

PRAYER ENRICHMENT SEMINAR STUDY GUIDE

**AN IN-DEPTH 10 HOUR BIBLE STUDY
ON THE JOURNEY OF THE REDEEMED**

by

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Prayer Enrichment Seminar Revised

My fellow traveler,

Welcome to an interesting journey. We are beginning where you are and together we shall end our journey around the throne of our Father. We must proceed with caution, yet with courage as we use the greatest power source on earth, prayer.

We are under orders from the Captain of our Salvation to change this world. Once rescued, you will need power as you become a threat. The world that held you in its grasp until your salvation came, will not release its hold without a fight. Spiritual power is the key to that victory, and prayer is the pathway to power.

The information provided in this Study Guide was first published in 1978. However, these lessons were handed out in prayer studies for years preceding the 1978 printing. In the fifteenth and the sixteenth printing, there was revision. Options were added to most of the lessons to make its use more suitable for classes, home Bible studies, etc., as well as a guide for the weekend seminars. In these revisions, unless otherwise indicated, the New International Version (NIV) has been used for Biblical references.

Shall we begin our journey?

Unto His Glory,
Albert G. Lemmons

Schedule Of Seminar

FRIDAY P.M.	Registration and Introduction	7:00 - 7:30 PM
Module 1	“Prayer - A Definition”	7:30 - 8:15 PM
Break		8:15 - 8:30 PM
Module 2	“Fasting - A Definition”	8:30 - 9:15 PM
Response		9:15 - 9:30 PM
Saturday A.M.		
Module 3	“The Prayer Of Faith”	9:30 - 10:15 AM
Break		10:15 - 10:30 AM
Module 4	“Types Of Prayer”	10:30 - 11:15 AM
Response		11:15 - 11:30 AM
Saturday P.M.		
Module 5	“Prayer And Healing”	1:00 - 1:45 PM
Break		1:45 - 2:00 PM
Module 6	“Laws Governing Prayer”	2:00 - 2:45 PM
Response		
Saturday P.M		
Module 7	“The Importance Of Prayer”	7:00 - 7:45 PM
Break		7:45 - 8:00 PM
Module 8	“Praying In The Psalms”	8:00 - 8:45 PM
Response		
Sunday A.M.		
Module 9	Intercessory Prayer	To Be Scheduled
Module 10	Discipleship In Prayer	To Be Scheduled

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The Sacrament of Prayer

It is the sense of the sublime which startles men by that which **is** but cannot be put into words. The attempt to convey what we see and cannot say is the everlasting theme of man's unfinished symphony.

We have kinship with the spirit of being. The awareness of the unknown is earlier than the awareness of the known. We should not expect thoughts to give us more than what they contain. Mind and heart are not the same. It often seems as if ideas and our own selves were strangers who somewhere in the realm of time met and became friends. We realize that we are able to look at our world with two faculties: with reason and with wonder. With the first, we try to explain and adapt the world to our concepts and with the second, we stand in awe of the ineffable one.

Doubt is not applied to that of which we have immediate awareness. We do not doubt that we exist or that we see and hear. Our question is whether we know what we see is a true reflection of what exists in reality. Doubt, then, is an activity of the mind. First we see, next we judge and form an opinion and thereafter we doubt. In other words, to doubt is to question that which we have accepted as possibly true a moment ago. Doubt is an act of appeal. One must first hold a belief before one is able to doubt. If we must know in order to question, then doubt cannot be the beginning of knowledge.

Wonder goes before knowledge. We are amazed at our ability to doubt and at our ability to wonder. Doubt may come to an end. Wonder lasts forever. Wonder is a state of the heart. Its basis, in part, may come from knowledge in which nothing is taken for granted. Spiritually one cannot live by borrowed or inherited knowledge. Inquire of your mind—what does it know, what does it take for granted?

Being is unbelievable. We are amazed that there is being at all. Radical doubt ends in radical despair. Plato said, "Philosophy begins with wonder", *Theaetetus* 155D. When in doubt, we raise questions. When in wonder, we do not even know how to answer a question. Doubts may be resolved and radical amazement of our ineffable God can never be erased.

There is no answer in the world to man's radical wonder about God. It has a wider spiritual scope than any other act of man. If we fail in our continued quest for insight, our being gets cut off at its roots.

The tree of knowledge and the tree of life have their roots in the same soil. In the course of nature, the tree of knowledge often has its brilliant but sapless leaves instead of fruits. The tree of life allows us not to ignore the mystery to which we are attached by our very existence. The most intimate is the most mysterious. Wonder alone is not enough. However it allows us to live within the spiritual core. The world of things we see is but a veil and reason is not the only motor of mental life.

Sometimes I wish the world could cry and tell me what makes it so full of fear. We are light to the darkness. What true light portrays is more than a way; it is the sense of our ineffable God and the perception of something objective which cannot be conceived by the mind.

Subjectivity is the *manner*, not the *matter*, of our perceptions. Our radical amazement responds to the mystery, but does not produce it. Man has not invented the grandeur of the sky nor endowed himself with the mystery of birth and death. We do not and have not created the ineffable; we merely encounter it (him).

