

# Biblical Solutions for Life Issues

## Topic 49 – Course Summary

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### Introduction

There are many people throughout the world who are hurting. That should not be surprising since the Scriptures tell us that diverse people in diverse life situations with diverse life experiences will undergo trouble in their lives (Job 5:7; 14:1). There are inevitable varieties of hardships that will fall upon each of us unexpectedly (James 1:2-4). Some people are hurting in the purely physical realm from things like the external difficulties of life (i.e. poverty, hunger, etc.) or physical maladies. Some people are hurting in ways that affect their behavior, emotions, or thinking. Believers have the resources to bring lasting, God-honoring care to hurting people.

God gives believers the resources necessary to address every life issue in a way that honors Him. The Scriptures are clear that all believers (those who have exercised the gift of true saving faith) are commanded and capable to use the Scriptures in the power of the Holy Spirit to make disciples. The purpose of these studies was to equip each of us so that through the sufficiency of Christ and the Scriptures we can mature, grow in our ability to apply the Scriptures to our own life issues and sin, and also bring Biblical care to others.

❖ **Have you embraced the blessing (yourself) and responsibility (others) of being given God's resources?**

Let's review where we have come thus far.

Topic	Title
1	Competent to Disciple
2	God's Attributes
3	Sin
4	True Saving Faith
5	God's Amazing Work in Salvation
6	Worship and the Holy Spirit
7	The Powerful Word of God
8	Sanctification
9	The Role of the Church
10	History of Psychology
11	Godliness
12	Forgiveness
13	Temptation
14	Pride
15	God's Faithfulness and Sovereignty
16	Trials and Suffering
17	Death and Dying
18	Decision Making
19	Sexual Immorality 1
20	Sexual Immorality 2
21	Laziness (or Unfaithfulness)
22	Anger
23	Materialism
24	God's Priorities for Your Recourses

25	Work
27	Singleness
26	Marriage - Foundation and Purpose
28	Marriage - The Husband's Role
29	Marriage - The Wife's Role
30	Marriage - Divorce and Remarriage
31	Marriage - Resolving Conflict
32	Marriage - Communication
33	Parenting - Foundations and Goal
34	Parenting - Father and Mother Roles
35	Parenting - Instruction and Discipline
36	Parenting - Loss of a Child
38	Parenting - ADHD and Mental Illness
39	Parenting - Blended Families
40	Parenting - Adoption
37	Critiquing "Idols of the Heart"
41	Review
42	Depression
43	Bipolar
44	Anxiety
45	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
46	Fear of man
47	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
48	Addictions
49	Review

## Suffering and Disease

Remember that suffering entered the world at the Fall (Gen 3). This is where all of creation, including people, were corrupted by sin.

<sup>20</sup>**For the creation was subjected to futility**, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup>For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. Rom 8:20-22

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so **death spread to all men, because all sinned** Rom 5:12

General suffering is a result of sin entering the world either by corrupted creation (disease, disaster, etc.) or as a recipient of a sinful action of another person (assault, murder, etc.). This is difficulty or hardship that comes on a person through no fault of their own (see topics 15, 16, and 17 for an understanding of how the believer can glorify God during trials and suffering).

Even so, God is sovereign over all suffering and in His sovereignty, love, and wisdom He works ALL things for His glory and our good (Rom 8:28). God calls believers who are experiencing suffering to rejoice (James 1:2-4; 1 Pet 1:6-8) and persevere (Rom 5:3-4). A believer who is suffering may never experience relief from that suffering this side of heaven. However, they have an incredible opportunity to present the truth of the Gospel to the world (to prove their faith): Jesus Christ is true and He has done a supernatural work in their heart. That is the issue – the heart motives and resulting actions through the trial and suffering.

The prevailing thought in the medical community is that people struggling with mental disorders are sick. This is based on a medical model of these struggles. When someone has cancer, there is a pathology showing that a disease is present which must be treated in a medical way. The problem with calling mental “disorders” an “illness” is that there are no tests that show a pathology.

When there is psychosis, a break with reality, then something is misfiring in the brain and the person may need medical treatment. In those situations, God in His Word still has much to say about how to honor Him in the illness.

Believers must be careful to never call anything a disease that the Bible calls sin and to never call anything sin the Bible does not clearly identify as sin. Labeling sin as disease offers no hope and could tend to influence God’s children to avoid responsibility for their sin.

## Comparing the World with God’s Ideas

It is important to understand the difference between what the “world” says and what God says if we are to address our own life issues and bring lasting change to help others.

