 13:5. He purposed for us to be born. We are not a mistake but a divine choice. We can either focus on the rejection that comes from certain individuals or focus on the acceptance that comes from the creator of the universe. The direction on which we choose to focus can either keep us holding onto our wounded spirit or cause us to receive healing and do life with a sweet spirit.

We have heard it said many times that: "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me." This is not true. Words have power to create life or death. *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue."* Proverbs 18:21.

Bullies, abusers, manipulators use negative words to wound. If you are a significant person in someone's life, your words are very powerful. Be careful about your words because a word can remain in someone's spirit for decades.

Peter J. Daniels, a very successful Australian businessman and multi-millionaire tells the story of how his school teacher told him in grade 4 that he would never amount to anything. Decades later he wrote a book entitled: "Miss Phillips, you were wrong!" The book was written to help people overcome the power of negative words spoken over their lives. Psychologists have said that for every negative word said to us, we need 10 positive words to counteract the power of that one negative word.

Again, we can't stop people saying negative things to us but we can choose whether we allow those negative words to enter and remain in our inner world. Do a spring clean and get every negative word out of your spirit. Place a filter over your mind that will keep the bad words out and only allow good words in. Then begin reading your Bible and discover everything positive God has to say about you. A great place to start is the book of Ephesians.

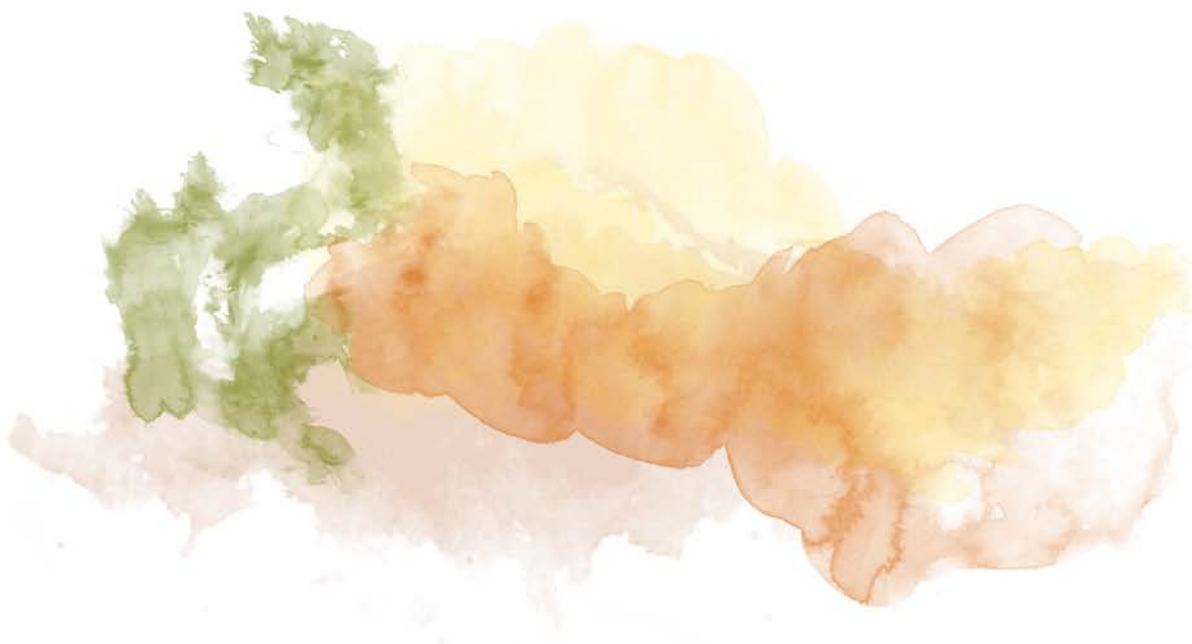
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Prayer

Father God, please help me today to reject every negative word ever spoken over my life. You loved me before the worlds were created. I was born on purpose and with purpose. You have designed me to be Your child and to live with You forever. Today I chose to believe what God's Word says about me and reject every other contradiction. I shut the gate to every negative word in Jesus Name.

Amen

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Session 7

The Gateway of a Wounded Spirit (Part Three)

A fifth way we can get a wounded spirit is from **shattered dreams**. There is nothing that has the potential to create sorrow of heart like a shattered dream. Proverbs 15:13 tells us that: *"A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken."*

Dreams are the things that give us vision, create excitement and motivate us to move forward. However when a dream is shattered, it has the potential to do exactly the opposite. It can leave us visionless, directionless, depressed, demotivated and often it can stop us dead in our tracks. At this point we need to distinguish between a wounded spirit and normal human response to a loss which we call grief. Grief is a very human part of our emotions that is trying to come to grips with a loss and work out how to move forward into the new environment. Grief can look like a wounded spirit from a distance and there is no doubt that grief can develop into a wounded spirit if it becomes toxic. The best way to describe a person in grief is someone who is sad over the loss of something or someone they loved. Before the loss, they lived in a world they defined as normal. After the loss, they are on a journey trying to discover what the new normal looks like. This journey is different for every individual but the end result is the same. We discover how to do life in the new environment.

The most common negative reaction to a shattered dream that will damage your spirit is to make a reactionary inner vow. I have heard people say, "I will never go into business again." "I will never trust anyone again." "I will never get close to anyone again." These inner vows can control you negatively for the rest of your life if you don't renounce then break their negative hold over your life.

A healthy soul is able to make decisions based on the information at hand not through the control of the hurts of your past.

Violation is the sixth way people can get a wounded spirit. A violation occurs when your boundaries are pushed way beyond what is acceptable. We all have an understanding of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour towards us. Unacceptable behaviour creates a feeling of violation. That feeling of violation has the potential to wound our spirit.

Examples of violation are rape, robbery, abuse, physical violence, emotional manipulation and a host of other scenarios that have pushed our boundaries into extreme zones. People who are violated have a good excuse and reason to develop a wounded spirit. However the wounded spirit adds to the violation and creates a horrific downward spiral for the individual.