Divine revelation introduces the mind to a reality which is not only *other* than itself, but *higher* than the universe. We are introduced to a reality, the mere awareness of which is more precious to us than our own existence. His presence may be *defied*, but not *denied*, and where at the end, faith in him is the only way.

The beginning of a faithful life of prayer is not a feeling for the mystery of living or a sense of awe, wonder or fear. The root of religion is the question of what to do with the mystery of living, what to do with awe, wonder or fear. In that journey we know that all we **own** we **owe**. "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable (indescribable) gift," II Corinthians 9:15.

The consequence of our fallen world includes the fact that any created living being, whether plant or animal will die when detached from its life source. When a flower is pulled up by its roots, or a stream of water blocked from its source—both will die. Death is a sad reality.

When the human spirit is detached from what is greater than itself, the good becomes bad, order becomes chaotic. What holds the inner life together? It is not only to know about God, even to know him, but to be known by him.

Distraction must be the highest priority on Satan's list today. The heart of man must be open to the remote and unseen in order to perceive what is near. Unless we seek "Our Utmost for His Highest,"¹ we shrink to inferiority.

Prayer is our attachment to the "utmost." We do not step out of the world when we pray. We see our world in a different setting. The selfish "I" or "me" is not the hub of reality. It is but one spoke in the revolving wheel of life. In prayer we shift the center of living from self-need to self-surrender. God, our Father, is the center toward which all forces of history move. "He is the source, and we are the flowing of his force, the ebb and flow of his tides."²

Prayer leads us to holy aspirations. It implants faith, vision and ideals we should cherish. It also is the foundation of spiritual living. When justice lapses into human cruelty and righteousness into hypocrisy, prayer revives us and keeps alive the rare greatness of some past encounter with God, which encounter glowed with greatness and meaning.

There are some things in life for which there is no substitute. Prayer is one. Obedience is another. Prayer provides a light. In our obedience we are often caught in dark places. Envy, fear, despair, anger and grief often lie heavily upon the heart and are dispelled by our Lord as shadows and replaced by light.

But prayer is more than a light before us. It is a light within us, I John 1:5-7 NIV. "Prayer is not a soliloquy. But it is a dialogue with God."³ Do we address God as person to person? It is incorrect to describe prayer by analogy with human conversation. We do not communicate with God as with man. We only make ourselves communicable to him. Prayer is an emanation of what is most precious in us toward him, the outpouring of the heart before him. It is not a relationship between person and person, between subject and subject, but an endeavor to become the object of his thought.

Clement of Alexandria said, “Prayer is a dialogue with God.”⁴ What does that mean? It is an answer to God: Here am I. And this is the record of my days. Look into my heart, into my hopes and regrets.

Prayer never ends, for faith endows us with a bold craving that he draw near us and approach us as a father. We do not walk in his ways so much, but **his** entering into our ways. The purpose of prayer, then, is to be brought to his attention, to be listened to, to be understood by him, to know him, yes, but more so to be known to or by him.

When we pray, we share spiritual life not only as a result of his power, but become a concern of his will and make our lives his divine concern. For many years I desperately pursued information and knowledge about God. Now I want to be an object of his knowledge and concern.

The conclusion of the matter is to live before God, to become a thought of God—this is the ultimate career of man. Man lives in the mind of God when God lives in the life of man.

“Grant us grace, Almighty Father, so to pray as to deserve to be heard.”
Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

End Notes

1. My Utmost for His Highest. A wonderful idea and description of one of God’s greatest men, Oswald Chambers.
2. Heschel, Abraham, Between God and Man, The Free Press, New York, 1959, p. 198.
3. Heschel, *Ibid.*, p. 100.
4. Clement of Alexandria. See Max Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*, Gottingen, 1948, Vol. 1, p. 423.

MODULE 1 – Prayer is the language of the human spirit in the ear of God and the centerpiece in the life of Jesus.

MODULE 2 – “Men should always pray and not faint or grow weary,” Luke 18:1b.

MODULE 3 – Prayer is the channel/conduit by which faith aligns the heart with the desires, designs and the will of God.

MODULE 4 – “Praying is to the soul what breathing is to the body. It is the atmosphere of the soul, the oxygen of eternity.” John Birkbeck, Earnestness of the Soul, page 18, Upper Room.

MODULE 5 – “And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well, the Lord will raise him up,” James 5:15.

MODULE 6 – “By prayer God draws us out by breathing the Holy Spirit into our lives.” Birkbeck, op.cit., page 20.

MODULE 7 – “During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission,” Hebrews 5:7.

MODULE 8 – Praying the Psalms is returning to the Heavenly Father his words in our voice. When he speaks, one hears his words as the Holy Spirit leads.

MODULE 9 – Intercession – The ultimate call. “He made intercession for the transgressors,” Isaiah 53:12c.

MODULE 10 – God takes the initiative in prayer. “The Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will,” Romans 8:27b.

“To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy--to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen”, Jude 24, 25.

Module 1 -- Prayer, A Definition

Mark 11:20-25

INTRODUCTION

1. Proverbs 15:8, “The LORD detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases him.”
2. Psalms 51:10-12, “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.”
3. Prayer is laying hold of God's highest willingness. In our communion with Him we allow His will to be done in our lives.