When we speak of “world” we mean the current world system that belongs to Satan. It is a system of deception and wickedness that leaves God out and is opposed to Him (James 1:13-14; 2 Cor 11:3; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor 4:4; John 16:11; 1 John 2:15-17; James 3:15). Satan’s aim is to make the values of this godless system seem attractive; appealing to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life to entice us to sin. So, we should not be surprised that what the “world” thinks of help for hurting people and what God thinks are different. The “world” has one idea and God in His Word has given us different one.

There are three questions regarding mankind for which the “world” provides answers: “Who is man?”, “What is wrong with him?”, and “How do we fix him?” The Bible has very different answers to these questions than the “world”.

Who is man?

“World” – Man is an evolved animal born morally neutral (or good); governed by instincts.

Bible – Man is a created being in the image of God for the purpose of glorifying God.

What is wrong with man?

“World” – Environmental factors and experiences (family, religion, trauma, etc.) have influenced man to cause problems. Man is not at fault, he is not responsible.

Bible – Man is sinner by nature and choice; he is responsible for his own sin and responses to experiences.

How do you fix man?

“World” – Man is fixed by medication designed to address behavior and/or re-education and changing of emotions and thinking by self-actualization, improving self-worth, eliminating self-defeating outlooks on life, etc.

Bible – Man requires freedom from the penalty and power of sin through salvation in Jesus Christ; then growth (progressive sanctification) through the Holy Spirit and Word of God.

❖ **Do you accept the world’s viewpoint or the Bible’s?**

### **Presuppositions**

There are foundational presuppositions regarding the Bible and Biblical teaching that must be understood when we seek to address our own life issues and sin and bring Biblical care to others.

1. Only Christ can set people free from the penalty and power of sin (Eph 2:1-10; John 3:16; Rom 1:16-17; 2 Cor 5:17; Rom 6:15-23; Phil 1:6). Satan’s world system has no power to free people from the penalty and power of sin.

❖ **Do I look somewhere other than Jesus to be freed from the penalty and power of sin?**

2. The Bible is the inspired Word of God – His complete moral will for us (2 Tim 3:14-17).

<sup>14</sup>You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, <sup>15</sup>and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>**All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;** <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:14-17

❖ **What do you think about the Bible?**

3. Only the Scriptures are authoritative and fully sufficient to meet the spiritual needs of God’s children (Isa 55:8-11; Heb 4:12; 1 Thess 2:13). The Bible is powerful and used by God to accomplish His desire in the lives of people.

<sup>8</sup>“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>“For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. <sup>10</sup>“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; <sup>11</sup>So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; **It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it.** Isa 55:8-11

<sup>12</sup>For **the word of God is living and active** and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Heb 4:12

<sup>13</sup>For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted *it* not *as* the word of men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, **which also performs its work in you who believe.** 1 Thess 2:13

#### ❖ **How high is your view of Scripture?**

4. All true believers (someone who has exercised the gift of true saving faith) have all the resources now (through the indwelling Holy Spirit and powerful Word of God) to walk in a manner that glorifies God (Eph 1:3-4; 2 Pet 1:3-4).

There are many Christians who are looking for the next method for spiritual success. They read book after book, listen to sermon after sermon, search the internet and read blog after blog only to continue to struggle in their Christian walk. The Scriptures tell us something different. We do not need to look for some new gimmick to walk in a manner that glorifies God. A true believer (one who has exercised the gift of true saving faith) has all the resources now (through the Spirit and Word) to walk in a manner that glorifies God.

<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,** <sup>4</sup>just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love Eph 1:3-4

<sup>2</sup>Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

<sup>3</sup>seeing that **His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.** <sup>4</sup>For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. 2 Peter 1:2-4

#### ❖ **Are you empowered with the resources God has given you to honor Him?**

5. Every believer is capable and commanded to make disciples (Matt 28:19-20). Spirit-filled believers teach and admonish (encouraging, advising, and warning of the consequences of sin) one another (Col 3:16), are “able to admonish” other believers (Rom 15:13-14), and are called to restore other sinning believers (Gal 6:1-2).

<sup>19</sup>Go therefore and **make disciples of all the nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matt 28:19-20

<sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom **teaching and admonishing** one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Col 3:16

<sup>13</sup>Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and **able also to admonish one another.** Rom 15:13-14

<sup>1</sup>Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, **you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness;** *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. <sup>2</sup>**Bear one another’s burdens**, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. Gal 6:1-2

#### ❖ **What are you waiting for?**

### Theology Review

In addition to the basic truths above, we covered several other theological truths that inform our thinking regarding addressing difficult life issues and sin in our own lives and in the lives of others.