One of the saddest stories of violation in the Bible is the story of Absalom's sister Tamar who was violated by her half-brother Amnon. This story is found in 2 Samuel 13. The bible tells us that Amnon forces Tamar to have sex with him, then rejects her and doesn't want to have anything to do with her anymore. His lust, once gratified, turns into exceeding hatred towards her. The Bible tells us that she ran to Absalom's house for shelter and there she "remained desolate in her brother's Absalom's house." 2 Samuel 13:20. That word desolate literally means to live in a state of numbness, to be stupefied and waste away. What a sad end to a life with so much promise.

Again we need to understand that sometimes we cannot stop the violation but can stop the violation from continuing in our spirit for a long time after the event. We need to deal with violation the same way we deal with offence. Let it go because by hanging on it will continue to destroy you.

The seventh way we can get a wounded spirit is through **disappointment**. It is impossible to go through life without getting disappointed. Disappointment comes when we have an unmet expectation. Wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone always kept their promises, always did what they said they would do, always responded to us in a caring and thoughtful manner? Reality check: not in this world. Consequently we need to resolve how we respond to life when disappointments come and come they will.

We need to determine that we are going to live life unoffendable. People will offend us but we make the choice whether we become offended. People say one thing one day and another thing another day. Some people are reliable, others are unreliable. It's very rare to find someone who is always loyal and always reliable.

You can make some of the people happy sometimes but you can't make everyone happy always. You can only do your best and your best will not always be good enough for everyone. So that is life. Some people disappoint us and sometimes we disappoint people.

Once disappointment becomes discouragement, it then has the potential to wound our spirit because discouragement is only one step away from despondency and despondency is only one step away from giving up. One of the greatest spiritual ministries is that of encouragement. We all need to be encouraged out of our disappointments. The Bible is full of encouraging scriptures. God is the God of all encouragement. To be an encourager is to be very godlike.

Session 8

The Gateway of a Wounded Spirit (Part Four)

I have discovered that one of the enemy's biggest footholds in the lives of people is through a wounded spirit. We need to guard against this by doing the following two things: Get healed from your wounded spirit and learn what you need to do to avoid getting a wounded spirit.

There are some important things we need to do to get healed from a wounded Spirit. Firstly, repent and ask God to help us get the poison of hurt, bitterness or resentment out. Once the poison is out, then get Jesus back into the centre of your life. He replaces the wound in your spirit with His love, peace, joy, grace and forgiveness. We then must consciously receive His love and healing in our spirit by becoming immersed in God's love and acceptance. The Bible encourages us with this promise: *"He heals the broken-hearted And binds up their wounds."* Psalm 147:3. I have found that this is most effective when prayed through with a spiritual mentor.

Now let me share with you how to avoid getting a wounded spirit? Firstly determine to live an unoffendable life. Put a guard around your spirit and don't let offence inside. *"Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil."* Ephesians 4:26-27.

Secondly, learn the four R's of a sweet spirit

- Renew your mind constantly.
"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Romans 12:1-2.
- Review your thoughts regularly.
"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ," 2 Corinthians 10: 3-5.

Place a filter on your mind that asks:

- "Will this thought help me or hurt me?"
- "Will this thought help my spirit become sweet or sour?"
- Resist the devil persistently
"Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." James 4:7.
- Rest in God continually.
Sweet spirited people have learnt to live in a God zone not a stress zone.
"... casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7

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Prayer

Father God, please help today to renew my mind so that it is in line with Your Word. Help me place a filter over my mind that rejects the negative and only allows the positive to enter. Please heal my spirit so that I may be spiritually healthy and fulfil Your purpose for my life. I ask this in Jesus Name.

Amen

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Session 9

The Gateway of the Occult (Part One)

Exposure to the occult is widespread across the world. 80% of the world's population are Animists, people who believe in the spirit world (Kevin Hovey: Missions Major Alphacrucis College). Even in the west there is a huge interest in spiritual things. Unfortunately a lot of the interest isn't directed to the pure things of God, it is directed to the mysticism of occultic practices.

The word Occult comes from a Latin word Occultus which refers to something hidden from the natural realm, something beyond the realm of natural knowledge or understanding. It pertains to magic, astrology or any system claiming the use of supernatural power or agencies.

We live in two worlds: the natural world and the spiritual world. The spiritual world also has two worlds: that which pertains to the Kingdom of God and that which pertains to the kingdom of darkness. Anything that has a supernatural element that does not emanate from the Holy Spirit needs to be seen as suspicious and probably emanating from the kingdom of darkness.

The Bible has quite a bit to say about involvement in the Occult and commands us not to have anything to do with darkness. *"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?"* 2 Corinthians 6:14.

The Bible also makes it very clear that we should not have anything to do with sorcery. Sorcery is any involvement in the casting of spells, incantations, tapping into a spiritual force that wants to control the world around you. The Bible tells us that sorcery is one of the works of the flesh that we are to avoid. *"idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."* Galatians 5:20-21.

The Bible gives us an illustration of two sorcerers who were rebuked for their involvement in this occultic practise. (1) Simon the Sorcerer from Samaria (Acts 8:9-24) and (2) Elymas the Sorcerer from Cyprus (Acts 13: 6-10).

The Bible tells us not to have anything to do with divination. Divination includes fortune telling, trying to predict the future, trying to predict the location of water and such like. We have an illustration of a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and was set free in Philippi, Greece. (Acts 16:16-19). The Bible tells us that this ability was given to her by a demonic spirit and when the spirit was cast out, she became normal once more. The lesson is clear; these things are demonically inspired and bring about bondage not freedom. The Occult is a snare from the enemy to trap God's people. This is why the Bible is so adamant about staying away from the occult? It belongs to the dark side. It's a trap. The purpose is always, to control you and to create fear in you.

Some other area of occultic involvement that the Bible forbids is clearly outlined in the book of Deuteronomy.

"When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you." Deuteronomy 18:9-14

The context of the above scripture has to do with the Children of Israel starting with a clean slate, God didn't want them to be lead astray as were the Canaanites. The reason the Canaanites lost the land was their involvement in practices that were ungodly. They were involved with human sacrifice, witchcraft, magic, spiritism and other practices that came from the dark side. Let us now look at how these practices still exist in our world today. Some are the same and some have received new names and new presentations.

The 21st Century version of **human sacrifice**, as far as I am concerned, is abortion. This is a very controversial subject and to avoid controversy, it would be easier to not discuss it. But we need to talk about it. We need to see abortion from a Biblical world view and not just a humanistic world view. I know that many would want me to leave this subject alone but I feel compelled to discuss it.