DISCUSSION

- I. Prayer, What Did Jesus Say?
 - A. Matthew 21: 21-22, “Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, Go, throw yourself into the sea, and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.'”
 - B. Mark 11: 20-25, “In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. Peter remembered and said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!' 'Have faith in God', Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, Go, throw yourself into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.'”
 - C. Luke 6:12, “One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.”
 - D. Luke 11:9-10, “So I say to you: 'Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.'”

- E. Luke 17:6, "He replied, 'If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, be uprooted and planted in the sea, and it will obey you.'"
- F. John 14:13-14, "And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."
- G. John 15:7-8, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."
- H. John 16:23, "In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."

II. Prayer Is Articulated Faith.

- A. The character of the one who prays draws one near the heart of God and sets a limit upon the answer God chooses to give.
- B. Prayer is life giving because it is our conscious connection to eternity.

III. Characteristics of Acceptable Prayer.

- A. In the name of Jesus. From the gospel of John:
 1. 14:13, "And I will do whatever you ask **in my name**, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father."
 2. 14:14, "You may ask me for anything **in my name**, and I will do it."
 3. 15:16, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask **in my name**."
 4. 16:23, "In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask **in my name**."
 5. 16:24, "Until now you have not asked for anything **in my name**. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."
 6. 16:26, "In that day you will ask **in my name**. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf."
 7. 17:11-12, "I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name--**the name you gave me**--so that they

may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them **safe by that name you gave me**. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.”

- B. According to God's will. “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything **according to his will**, he hears us,” I John 5:14.
- C. God often makes the sovereign choice to accomplish His will only when asked to do so.
 - 1. Jeremiah 29:7-11, “Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. **Pray to the LORD for it**, because if it prospers, you too will prosper. Yes, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them, declares the LORD. This is what the LORD says: ‘When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. **For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.**’”
 - 2. Daniel 9:2-4, “In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. So I turned to the Lord God and **pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes**. I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands.”
 - 3. Jeremiah 33:2-3, "This is what the LORD says, he who made the earth, the LORD who formed it and established it--the LORD is his name. 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'”
 - 4. Nehemiah 1:1-6, "Jerusalem's wall is broken down. . . When I heard this, I sat down and wept. For days I **mourned, fasted and prayed**. . ."

- a. Nehemiah was a layman.
 - b. His prayer was **impassioned**.
 - c. **Remorse** was replaced by **resolve**.
 - d. His **conviction** became **obsession**. “And so we rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem,” Nehemiah 4:6.
- 5. Simeon the Priest, Luke 2:25-32.
 - 6. Anna the prophetess, Luke 2:36-38.
- D. The element of passion.
- 1. Agonize with God.
 - 2. The Greek verb in Colossians 4:12, *agonizomai* means to struggle or to be impassioned in prayer.
 - 3. This idea carries throughout Old and New Testament literature.

CONCLUSION

- 1. Psalms 81:10, “I am the LORD your God, who brought you up out of Egypt. Open wide your mouth and I will fill it.”
- 2. To no other energy did Jesus commit himself as to prayer.
- 3. If Satan can keep us off our knees, he can effectively neutralize our Christian witness or testimony. Our prayers are keys used to accomplish God’s holy purposes.

Module 1 -- Option 1

- I. The Call to Prayer.
 - A. We must be persistent, Luke 11:5-8.
 1. Persistence is needed to effect such a change in us that we conform to the character and will of God who is eager to hear our cry.
 2. Prayer is the obedient choice of the will.
 - B. We must not play at prayer.
 - C. C. S. Lewis in *Screw Tape Letters* has Demon sending a letter to his assistant, Wormwood, on a need to destroy prayer. He warns, "interfere at any price and in any fashion when people start to pray, for real prayer is lethal to our cause."
 - D. Satan will allow us to memorize scripture, take communion, give to good causes--BUT, if he can keep us off our knees, we are no threat to him.
- II. Questions for Consideration.
 1. Why is the practice of prayer, so passionately pursued by Jesus, ignored by most of us who call Him Lord?
 2. Why did the Holy Spirit feel it necessary to record more times the assurance from Jesus to believers that he both hears and answers prayers than He said to sinners that He forgives their sins?
 3. Do you have a faithful practice of prayer?
 4. What are you willing to sacrifice or give up in order to pray?

Module 1 -- Option 2

Prayer brings spiritual power

S. D. Gordon wrote:

True prayer is power. The time of prayer is the time of power. The place of prayer is the place of power. Prayer is establishing a true relationship with the divine dynamo, so God may flow through one freely. The life of a prayer warrior is a journey of power. When you pray, you project a little more of God's power on a troubled world. The power of prayer brings one to victory. This is not arrogance. It is a declaration of the promise of God. When we ask in faith we receive, Matthew 7:7.

My own growth depends on my consistency in prayer. When I am consistent, tension and anxieties are replaced with calm assurance, hope and power. Prayer is the road of divine endowment. Spiritual fruit grows and abounds. Satan will be defeated.

The ancient Bishop John Chrysostom wrote (probably from exile, 400 AD), "The potency of prayer hath subdued the strength of fire, it hath bridled the rage of lions; hushed anarchy to rest; extinguished wars; appeased the elements; expelled demons; bursts the chains of death; expanded the gates of Heaven; assuaged diseases; repelled frauds; rescued cities from destruction; stayed the sun in its course and arrested the progress of the thunderbolt. Prayer is an all efficient panoply, a treasure undiminished, a mine never exhausted, a sky unobscured by clouds, a heaven unruffled by storm. It is the root, the foundation, the mother of a thousand blessings."