## God's Attributes

Our understanding of God and what we think about Him affects us deeply. Believers must cultivate a deep understanding of who God is and what He has done for us in Christ. When we understand God for who He has revealed Himself to be in His Word, all other affections fall away and we are moved to deep love for our creator; we are driven to our knees in worship; and it cultivates a heart motive to obey, please, honor, and glorify Him.

❖ **How high is your view of God?**

## Sin

Every person is born with a sin nature (original sin) that we inherit from Adam (Rom 5:12). It is the corruption of our whole nature and is that which inclines us to sin. The result of the sin nature is "total depravity", where the corruption of sin extends to every aspect of our being (Rom 1:18-3:20) including intellect (2 Cor 4:4), conscience (1 Tim 4:2), will (Rom 1:28), and heart (Eph 4:18). The result of sin is that we are lost, separated from God, totally incapable of moving toward Him on our own; without hope in this life and destined for hell in the next.

❖ **How accurate is your view of yourself?**

## True Saving Faith

The Scriptures are clear that true saving faith is faith in the Lord of all. Saving faith is not mere intellectual assent to facts concerning Biblical truth or the gospel. True saving faith involves repentance (Heb 6:1), following Jesus (John 10:27-28), self-denial (Luke 9:23-26), forsaking all (Luke 14:15-33), confessing Jesus as Lord (Rom 10:8-10), and a heart attitude to obey Jesus (John 3:36). Those that have been made new in Christ (2 Cor 5:17) are such because they have true saving faith which is a living faith; a faith that works; a faith that demonstrates itself true; a faith that is progressing in sanctification.

❖ **How accurate is your view of true saving faith?**

## God's Work of Salvation

God's work in salvation is amazing. He does a supernatural work in the true believer. He regenerates, converts, justifies, adopts, indwells, spiritually baptizes, seals, bestows spiritual gifts, and sanctifies. The true believer has been changed (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 2:20) and will therefore bring about fruits in their life in keeping with repentance (1 Pet 1:8-9; John 14:14, 23; 1 John 2:3-6). This is a forever-change and one that has practical implications for our life. God's work continues throughout the life of a true believer (Phil 1:6).

❖ **How thankful are you for all the blessings you have received in Christ?**

## Filling of the Spirit

The usual, expected position of the believer is to be filled with (or controlled by) the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18-6:9). The believer who is bowed only before God and not other masters (of sin) is filled with the Spirit. When a believer is submitted to God and his Word, the indwelling Holy Spirit produces Christ-like heart motives, attitudes, words, reactions, and relationships. One of the results of Spirit filling is progressive sanctification, being progressively transformed into Christ's image (2 Cor 3:18). The outside will be moving to match-up with the inside exhibiting progressively more Christ-like character.

The Scriptures play an important role, in conjunction with the Spirit, in changing us. In fact, being filled with the Spirit and allowing the Word to richly dwell in our hearts are the same spiritual reality (compare Eph 5:18-6:9 and Col 3:16-4:1). The Spirit applies the Word to the believer's heart. The Spirit is powerful. God's Word is powerful. Therefore, the believer in the most dire, seemingly hopeless circumstances can be encouraged, comforted, and changed as the Spirit applies the Word to his/her heart.

❖ **Are you consistently walking in the Spirit?**

## Role of the Church

The body of Christ is all individuals who have exercised true saving faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. (Matt 16:18; 1 Cor 12:12-13; Col 1:18; Eph 2:11, 3:6; 3:10). The body figure illustrates the diverse-unity and interdependence that is present in the church. The body is made up of unique individuals who are united by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another (Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:12-27). We are a family. Being a member of Christ's body comes with responsibilities toward Him and the other members. Our motivation for striving to excel at relationships in our life (particularly within the body of Christ) is the incredible mercy and grace we have been shown. We once walked in those things for which the wrath of God will come. We have been chosen by God, separated from sin, and beloved by Him. Therefore, we should put on those qualities that build unity in the body (Col 3:5-15).

A significant demonstration of love between believers is to be concerned about each other's walk with Christ and therefore enter into difficult conversations and actions that are best for each other. We are commanded to extend ourselves in love to care for the brethren.

### ❖ **Do you extend yourself to serve your family?**

## Important Truths in Addressing Difficult Life Issues and Sin

1. The believer's highest goal must be to glorify God.

To glorify God is to show His character in our motives, thoughts, words, and deeds. We glorify God when we live in a way that those around us can see God's character in us (Ex 33:17-23); when we display the life of Christ living through us (Gal 2:20).

<sup>31</sup>Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever **you do, do all to the glory of God.** 1 Cor 10:31

<sup>20</sup>I have been crucified with Christ; and **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;** and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. Gal 2:20

For the believer, our desire to glorify God must be our greatest desire, our highest purpose, more important than anything.