In Australia it is legal to abort a baby up to 20 weeks from conception. At 6 weeks, when the mother first begins to realize she is pregnant, there already is a heartbeat. By 20 weeks all the features of a child are present. There are babies born at 21 weeks who have survived. At 24 weeks the chances of survival increases dramatically. The question we need to ask is: "Who decides that at 20 weeks we can abort because it really isn't a baby but at 21 weeks we cannot because now it is a baby?"

The right for someone to make a personal choice should never override the right of someone else to experience life, especially the right of someone as vulnerable as a baby in a mother's womb. Abortion is made easier by renaming unborn babies and calling them a foetus or anything else other than an unborn child. Abortion is made easier when the mother is not given the option of seeing an ultra sound of the unborn child.

According to the World Health Organisation 40 to 50 million abortions are performed per year. How many of these babies are aborted only because someone said, "If it's inconvenient you have a right to abort."

For those who have been involved in abortion, I want to show compassion, love and acceptance. I want to communicate that there is forgiveness available through Jesus Christ. He paid the penalty for all sins including the sin of abortion. If you have been caught up in the deception of this evil spirit then ask God to forgive you for believing the deception and ask Him to forgive you for allowing the abortion to take place. I would also encourage you to see a pastor or a Christian counsellor to walk you through the healing process that is necessary because of the deep emotions involved once this truth becomes a revelation. This is such a big thing that I don't want to gloss over it with just a few paragraphs. Let me encourage you once more to please talk with someone that can walk you through the healing process.

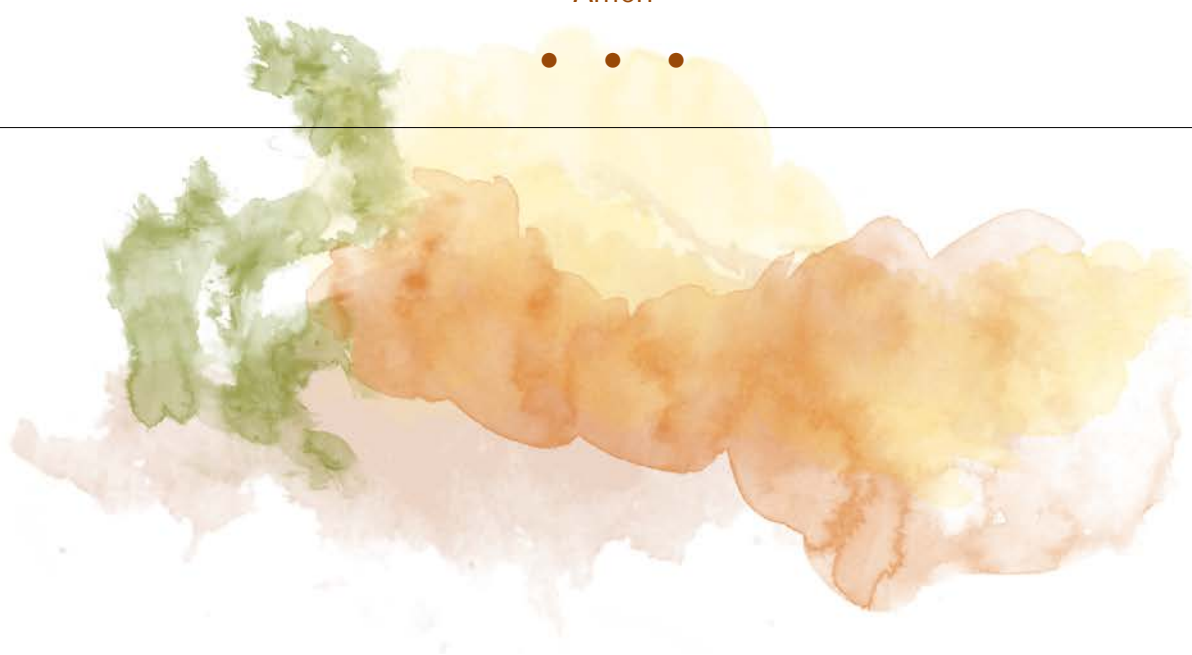
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Prayer

Father God, please forgive me for any involvement I have had with behaviour You forbid. I renounce my involvement in all areas of occultic practices. I ask You to forgive me in Jesus Name.

Amen

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Session 10

The Gateway of the Occult (Part Two)

The next area that God forbids is **Witchcraft**. The central idea behind witchcraft is to connect into a power outside of yourself to gain a higher level of control over your world. Some of the things involved in witchcraft are the casting of spells, incantations, using the inner force, meditation and mantras. This power is of course supernatural and comes from a spirit. It is opening the door to the enemy. Why would you want to connect into any other power other than the highest power, the power of Almighty God who created the Heavens and the Earth?

This is the enemy's deception causing people to believe they can become powerful by being able to control things. What they don't realize is that they are falling into the snare of the enemy where he gains the control and power over the individual.

Once again the good news is that God's power is greater than the power of witchcraft. However the individual involved must renounce the enemy and submit to the Lordship of Christ asking His forgiveness and deliverance from all the power of the enemy.

Another area of occultic involvement that God forbids is what the Bible calls **soothsaying**. Soothsaying is anything that connects into the spirit world, outside of the power of the Holy Spirit, to interpret the future or present events. This can involve but is not limited to: palm reading, reading of tea leaves, tarot cards, consulting psychics, crystal balls, astrology, and horoscope. Once again what the individual doesn't realize is that these things are a snare of the enemy that he uses to gain control over your life. For many the thought of knowing the future is extremely tempting. Have nothing to do with the domain of darkness or the works of Satan.

The other area of occultic involvement forbidden in the Bible is spiritism. A **spiritist** is a medium, one who calls up the dead. A notorious spiritist in the Bible was the Medium of Endor whom King Saul consulted and was duly punished because of it. (1 Samuel 28:7).

Some of the practices that can be defined as spiritism involve séances, Ouija boards, spirit guides, astro-travel. Basically anything that connects with the spirit realm that is not connected to the Holy Spirit.

To gain victory and deliverance over the occult and the power of the enemy, every Christian needs to know these following three truths. Firstly, every Christian needs to know that Jesus is the all-powerful One. Jesus is more powerful than the enemy. Jesus broke Satan's power over our lives. *"Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you."* Luke 10:19. Christ's victory over the enemy is our victory over him *"Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."* Romans 8:37.