Summary—six qualities of prayer:

1. In asking, we are accessing our personal needs.
2. In confession, we are confronting our sins.
3. In praise, we are acknowledging our blessings.
4. In intercession, we are involved with the needs of others.
5. In fellowship/communion, we are embracing the grace of God.
6. In earnestness/sincerity, we sense the holy presence of God.

Module 1 -- Option 3 In The Name of Jesus

“And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it,” John 14:13-14. “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit -- fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name,” 15:16. “He who hates me hates my Father as well. If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me,” 16:23-24, 26.

“In My Name” – repeated six times. Our Lord knew how slow our hearts would be to take it in, and he so longed that we should really believe that his name is the power in which every knee should bow, and in which every prayer could be heard, that he did not weary of saying it over and over. Between the wonderful **“whatsoever you ask,”** and the divine **“I will do it,”** **one expression is the simple link: “In My Name.”** Our asking and the Father’s giving are equally in the Name of Christ. Everything in prayer depends upon our apprehending this.

We know that a name is a word by which we call up to our mind the whole being and nature of an object. The Name of God is meant to express his whole divine nature and glory. The Name of Christ means his whole nature, his person and work, his disposition and Spirit. To ask in the Name of Christ is to pray in union with him. When first a sinner believes in Christ, he only knows and thinks of his merit and intercession. To the very end that is the one foundation of our confidence.

And yet, as the believer grows in grace and enters more deeply and truly into union with Christ—that is, as he abides in him—he learns that to pray in the name of Christ also means in His Spirit, and in the possession of his nature as the Holy Spirit imparts it to us. As we grasp the meaning of

the words, "At that day you shall ask in my name" -- the day when in the Holy Spirit Christ came to live in his disciples -- we shall no longer be staggered at the greatness of the promise: "Whatsoever you ask in my name, I will do it." What is asked in the name of Christ, in union with him, out of his nature and Spirit, must be given. As Christ's prayer nature lives in us, his prayer power becomes ours too. The honest and wholeheartedness of our surrender to all that we see that Christ seeks to be in us, will be the measure of our spiritual fitness and power to pray in his name. Ministry of Intercession, Andrew Murray

Module 1 -- Option 4

Authentic prayer is the conduit through which the power of God flows. Prayer brings the power of heaven into the circumstances of earth. We have read astonishing claims God makes about prayer and what He says He can/will do through it.

If we can believe, take Him at His word then nothing on earth is beyond the reach of His Sovereign power. Prayer is simply opening the conduit of your life to receive what God chooses to give.

"The deepest thirst within us is not adapted to the deepest nature of this world. If I find in myself a desire that no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that it was made for another world." C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, page 106.

If you have a hunger, a longing to be united with something in the universe from which you feel deprived, that is a blessing. Blessing, you say? Yes! Our best "havings are wantings." One of the sweetest things in my life now is the longing to find Him from whom all beauty and grace began. These inconsolable longings are something of a homing device, placed in our hearts by grace. Prayer is important and powerful. It is a gift from God our Father who longs beyond all our wildest imaginations to draw us unto himself. Psalm 109:4, "I am prayer," *Veani Teflah*. Psalm 139:16, "You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed..."

**Module 1 -- Prayer A Definition
Notes**

Module 2 -- Fasting, A Definition

Matthew 6:16-18

INTRODUCTION

1. Prayer and fasting are linked together in scripture, Daniel 9:3; Nehemiah 1:4; Matthew 6:5-18; Acts 13:3.
2. Old and New Testament words for fasting:
 - a. The verb tsom, Hebrew word for abstention from food, to cover the mouth.
 - b. The verb anah, Hebrew word for afflict or humble oneself, synonym for fasting.
 - c. The verb asitos, Greek word for fasting, voluntarily abstaining from food.
 - d. The verb nesteuo, Greek word for fasting.
3. Fasting includes giving up something good for something better, 1 Corinthians 7:5 KJV
4. Guards against false motives.

DISCUSSION

- I. The Teachings of Christ on Fasting.
 - A. Fasting as preparatory to his ministry, Luke 4:1-2.
 - B. Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 6:16-18.
 - C. New aspects of fasting for Christians following the resurrection and ascension, (See pages 24–26).
 1. Matthew 9:14-17
 2. Mark 2:18-22
 3. Luke 5:33-39
- II. The Early Church and Fasting.
 - A. Acts 13:1-3, “In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch) and Saul. While they were **worshiping the Lord and fasting**, the

Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'. So after they had **fasted and prayed**, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”

- B. Acts 14:23, “Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with **prayer and fasting**, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.”

III. Fasting In the Life of Paul.

- A. II Corinthians 6:3-10 KJV, “Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God in patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, **in fastings**...”
- B. II Corinthians 11:23-27 KJV, “Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, **in fastings** often, in cold and nakedness.”
- C. I Corinthians 4:17 NIV, “For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.”