### ❖ **What is your most important and over-riding purpose?**

2. The believer must strive to walk in the Spirit ("above the line").

<sup>16</sup>But I say, **walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.** ... <sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Gal 5:16, 22-23

Living a consistently God glorifying life is possible only through Spirit-filling. The Christian life is not lived in the believer's own strength. It is a life lived filled with the Spirit as the life of Christ flows through us.

When a believer is submitted to God (Eph 5:18-6:9) and His Word (Col 3:16-4:1), the indwelling Holy Spirit fills (or controls) them and produces Christ-like character, heart motives, attitudes, words, and reactions. The believer in a right relationship with God will be filled with the Spirit. This is the usual, expected state of a believer. Being filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18) is also described as "letting the word of Christ richly dwell within you" (Col 3:16), "abiding in Christ" (John 15:1-11), "setting apart Christ as Lord in your heart" (1 Pet 3:15), "living by faith in the Son of God" (Gal 2:20), and "presenting your body a living and holy sacrifice" (Rom 12:1-2).

As we bow before God in complete submission, we will be filled with the Spirit and will exhibit the fruits of the Spirit. If we find ourselves sinning and therefore bowed before a master other than the Lord, then we must repent and bow again before the Lord. As we repent and once again bow before the Lord as master, we will be filled with the Spirit and the life of Christ will flow through us. We will have the power to live a God-glorifying life. We will then exhibit the fruits of the Spirit.

God's Word is the tool that God's Spirit uses to produce God honoring change in God's child. Therefore, we must commit to be obedient to God's Word.

❖ **Are you consistently walking in the Spirit?**

3. The Believer must cultivate a deep understanding of God and His character through a study of His word.

Our understanding of God and what we think about Him affects us deeply. Therefore, we must cultivate a deep understanding of who God is and what He has done for us in Christ.

God is infinitely glorious, beautiful, and great. He is unchanging, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, and sovereign. He is faithful, righteous, just, holy, loving, compassionate, forgiving, and longsuffering. By contrast, people (we) are sinners, totally corrupted, depraved, and dead in our trespasses and sins. The result of sin is that we are lost, separated from God, totally incapable of moving toward God on our own, without hope in this life and destined for hell in the next. God loved us so much that He sent His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to pay the penalty for our sins. Jesus did not die on the cross so that we could have our "best life now" or be healthy and wealthy. He died so that those who exercise the gift of true saving faith would be saved from their sin!

When we understand God for who He has revealed Himself to be in His Word, all other affections fall away and we are driven to our knees in worship. Having a proper God-consciousness is critical to living a life pleasing to God. The more our thoughts are set on the things above, the more it will cultivate a heart motive to obey, please, honor, and glorify Him.

<sup>1</sup>Praise the Lord! **How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, Who greatly delights in His commandments.** Psa 112:1

<sup>11</sup>**Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.** Psa 86:11

❖ **From where do you get your view of God?**

4. The believer must be actively involved in a local body.

<sup>23</sup>Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; <sup>24</sup>and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. Heb 10:23-25

Believers are united in Christ and connected to one another. The body figure illustrates the diverse-unity and interdependence that is present in the church. The body is made up of unique individuals who are united by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.

<sup>4</sup>For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so **we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.** Rom 12:4-5

<sup>27</sup>**Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.** 1 Cor 12:27

God has designed the church in such a way so that care can be brought to believers. The church is the major way that God brings love, edification, encouragement, admonition, comfort, etc. to believers. See topic 9 for a listing and explanation of the “one-anothers”.

Being a member of Christ’s body comes with responsibilities toward Him and the other members. Our motivation for striving to excel at relationships in our life is the incredible mercy and grace we have been shown. We once walked in those things for which the wrath of God will come. We have been chosen by God, separated from sin, and beloved by Him. Therefore, we should put on those qualities that build unity in the body.

<sup>12</sup>So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; <sup>13</sup>bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. <sup>14</sup>Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity. <sup>15</sup>Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Col 3:12-15

In the midst of difficult life issues, believers should continue to use their gifts to serve others in the body (1 Pet 4:10). This takes the focus off their difficulty and onto others, seeing others as more important than themselves (Phil 2:3-4). The exception would be those that are walking in sin. In which case, repentance is needed.

<sup>7</sup>The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober *spirit* for the purpose of prayer. <sup>8</sup>Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup>Be hospitable to one another without complaint. <sup>10</sup>**As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.** <sup>11</sup>Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Pet 4:7-11

<sup>3</sup>Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; <sup>4</sup>do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Phil 2:3-4

❖ **Are you actively involved in your local body?**

5. Follow biblical methods of turning from sin.

Biblical methods of turning from sin always involve yielding to the Holy Spirit; submission to the Word of God; and putting off sin, renewing the mind, and putting on righteousness.