Secondly, every Christian needs to know that light is more powerful than darkness. We are children of light and we belong to the Kingdom of His divine light. 1 Thessalonians 5:5 *"You are all sons of light and sons of the day."* Don't be afraid of the darkness. The smallest candle can dispel the most oppressive darkness. Darkness cannot dispel light. Walk in His light and you will walk victorious.

Thirdly, every Christian needs to know the power of renunciation. This is a simple prayer that breaks the enemy's claims over your life. Just as a prayer of invitation opens you up to spiritual powers, a prayer of renunciation closes the doors to spiritual powers you don't want in your life.

When we get saved, we confess Jesus Christ as our Lord through our words. We are inviting Jesus to come into our lives. Renunciation is doing the opposite. By renouncing, we expel whatever is in our lives that we no longer want there.

The apostle Paul tells us 2 Corinthians 4:2 about the importance of renouncing the hidden things that bring shame to the Christian. The apostle James encourages us to resist the devil and he will flee from us. (4:7). Renunciation basically says to the enemy that you do not want anything to do with him or his kingdom of darkness. The following prayer of renunciation will break any stronghold in your life by the power of Jesus Christ.



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Prayer of Renunciation

Father God, please forgive me for any involvement in behaviour that you forbid. I renounce my involvement in all areas connected to occultic practices.

I ask You to forgive me and break the enemy's hold over my life. I ask that the blood of Jesus cleanse me from all sin and set me free from past sins.

I now close the gate to the enemy in Jesus name.

Amen

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Session 11

The Gateway of Idolatry (Part One)

When we think of idolatry in the 21st Century, we often think of pagan people prostrated before some statue or deity. However God's definition of idolatry is much broader. The simple definition of idolatry is: placing your primary affection on anything other than God, creator of heaven and earth. God needs to be the focus of your primary affection and devotion and anything or anyone that removes God from your primary affection has become an idol.

When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, the first three had a focus on our primary affection and devotion being directed towards God. These Commandments explain God's desire that we have no gods other than Him, that we not make any carved image to worship and that we not take the Name of the Lord God in vain.

"You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain." Exodus 20:3 – 7

Jesus repeats the importance of placing God first in the New Testament. Mark 12:30 - *"And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength".*

**THE ENEMY WILL DO EVERYTHING WITHIN HIS POWER TO REMOVE GOD FROM HIS
RIGHTFUL POSITION.**

Let us focus on a few 21st Century idols of the modern world.

The first one I want to deal with is the Idol of Materialism. One of the biggest idols most people have to battle is the idol of materialism. Jesus tells us that:

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." Matthew 6:24.

Mammon is the name given to the god of things, wealth, money and greed. Even Jesus did battle with this spirit in the wilderness when the enemy was tempting Him. *"Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.'"* Matthew: 4:8-9. Jesus overcame the temptation paving the way for us to also overcome this temptation.

One of the big issues we all need to wrestle with is: who comes first, God or mammon? To clarify where we stand on this issue, ask yourself these questions. Am I too busy to pray? Am I too busy to worship? Am I too busy to dedicate to God the first part of the week? Am I so caught up with making a living that I don't have time to live for the maker? Our real answer is not what we would like to be but how we actually prioritise our time for that which we really love. At the end of the day we all know what we really love by looking at what gets the bulk of our time and attention.

Let me share with you some pointers that will help you break the stronghold of materialism. Firstly, understand that God is committed to providing the "things" for you on the condition that you keep the "things" out of your heart. *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* Matthew 6:33. When I was in Bible College, a long time ago, I learnt that if you keep money out your heart, God will keep it in your pocket.

Secondly, realize that the love of money is destructive. A passion for money wants to possess your soul. It is a spirit that is connected to worldliness and all kinds of evil. Paul writes to his son in the faith Timothy and warns him about this. *"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."* 1 Timothy 6:10.

Let's be clear, money is amoral. It is neither morally good nor evil. It is neither money nor things that are the issue. It's the love of things and the love of money that is the issue. In actual fact, God wants to bless us with things if we place Him first and walk humbly before God. *"No good things will He withhold from those who walk uprightly"*. Psalm 84:11.

Another important point I want to bring to your attention is that God has nothing against people of wealth. Many of the great characters of the Bible were people of immense wealth. Abraham was wealthy, David and Solomon were wealthy. Even Joseph and Mary whom we consider to be quite poor were people of considerable wealth when we remember that they were given a king's ransom at Jesus' birth from the wise men of the East. Materialism isn't about how much money you have, but who's got your heart.

Here is an interesting statistic that puts it all into perspective. According to research from the World Bank, 80% of the world lives on less than \$10 a day. What that means is that if you make more than \$10 a day you are in the top 20% of the world's wealthiest people.

I have learnt that one of the best ways to break the stronghold of this spirit is to be generous. When Paul was writing to Timothy about this issue he encourages people of wealth to be generous with their wealth. *"Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,"* 1 Timothy: 6:18.

Some questions every Christian needs to ask: Do I want to rule over money or have it rule over me? Do I want to be in command of money or have it command me? Do I want God to trust me with money or have Him withhold money from me because He can't trust me with it? The point is that the way we deal with money can either be a blessing or a curse. Make sure you are blessed with money and not cursed with it. Don't make it your idol.