IV. The Benefits of Fasting.

- A. David said, “I put on sack cloth and humbled myself with fasting,” Psalm 35:13b.
- B. When in a state of desperation regarding self, family, nation, etc. fasting is a way of expressing sincerity before the Lord.
 1. “When I weep and fast...” Psalm 69:10ff.
 2. “I pray, O Lord in the time of your favor. In your love, O God, answer me with your sure salvation,” Psalm 69:13.

3. Rescue me from the mire, do not allow me to sink or lose the battle. "Come near and rescue me..." Psalm 69:18.
 4. Answer me out of your goodness with sweet comforting words.
 5. "Grant me your plenteous tender mercies and turn to me."
Amplified Bible, page 655.
- C. The struggle/battle.
1. In the battle between Spirit and flesh, fasting is a way to success.
 2. The context of Psalm 109:21ff with specific emphasis on verse 24, "my knees give way from fasting..." illustrates a victorious battle over flesh/worldliness with which we are consumed.

CONCLUSION

1. Practical suggestions: See Module 2, Option 4, pages 39 – 41.
2. No one on medication should fast without the consent of a physician.
3. In fasting, it is more important to rend one's heart than one's garment.
4. Fasting is a means by which the believer subjects the physical and promotes the spiritual. When this happens, there is potentially a conversion of power from fear to faith; from carnal to spiritual; from self to God.
5. There are some ways in which fasting sharpens our awareness of and focus on God, like a lens brings the rays of the sun to a point. This provides the warmth of God's love to our life on a cold, dark, lonely journey.
6. In fasting the physical body burns stored energy. In a similar way, fasting releases stored spiritual reserves. Prayer and faith are the conduit through which it occurs.

Module 2 -- Option 1

The Christian Fast

Albert Lemmons

After the remarkable statements of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 6:5-18, it is no surprise that the synoptic writers pick up the subject of prayer and fasting and have much to say. Matthew, Mark and Luke, by the Holy Spirit, go to great lengths in the parables of the new wineskins and new cloth to give Christ's followers insight to some spiritual realities and possibilities heretofore unknown.

MATTHEW'S account in 9:14-17:

14 "Then John's disciples came and asked him, How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?

15 Jesus answered, How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.

16 No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse.

17 Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

Matthew's statement concludes by quoting Jesus as literally interpreting his own idea of the potential role of fasting upon his departure. "Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved." The words "both are preserved" are connected to verse 15 and his rhetorical question, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them?" The idea of "both are preserved" is not referring to wineries and garment factories. Jesus said that a significant dimension to fasting would now show Jehovah's concern for the well-being of His heritage from Sinai to the cross of Jesus.

Jesus absorbed the criticism that his disciples did not follow the Mosaic tradition as practiced by the Pharisees and John the Baptist. He and his disciples clearly “cut the cord” between what God had ordained for the Jews and what Christ intended for his followers. Paul stressed “fastings often” in II Corinthians 11:27 AV, removing forever the idea that fasting in the New Testament was just an extension of Jewish custom, practice, or an outgrowth of an ancient rite.

That fasting occurred as a traditional custom by early Jewish Christians is without doubt. However, Jesus drew a clear line of distinction between what God’s people had done for 1500 years and what his disciples would do after the time came when the bridegroom was taken from them -- they would fast and both are preserved.

MARK'S version in 2:18-22:

18 “John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, ‘How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?’

19 Jesus answered, ‘How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them.

20 But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast.

21 No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse.

22 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins.’”

Even the idea of imposing the “old” on the “new” is unthinkable. No, “he poured new wine into new wineskins,” 2:22c. This points to another dimension, or purpose for fasting in the Christian community. This new dimension included a “help” for the Christian prior to, but including the advent or second coming of Jesus Christ.

LUKE'S account of this is found in 5:33-39:

33 “They said to him, ‘John's disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking.’

34 Jesus answered, 'Can you make the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them?

35 But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast.'

36 **He told them this parable:** 'No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old.

37 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out, the wineskins will be ruined.

38 No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins.

39 No one drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, The old is better.'"

Verses 38 and 39 at first glance appear to pose a problem. New wine must be poured into new wineskins. These two verses are separated by what is to be a new idea of fasting in the kingdom of God after Pentecost, versus the older traditional practices, many of which had come to have little meaning. By no means was Jesus reverting to an essentially one-sided use of fasting which may be defined by an over-all summary statement of fasting in the Old Testament as it dealt with sin issues. Isaiah 58 is an obvious exception. When one understands the importance of Isaiah 58 in Messianic context (55-66 Isaiah III) the mission and ministry of Jesus is better realized. What does this mean? Consider the following:

1) Jesus intended for his disciples to fast for some noble purposes after his ascension. Three times he specifically said "and in those days shall my disciples fast," Matthew 9:16b; Mark 2:20b; Luke 5:35b.

2) During the first advent, while his physical person was in a tangible form with and among his disciples, as he looked upon the "new" wine idea for fasting--for his disciples to fast would have been an insult of unimaginable proportions. It would have been an equal insult to Matthew 16:5-12 when his disciples reasoned that because they did not prepare lunch for a day in their lives, they would have nothing to eat that day even though Jesus was in their midst. They ignored him and He gave them a blistering rebuke.

3) Jesus intended for something to act as a “substitute”, an “otherness”, on his behalf during his absence from them. Only Jesus knew the importance of this, hence the magnitude of His solution.