<sup>18</sup>And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup>speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; <sup>20</sup>always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; <sup>21</sup>and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. <sup>22</sup>Wives, ... Eph 5:18-6:9

<sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. <sup>17</sup>Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. <sup>18</sup>Wives, Col 3:16-4:1

Just like Paul in Galatians presented what walking in the flesh and being filled with the Spirit looks like (Gal 5:16-26), in Ephesians and Colossians, Paul gives the results of being filled with the Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit is the surrendering of every area of our life to God so that the Holy Spirit is controlling your words, worship, reactions, and interaction in relationships.

❖ **Are you taking in the Word of God consistently/constantly?**

From Ephesians 4:20-24

<sup>20</sup>But you did not learn Christ in this way, <sup>21</sup>if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup>that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, <sup>23</sup>and that you **be renewed in the spirit of your mind**, <sup>24</sup>and **put on the new self**, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Eph 4:20-24

Paul spends the first 3 chapters of Ephesians detailing the blessings of salvation. Then in chapter 4, because of that salvation, believers are to “walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called”. Do not be like you were before, be something different. This process of change or sanctification (changing into Christ-likeness) is described as: 1) put off, 2) renew, and 3) put on.

“Lay aside” (“put off” in the ESV) means to cease doing what you were previously accustomed to doing; stop doing it; throw it off like filthy, foul smelling clothes; be done with it. It is a metaphor like having your clothes soaked with sewage and stripping them off and throwing them away and never getting them back. Like repentance from sin – we strip the sin off and never get it back.

❖ **Do you through off sin with the intent to never pick it up again?**

“Be renewed in the spirit of your mind” – our minds are made new as we fill it with the Word of God. It is not about covering up sin with something that smells good. It is about being transformed so that the sin is no longer a part of you. God’s Word is the tool that God’s Spirit uses to produce God honoring change in God’s child. Similarly in Romans:

<sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed** by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Rom 12:2

Where is your focus?

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>**fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Heb 12:1-2

<sup>1</sup>Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking the things above, where Christ is**, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup>For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Col 3:1-3

❖ **Are you spending time in God’s Word? Where do you set your eyes/mind?**

“Put on the new self” – Paul continues his clothing metaphor. The idea is "sinking into a garment". It is like sinking into a new coat when it is freezing outside. This is making a choice to obey, to do righteousness, to replace the sin that you “put off” with obedience.

❖ **Is your purpose to glorify God through obedience?**

## Concluding Thoughts

The Scriptures are clear that all believers are able and commanded to use the Scriptures in the power of the Holy Spirit to address their own and others' life issues and sin. If we are going to use the Scriptures in this way, then the Scriptures need to be an integral part of our life.

<sup>16</sup>**Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you**, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Col 3:16

<sup>15</sup>Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, **accurately handling the word of truth.** 2 Tim 2:15

<sup>9</sup>For on the first of the first month he began to go up from Babylon; and on the first of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, because the good hand of his God *was* upon him. <sup>10</sup>For Ezra had **set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances** in Israel. Ezra 7:9-10

❖ **Where and how might I be involved in disciple making?**

❖ **Am I involved in disciple making?**

## Real Life Scenarios

*Yourself:* You are going through a difficult time (financial, medical, relational, etc.). What are some things you could do right away that ensures your focus is on honoring God?

*Someone Else:* Your friend is going through a difficult time (financial, medical, relational, etc.). In thinking about bringing Biblical care to your hurting friend, what is the first thing you need to know? What is the next thing you might share with him/her?

**Biblical Solutions for Life Issues**  
**Topic 49 – Course Summary – Additional Study**

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.

Ask God to search your heart and show you how your life demonstrates what you view as the most important thing. What is the thing you want most?

If the thing you want most is not to glorify God, what should you do?

Read Galatians 5:16-23.

What characteristics are most evident in your life?

What deeds of the flesh do you need to put off?

Does your life show that you are consistently walking in the Spirit?

Read Hebrews 10:23-25 and 1 Peter 4:10.

Are you actively involved in a body of believers or are you a casual attendee?

Read Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; and Psalm 119:9-11.

What can God's Word do powerfully in your heart?

Are you treasuring God's Word in your heart?

What does/would treasuring God's Word look like?

What differences would be evident in your life if you were treasuring God's Word in your heart (specific thoughts and deeds)?

Read Ephesians 1:3-4.

List out as many spiritual blessings as you can think of.