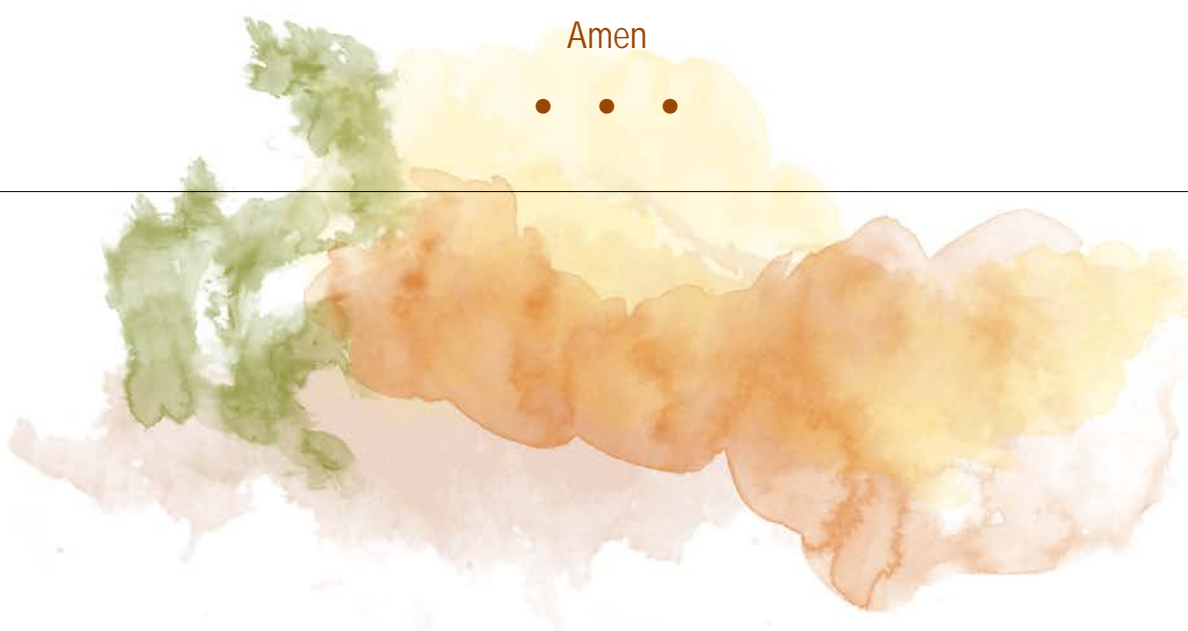
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Prayer

Father God, please help me to seek first Your Kingdom and not the things of this world. I want to place You first in my life and have no other god but You. This is my prayer in Jesus Name.

Amen

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Session 12

The Gateway of Idolatry (Part Two)

The other big idol that many people face in the 21st century is the Idol of Pornography. Pornography is an addictive behaviour which breaks at least 6 of the 10 commandments because pornography involves idolatry (which is the first three), adultery (the seventh), stealing (the eighth) and coveting (the tenth). Idolatry involves the worship of an image. Isn't that the essence of pornography? The desire to be in the presence of an image that captures your passion.

Adultery, as Jesus defined it in Matthew 5:28, is the desire to have sexual interaction with someone or something who is not your spouse. (Fornication is the same sin for singles). It is impossible to view pornography without igniting the fires of lust. The images are designed to do just that.

The definition of stealing is to take something that doesn't belong to you. Every time we view a pornographic image, we are stealing someone's dignity. What's tragic is that the people involved in the pornographic industry are broken people themselves and viewing only adds to their torment because it keeps them in the industry.

Coveting desires something that does not belong to us. The images that we see are again designed to ignite the fires of desire with a person other than your spouse. These fires ought only be lit in the confines of a marriage towards your own spouse.

Idolatry breaks the first three commandments. Lust breaks commandment 7, stealing breaks commandment 8 and coveting breaks commandment 10. Pornography is not just a harmless habit. It separates people from intimacy with God and keeps them worshipping at the altar of lust.

Much of the idolatry mentioned in the Bible also involved the practice of immorality and involvement in fertility cults which revolved around sexual immorality.

"Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play" (commit acts of sexual immorality). Exodus 32:6

"Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel." Numbers 25:1 – 3

"Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so." Judges 2:17

One of the common practices of the time was not only visiting the temples to venerate idols but also to copulate with a temple prostitute. This combined idolatry with sexual immorality. Paul had to address this with the Christians at Corinth who had been culturally accustomed to this type of behaviour. *"Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!"* 1 Corinthians 6:15.

God also warns His people about this in the Old Testament. *"There shall be no ritual harlot of the daughters of Israel, or a perverted one of the sons of Israel."* Deuteronomy 23:17.

The prophet Amos also addresses this. *"A man and his father go in to the same girl, To defile My holy name. They lie down by every altar on clothes taken in pledge, And drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god."* Amos 2:7-8.

Pornography is the 21st century version of a new type of idolatry that combines sexual immorality and an image. It is addictive, immoral, captivating and gives the enemy a huge foothold in the believer's life.

We need to close the gate to pornography in our lives by getting a revelation of its destructive power. To break this stronghold, we need to do the following. Repent and become accountable to a course of action to break the addictive behaviour in your life. Become accountable to a godly person who will pray for you and ask you the hard questions. Can I encourage you to see a pastor or a leader and make yourself accountable today? Don't let this behaviour continue in your life. Don't keep it hidden. Expose it to God's light and get the victory over it thereby shutting the gate to the enemy's power in your life.

The next point we need to look at is how to determine if something else has become an idol in our lives. This can be discovered by asking these five questions.

1. What do I find myself thinking about? Your mind will always be attracted to your affections. You will always think about what you love. If you find yourself thinking more about something else and thinking less about God, then that something has the potential of becoming an idol.

2. What do I find myself talking about? Where does my conversation end up going? You will always talk about what you love the most. If God never comes up in your conversation but something else always keeps coming up, then that something else has the potential of becoming an idol.
3. What do I spend a lot of time doing? You will always find time for what you love the most. If you are finding less time for God, then you will be finding more time for something else. What you make time for becomes a love in your life. Do you love something else more than God?
4. What do I spend my energy hoping for? Your hope is the picture you paint for your life. Your hope is always what you see as the ideal scenario for your life. You will give your life to your true hope. The vision you paint for your life is a reflection of your inner desires and aspiration. Is God at the centre of these aspirations or is there something else that takes centre stage?
5. Is there something on the throne of your life other than God? Whatever you spend more time thinking about, talking about, pursuing or hoping for other than God, has the potential of becoming an idol that needs your immediate attention. Even legitimate things like spouse, children, work, house, business, etc. can easily overtake God and remove Him from being our number one passion thus becoming an idol in our lives.

Can I encourage you to always place God first in your life? If He is given rightful place, His blessing will more than compensate for what you may feel you have missed. You cannot lose by placing God first.



Prayer

Father God, please help me to seek first Your Kingdom and not the things of this world. I want to place You first in my life and have no other god but You. This is my prayer in Jesus Name.