4) The revelation of the mission and ministry of the *Paraclete* waited for Christ’s incarnation to be fully taught. (Statement regarding the bridegroom and children of the bride chamber or guests of the bridegroom, Matthew 9:15; Mark 2:19-20; Luke. 5:34). It was also necessary for his ascension to be realized, not just explained, I Peter 1:11b, but understood, Acts 1:2-11.

On Pentecost, eight days after “the bridegroom was taken away from them,” Matthew 9:15b; Mark 2:20; Luke 5:35, the *Paraclete* was poured out in a glorious baptismal measure. The divine energy resulted in Pentecostal power as the prophets Joel and John the Baptist had said.

It is more than interesting to me that the main teaching of Jesus regarding the person and work of the Holy Spirit is not found in his teachings and parables of his early ministry, but in a single discourse immediately preceding his crucifixion in John 14, 15, 16. These are three of the most remarkable chapters in the Bible. It is here in these verses that the disciples received a shock! Their hero, their source of physical and spiritual existence, announces his departure. Even their misguided ideas of his Messiahship were further dashed to pieces.

It seems more than coincidental that in His instruction on fasting, Jesus tied this to something or someone after His departure. He makes use of the term “after my departure” the Holy Spirit will come to you. The Father will give (send) you another counselor/comforter forever, the Spirit of Truth, John 14. This is a correlation to Matthew, Mark and Luke when He talked about the bridegroom leaving, and after those days, or on that day, or at that time, He would go to the Father. In verses 25-26, John affirmed that Jesus was still with them, but assured them that after the departure of the bridegroom the “children of the bride-chamber” will have the Holy Spirit as counselor. Jesus said the Holy Spirit will “infill” you with information you need just as I did when I was with you in my personal ministry. “I must leave,” he continues, “to complete my Father’s will, but I will come again.”

In Chapter 15, he prepares his disciples for the inevitable transition. You will be misunderstood, mistreated, unappreciated, but as “children of the bride-chamber,” you need not mourn because, verse 26, “when the counselor comes, whom I will send to you from my Father, the (Holy) Spirit of Truth who goes out from the Father, He will testify about me, but you also must testify because you have been with me from the beginning.”

In one of the most informative passages on prayer Jesus ever taught, he concluded his discussion in Luke 11:13 on a high emotional note. He taught the importance and desire of mortals giving good gifts to their children. “How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.” The tense of the verb indicates an ongoing request, asking or prayer and the Holy Spirit (*Parakletos*) is the result of the prayer of faith, which reality is best accomplished through fasting.

One of the problems of translating the Greek text is to bring into another language true symbols for ideas for which the original word stood. There is no greater task for a believer than right here. There is no English word that may accurately or correctly bring to our mind the Holy Spirit given word for the Holy Spirit Himself (*Paraclete*). In the Hebrew language, scholars for centuries have wrestled with the word Jehovah. There are other difficult words to translate such as abba and hallelujah.

“The idea of *Paraclete* has a Latin equivalent, advocate, which is once used to translate it, and seems to embody mainly the conception of being called to one’s aid or summoned to act as a substitute; to conduct a case or a cause in another’s behalf or as his representative,” Arthur Tappan Pierson, 1837-1911. This was originally delivered as a lecture in 1895 during the annual Duff Missionary Lectureship at Edinburgh, Scotland. He continued, “Whatever other conceptions may properly pertain to the *Paraclete*, this seems to be central and controlling, The Holy Spirit comes when Christ goes -- comes to take the place of the absent Lord Jesus who has returned to his heavenly Father. Therefore, to the believer and to the church as a collective body of believers, all that Christ would have been had He remained on earth, with their added advantage: that as a condition of his humiliation, the Lord Jesus submitted to certain limitations of His and our humanity, and was therefore, while in the flesh, not practically omnipresent.

The Holy Spirit does not have a human body as His mode of incarceration. He is everywhere and abides with every believer. Therefore, it was necessary on behalf of his disciples that Jesus should go away, because when he departed he sent the *Paraclete* to act in his stead.

It is my faith that fasting and prayer as Jesus intended it to be was practiced and understood by the early church. It was the very means by which an infilling/renewal of God and the Holy Spirit came to them. The explicit teaching of Christ Himself was that it is something new and very important and stood as the door/access to Jesus Christ seated on the right hand of God in Heaven. One of the reasons the prayer of faith with fasting was so important to the early church was that it became God's chosen means by which the Holy Spirit was given an open channel of communication with the throne room of God.

PAUL cast insight in Romans 8:26-27, "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."

If fasting and the prayer of faith are catalysts to the "in-filling" of the Holy Spirit, and therefore give access to the throne room of our Father, this may account for the dearth of spirit-filled lives and spirit-filled churches in our time.

"If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" Luke 11:13.

Module 2 -- Option 2

Simply stated, fasting is voluntarily giving up some good physical thing in pursuit of something better spiritually. Fasting quickly and cleanly breaks the bonds of self-dependence, self-satisfaction and self-reliance and reestablishes our focus on God as our Provision and Sustainer. Fasting removes me from the throne of my heart and allows God to again take his rightful place as God of my life.

The type and duration of a fast should be a matter between you and God. If you have not already, you need to spend time in prayer with God concerning these matters prior to beginning your fast. If you are not already spending time in the Bible on a regular, daily basis, you need to begin now. God, through your time in the word and time in prayer, *through your time with Him*, is what will sustain you during your fast. If you say you are participating in this fast yet fail to spend time with God, do not blame circumstances, your fast or God when you fail. And do not speak despairingly of something that Jesus Christ himself expected of believers; “And when you fast...”

Fasting isn't a commandment. It appears Jesus believed it to be something a believer would want to do! “When you give...” “When you pray...” “When you fast...” are all activities a Christian is expected, not commanded, to participate in.

There are several different definitions for all the different types of fasts, but we will only identify three:

- **Absolute/Total** – No food or water. However, do not commit to an absolute fast for more than three days and only then if you are in good health and have a clear directive from God.
- **Partial** – Abstinence from certain kinds of foods, for example, no meat or bread.
- **Modified** – Abstinence from all solid food, for example only diluted fruit juices and/or diluted vegetable juices, diluted broth, etc.

Note: These thoughts are informational only and are not intended to replace competent medical advice. If you are on a regular medication, or suffer from heart, circulatory or diabetic disease, it is wise to obtain medical advice before entering into any fast that extends beyond a meal or two.

Those still growing, young children and teenagers, should abstain from something other than solid foods. Movies, a favorite television show, dessert, sweets or a favorite soda are some ideas. Encourage your children to spend time with God during the time they normally would spend in this activity.

In the early period of your fast, you may experience unpleasant symptoms, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, or grumpiness. Usually, these are indications that your fasting is overdue and that you need the purifying physical action of fasting in various areas of your body. Continue with your planned fast. After the first day or two, these unpleasant physical reactions usually subside.

Remember that hunger is partly a matter of habit. In the early stages of a fast, hunger will probably return at each normal mealtime but those pangs will lessen in intensity and length as your fast continues.

Guard against constipation. Before and after fasting, choose meals that will help you in this respect. Fresh fruits and fruit juices, dried figs, prune, apricots or oatmeal will help minimize this risk. You will also notice a change in the timing, frequency and “look” of your bathroom breaks. Your body is cleansing itself of toxins and built up deposits, and this is to be expected.

Begin now by weaning yourself from strong stimulants such as coffee, tea and soda, and have smaller easily digested meals between now and the beginning of your fast. Filling your stomach before your fast begins will hinder you, not help you.

Break your fast gradually. Begin with meals that are light and easy to digest. The longer you have fasted, the more care you should take when breaking your fast.

Pray as you determine the fast to which God is calling you. For example, those called to a modified fast should consume no more than four to eight ounces of diluted juice in the morning, a cup of herbal tea with a drop of honey for lunch and eight to twelve ounces of diluted broth for dinner, with water throughout the day. Fruit and vegetable juices should be 100% pure juice. Avoid artificial anything in any form. The idea is not to “substitute” one food source for another. It is to empty yourself so that God may become your sole focus during this time. In other words don’t try to see how much you can get away with, instead witness God’s power to sustain you.

Avoid religious arrogance and boastfulness. Jesus Christ gave up the glory and riches of heaven for you. Jesus Christ left God’s throne room and came to this earth for you. Jesus Christ lived, suffered and was murdered for you. You are only choosing to skip a few meals.

There are scriptural references and websites that will help prepare one for an extended fast. Utilize both, but spend time in prayer asking for God’s leading and direction. These are good informational sources, but do not substitute anything for time in God’s word and time with him in prayer.

Finally, do not become lost in “what” and “how”. Instead, become lost in the “why” and “whom” of your fast. As with anything else, your heart, your motivation, your *reason* for doing what you do is of most importance.

Why would I want to voluntarily do this? Because fasting carries us more in line with God and his will for our lives. It doesn’t make us “super spiritual” or “extra spiritual”, but allows God to fully indwell us with the Holy Spirit and prepares us to hear him. So where do I sign up?

As our Provider, God has to sustain us. As our Sustenance, God has to carry us through. All that is required of us is an open and malleable heart. Softening and making your heart available to him is what fasting is all about. It places your heart in a pliable position, one that can be molded and shaped according to his will. This allows one to hear, believe and trust him against human logic.

Do you have to humble yourself before him in this way to be the recipient of what God has to do in your life? “No”. However, humbling yourself before him in this way creates the focus and the room in your heart to be fully indwelt by his Holy Spirit. It allows room for an extra measure of the Holy Spirit! Humbling yourself before him in this way will allow his new wine to be poured into your old wineskins.

Stop and ask God to direct you as to the type of your fast. He will not allow you do anything that he does not know through his provision you can do, but he will not do anything with an unwilling heart. Take the step. Open, or open again the Bible, and ask him to lead you. Pray, or pray again, and ask that his will be done through your fast. He will answer. He will provide. He will sustain you.

“On that you would burst from the heavens and come down! How the mountains would quake in your presence! As fire causes wood to burn and water to boil, your coming would make the nations tremble. Then your enemies would learn the reason for your fame. When you came down long ago, you did awesome things beyond our highest expectations. And oh, how the mountains quaked! For since the world began, no ear has heard and no eye has seen a God like you who works for those who wait for him. You welcome those who cheerfully do good, who follow godly ways.”