Amen



Session 13

The Gateway of Generational Patterns

Another gate where the enemy camps and seeks to gain entry into our lives is through Generational Patterns. A generational pattern is a pattern of behaviour that is easy for us to emulate because we have seen it modelled. Just as the children of the godly have a head start in life because of a generational blessing, the children of the ungodly have to break ungodly patterns and behaviours that exist in the family line. How many times have we heard, "He's a hot blooded Italian", or "He's a prim and proper Englishmen," or "He's an emotional Latino." We need to understand that Generational Patterns can and are passed down from generation to generation. In all of us there is a propensity to certain behaviours that are in our generational blood line. Some of these more negative behaviours include but are not limited to: Alcoholism, Lying, Laziness, Sexual Immorality, Poverty, Negative Speech, Gambling, Immorality, Racism, Stubbornness, Violence and Rage. If you exhibit any of these characteristics and find yourself doing them almost subconsciously, then we may have to deal with a generational pattern.

What the Bible says about Generational Patterns.

The Bible alludes to generational patterns in the book of Acts when Stephen was addressing the Scribes and Pharisees, He confronts them with these words: *"You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you."* Acts 7:51.

We cannot deny that there is an influence that is passed to us from our fathers. The Bible tells us that something is passed onto the children from the previous generations. If you are constantly hearing from people around you, "You are just like your father" or "You are just like your mother" and it's not said as a compliment, then this is a clear message that you are exhibiting a negative generational pattern.

The second thing I want to point out is that this is about a generational pattern and the sin is committed when we submit to the sin pattern. God holds the sinner accountable for their own sins and not their children. The person who sins is guilty for their sins. God will not punish children for the sins of their fathers. The Bible is clear about this.

"The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself." Ezekiel 18: 20.

Let me tell you how generational patterns Work. If you do nothing, you will easily flow into the pattern that is set for you. We all flow easily into our pre-programmed natural pre-dispositions. This is especially strong because of our sin nature. The enemy camps at the gate looking for the easiest ways to break in. Generational sin patterns are easy to fall into because they are pre-programmed in our spiritual DNA. It's like a magnetic pull, if you do nothing, you get drawn to it.

Now let me tell you how to break a generational pattern. The first thing you need to do is to identify your family weakness. Just look into your family line and look for a pattern that is repeated over and over again by your previous generations. The next thing you need to do after you have identified this pattern is to repent of it and renounce it. Once you have done this, then build a fence around this generational weakness by becoming open and accountable to a godly mentor. You must realize that this is a weakness and every weakness needs extra protection and accountability. Then lastly, make intentional changes to do the opposite to the Generational Pattern. If the generational pattern is lying, then become focused on always telling the truth. No exaggerations, no white lies, only the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. If it's poverty, then become generous. If it's immorality then commit yourself to total purity. If it's negative speech, then guard every word that comes out of your mouth so that your speech is always positive.

Once you have broken the hold of a negative generational pattern, then you are responsible to establish a new and positive Generational Blessing. You will become the founder of a blessed generation. Paul gives an illustration of someone like this. It was Timothy's grandmother Lois. She passed on the generational blessing to her daughter Eunice who passed it on to her son Timothy. *"when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also."* 2 Timothy 1:5.

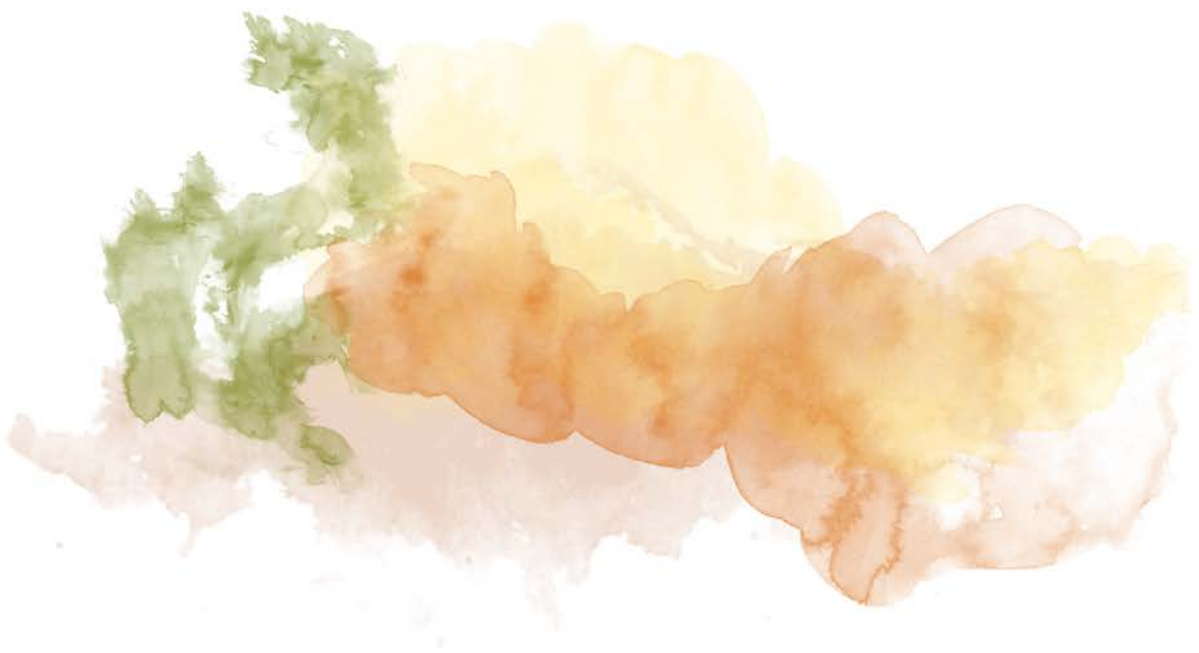
Timothy was blessed because of the positive influence that flowed down from his grandmother. Determine to establish a positive Generational Legacy. Keep the enemy out of your home. Submit to the Holy Spirit. Live life intentionally focussed on your God goals. Live life with the idea that how you behave will be passed on to your children. Live the way you want them to live.



Prayer

Father God, please help me to break every generational pattern in my life. I want to be the promoter of generational blessings. I ask the Holy Spirit to help me live a life that brings honour to God. Help me to live a life others want to model because it is a God focussed life. I ask this in Jesus Name.

Amen



Session 14

The Gateway of the Flesh

The seventh gate where the enemy camps and looks to gain access into our lives is through the flesh. The flesh is a Bible term that refers to our pre conversion nature. The Bible calls it the old nature. The Bible gives other names to this nature. It calls it "The Old Man", "The Carnal Nature", "This Body of Death", "To be Carnally Minded". All of these names refer to the nature that controlled us and caused us to break God's laws before we were saved. After conversion the flesh was crucified and buried with Christ. The enemy wants to tempt us to live life as we used to live it, as carnal Christians operating in the old nature rather than living in our new spiritual nature.

Consequently, there are two natures that seek to control our lives. One is the old ungodly nature and the other is the new Holy Spirit lead nature. This is what Paul says about these two natures when writing to the church in Galatia. *"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law."* Galatians 5:16-18

Paul continues and tells the church what being controlled by our old base desires looks like in the real world. *"Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."* Galatians 5:19-21

Christians that don't pray, don't have a devotional life, don't worship, don't have fellowship with other Christians and don't feed their spirit, have real difficulty in overcoming that old nature. Paul then explains that a daily communion with the Holy Spirit will enable us to break free from the old nature. He goes on and describes what being controlled by the Holy Spirit and living in the new nature looks like. *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law."* Galatians: 5: 22-23

The enemy camps at the gate enticing us to give in to our carnal nature. The more we walk in the spirit, the less we hear that enticing voice that invites us to go back. The less we walk in the spirit the more enticing that voice becomes.

The Carnal Christian.

When writing to the church in Corinth, Paul explains that living in the flesh is to live as a Carnal Christian. *"And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ."* 1 Corinthians 3:1. He was rebuking them for living the base life and not rising up to the spirit lead life. *"for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?"* 1 Corinthians 3:3. Paul wanted them to move to higher truths not just the elementary ones but they weren't able to handle it. All they wanted was the easy stuff, the milk as Paul puts it. (1 Corinthians 3:2)

The enemy wants to resurrect the carnal nature within us and prevent us from walking in the spirit. If we live life according to the base desires of the flesh, we will miss out on the full plan of God for our lives.

Let me share with you how to overcome the flesh and live the overcoming victorious Christian Life.

1. Walk in the Spirit -

"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Galatians 5:16.

The apostle Paul emphatically declares that if you walk in the spirit, the flesh will not control you. Paul encourages us to be in communion and connection with the Holy Spirit. Begin to communicate with Him. Get into the practice of saying, "Good Morning Holy Spirit", when you wake up in the morning. Ask Him questions. Ask His advice when making decisions. Become Holy Spirit aware.

2. Die Daily -

"I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." 1 Corinthians 15:31.

Paul tells us his secret to living victoriously is found not just in walking with the Holy Spirit but also dying daily to his old nature. Paul tells us to reckon, consider the old nature dead and crucified with Christ. *"Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts."* Romans 6: 11-12. He encourages us to make daily decisions that will not allow sin to control us. The opposite needs to happen. We need to control the sin nature and get dominion over it.

3. Put on the new man.

"and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness." Ephesians 4:24.

The apostle gives us the third secret to living in victory by consciously putting on the new nature. Become aware that the life we live is connected to the choices we make. There is no better choice for the Christian than putting your new nature on. When you get dressed in the morning make sure you are also dressed with your new nature. Don't leave home without having put it on.

4. Renew the mind

"that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind," Ephesians 4:22-23.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." Romans 12:1.

The apostle Paul then encourages us to get our thinking in line with the Word of God. You cannot live in victory if your thinking has not been renewed. Your thinking must align itself with what God says about you and the world you live in. Our thinking determines what choices we make, how we respond to life, the answers we give the questions that life throws at us. Everything we do is controlled by our thinking. Is our thinking a renewed Biblical thinking or is it still dominated by worldly indoctrination? It is impossible to get a renewed mind unless you are filled it with God's Word and Biblical principles. Because we are constantly bombarded with ungodly mindsets, we need to be daily exposed to God's Word. If we don't do this we will revert back to ungodly thinking. A renewed mindset is one of the greatest weapons we have against the world, the flesh and the devil.

5. Discipline the body

"But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." 1 Corinthians 9:27.

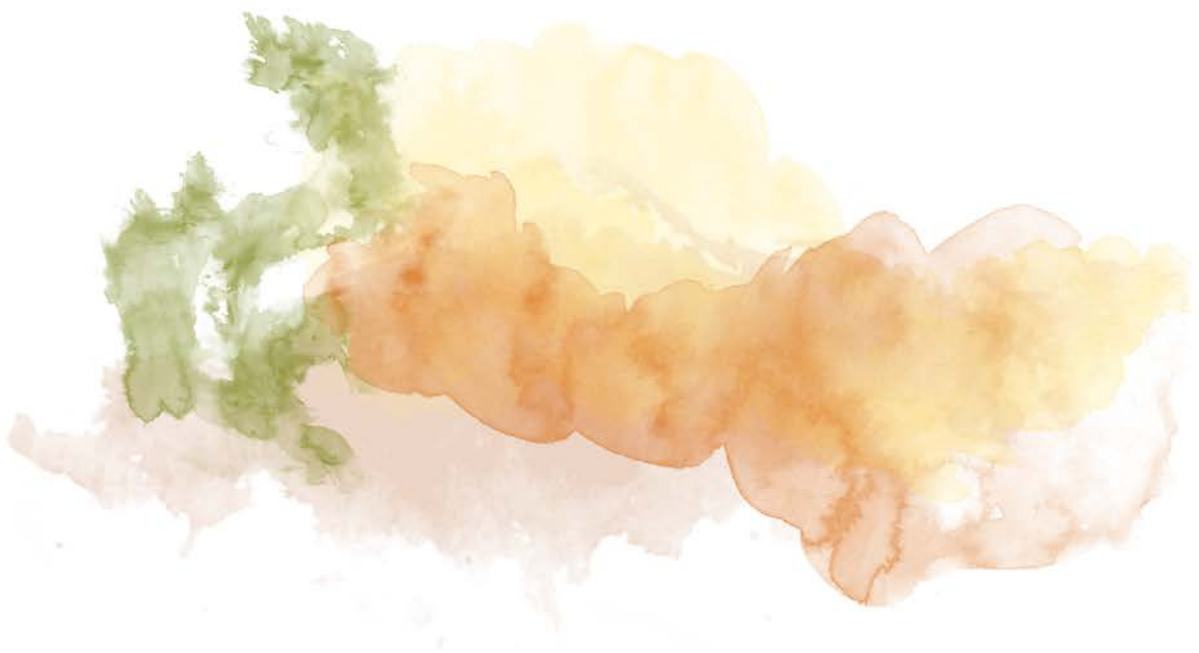
Finally the apostle Paul tells us that in order to stay victorious we have to stay disciplined. This teaching we have received is not something you hear and then place on a shelf. It requires disciplined appropriation day in and day out. Every day we need to discipline ourselves to walk with the Holy Spirit, to die to the old sin nature, to put on the new nature and to renew our minds. This discipline ought to become so automatic that it becomes 'What we do'. It is only then that you have disciplined yourself and your prize is living a victorious, healthy Christian life for the glory of God.



Prayer

Father God, please help me to walk in the fellowship with Your Holy Spirit. Please help me to die daily to my old sinful nature. Help me Lord to clothe myself daily with my new godly nature and help me to have a mind that has been renewed by God's Word. I ask this in Jesus Name.

Amen



Session 15

Summary

1. The Christian journey doesn't finish at salvation. At salvation it takes on a new dimension.
2. The goal: That we might become a disciple of Christ so that we might make disciples of others.
3. The goal of the enemy: to either stop you becoming a Christian or stop you progressing to God's dream for your life.
4. How does this happen?
 1. When you were saved, Jesus came to live in your life (house), the enemy was defeated and was evicted.
 2. The enemy's plan is to gain access and eventually to regain control over your life.
 3. He is like a roaring roaming lion seeking to devour you but before he can devour you, he needs to gain entrance. He does this by camping at the gates of your life seeing if the gate is left unguarded and ajar. If the gates are unguarded, he gains access. Once he gains access he is looking to find a spot from where he gains a foothold.

Illustration: a beach-head in war terms. This is what Paul says in Ephesians 4:27 *"...nor give place to the devil."*

It's from this vantage point that the enemy erodes all that God is trying to do in our lives. It will keep you weak and carnal and not allow you to grow strong and powerful. At the end of the day, you are called to make disciples, to win the lost, to make a difference in your world. That is why we are left here and not taken to heaven the moment we get saved.

5. The seven gates from which the enemy seeks to gain access

1. The Gate of Disobedience.

The central theme of the Bible is God wants us to obey Him, the devil wants us to disobey God. Obedience to God will bring joy to God while disobedience to God will bring joy to the enemy. The consequence of disobedience is that it empowers the enemy, disempowers the believer and disappoints God.

Place a guard at this gate and make sure that on a daily basis you say: Lord, not my will but your will be done. There is nothing greater in life than fulfilling the will of God.

2. The Gate of Offence.

One of the enemy's most used traps against the Christian is the trap of offence. The Greek word for offence is SKANDELON which means snare, bait. Offence is the bait of Satan that enables him to gain entry and poison your life.

The Christian response to offence is forgiveness. Learn to live life unoffendable and learn to forgive easily. It will save you from a lot of heartache.

3. The Gate of A Wounded Spirit.

A wounded spirit is an infection that gets into your inner world that continues to cause pain and suffering. It usually enters through a painful experience but if we allow it to remain, it becomes like a poison that continues to eat away at our soul. The best way to deal with a wounded spirit is not allow it in in the first place. If it is there, go to Jesus, repent and give him the poison, He will give His healing power if you decide to receive His love and healing.

4. The Gate of the Occult.

The occult is anything to do with supernatural powers other than the power of the Holy Spirit. Anything to do with higher powers, astrology, reading your stars, palms, tea leaves, Ouija boards, séances, psychics, mystics, mantras, new age, etc. etc. is all of the occult. The casting of spells witchcraft, spiritism, contacting spirits, etc. is all forbidden and connects people to a spiritual side that not only does damage to the Christian but also gives the enemy a foothold in your life.

Place a guard at the gate and have nothing to do with the works of darkness.

5. The Gate of Idolatry

Idolatry is placing anything before God. We looked at two of the major idols in the 21st century. The idol of materialism and the idol of pornography. These things remove God from his rightful place and place something else on the throne of your life.

This is one of the enemy's primary goals. Get God off the primary focus. This will give the enemy a foothold and from there he can cause damage.

6. The Gate of Generational Patterns

A generational pattern is a pattern of behaviour that is easy to emulate because it has been modelled in our forefathers and passed on through a spiritual connection. Sometimes there are weaknesses that we easily fall into because there is a predisposition there. We need to become aware and strengthen the weakness through renunciation and stronger protection and accountability.

7. The Gate of the Flesh.

The flesh is our old sin nature that we need to deal with. The best way to deal with it is to walk in the spirit, put off the old nature. Put on the new godly nature, renew the mind and make sure it becomes your daily discipline. That way you block off the enemy and stop him getting access into your life.

CONCLUSION

God wants you to become healthy and become all that He has for you. His main goal is that you become a disciple of Christ who is making disciples of others. Get these things sorted in your life and the enemy will not be able to stop your progress.

If you don't get these things sorted, you give the enemy access to your life and he will hinder your progress.

Imagine what every church would look like if every Christian overcame the enemy and walked forward into their God given destiny.

We would have people saved, people healed, delivered moving forward in to the power of God because the enemy can't get access. Make a decision today to place a guard at the gates of your life to keep the enemy out so that Jesus can have total control of your life today and forever.



Prayer

Father God, today I want to make a decision that I will place a guard around my spiritual house and stop the enemy at the gate.

Help me Lord to walk in obedience to Your will.

Help me Lord not to get offended when offence comes knocking.

Help me Lord not to allow anything into my spirit that can cause a wound.

Help me to keep a sweet spirit.

Help me to be discerning with anything that has an occultic influence and not allow it into my life.

Help me always to place You first and not allow anything to remove You from the primary place of affection in my life.

Help me to break every negative generational pattern in my life and establish new patterns that bring blessing.

Please help me Lord to walk in fellowship with the Holy Spirit so that I may overcome my old sinful nature and live in the victory You have given me.

I shut the gate to the enemy and confess my love for Jesus. I want Jesus to rule and reign in my life forever.

Amen