But we are not godly. We are constant sinners, so your anger is heavy on us. How can people like us be saved? We are all infected and impure with sin. When we proudly display our righteous deeds, we find they are but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall. And our sins, like the wind, sweep us away. Yet no one calls on your name or pleads with you for mercy. Therefore, you have turned away from us and turned us over to our sins.

“And yet, LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay and you are the potter. We are all formed by your hand. Oh, do not be so angry with us, LORD. Please do not remember our sins forever. Look at us, we pray, and see that we are all your people. In the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen!”

Stephen Lemmons

Module 2 -- Option 3

The following is a series of e-mails I received from a brother in the Metroplex of Dallas whose identity I have not chosen to share. However permission was given to include these in this book. After studying the subjects of prayer and fasting, about half of the members of that church decided to try out what they had learned. The fast lasted 7 days. They met at the church building each night. It answers many of the questions that I have been asked over the last 30 years.

Tuesday

Last night at church those of us who were fasting were singing and praying and reading scriptures--there were 170-200--a couple of interesting things happened. After our prayer time, one of our members saw the brace I was wearing on my wrist and asked me what was wrong. I told him the doctor thought it was the first stages of carpal tunnel syndrome. He grabbed another friend and they prayed that God heal me, right now, because I didn't need to be bothered with this attack of Satan while we are in a time of fasting and prayer. He rebuked the condition in the name of Jesus. We prayed for about 5 minutes with others joining in, putting their arms around me and touching my arm and hand. After I got over the shock of what was happening, I relaxed. After the prayer, I immediately took off my brace. That was around 8:30 last night, and I have not had it on since. On the way to church that night I was saying that my hand had been worse, and particularly yesterday evening, than it had ever been. My left two fingers were numb all day long. I am happy to tell you that my hand has been perfectly NORMAL all night and today!

My prayer at church tonight went something like this: "When I got up this morning, I thought what a great thing I am doing for God. As I rolled out of my comfortable bed, walked across a carpeted floor, in a heated room, to a hot shower, I dressed in nice clothes, kissed my amazing wife good bye, then drove a nice auto to an air-conditioned office, I kept thinking, what a great thing I am doing for God.

Thank you for hitting me with a bad case of the grumps. Thank you for getting my attention as to what this truly is all about. You don't care that I am giving up food for you. I understand you want it all. God, I want you to remove anything that is standing between you and me. I want you to break my heart so that you can mold it to do what you will with me. If that means my job, then take it; if that means my house then take it. Whatever that means, your will be done. I want to be counted on as yours. I want people to see your Son when they look at me. Help me to be strong and stand up for what I know is right at home and at my job. Give me the courage to tell those I work with "no," I won't participate in some things. I'm tired of trying to do it on my own. I can't do it on my own." Well, half way through my prayer, I had 3 elders standing around me hugging me, laying their hands on me, "amenin" and "thank you Lordin" me--I thought it was pretty cool.

One of our single again moms prayed a beautiful prayer that God would give her patience and a discerning spirit because she desired a companion like many of the Godly men who were in that session. She was surrounded by elders, elders' wives and friends as she prayed. Then several said prayers that God be faithful to his promise and put that person in her and her daughter's life. That was pretty cool too. Another thought, you certainly can achieve a level of "boldness" when you fast 3 or 4 days. I don't mean arrogance, but just the ability to mentally and spiritually march right into that throne room and lay hold to God's promises. That's pretty cool too. I could go on and on, but I'll save some for later. We have been praying for your healing. Again, I'm not going to ask how you are. I'm sure you are both much better. Talk to you soon.

Wednesday

We are in day three of the seven days, and although tough from time to time, I'm still happy to report so far, so good. Last night everyone (that could) that is going for the whole week met at the church building for prayer and songs. Monday's theme was worship. Tuesday's was confession. Today's is family, and I forgot the rest, but they are on our refrigerator for reference. There were around 100 of us there last night (give or take a few) anyway pretty cool. I'm looking forward to tonight. I'll not be able to attend Thursday since I will be out-of-town again. The lady's retreat begins Friday night, so I probably won't try to attend Friday night with all three kids.

Anyway, like I said, it seems to be going okay. The one thing I've noticed is that when I wake up in the morning, I'm still praying; (I guess from where I fell asleep in the middle of a prayer), and that is pretty cool. I also find some of my favorite church songs going over and over in my mind all day. That's pretty cool too. The 24 year old that I work with has given up beer at dinner as long as I am fasting, and he told me Monday night that he wants to start studying the Bible. He was raised _____, and had fairly absent parents, so it's remarkable that he has done as well as he has. Anyway, we spent a little time Monday night discussing why our church is fasting, what it means, etc., and I gave him a few verses to read.

I don't know if I'm just doing this wrong or what, but I really feel fine. I do get dizzy occasionally (just briefly) like when I stand up too fast. For breakfast we have four ounces of white grape juice OR orange juice OR V8 mixed with 4 ounces of water. At midday, we have a cup of herbal tea with a drop of honey. For dinner, 12-16 ounces of water that a potato, carrot and a stalk of celery have boiled in for 30 minutes. Since dinner has always been my big meal, that is the toughest time of the day for me. _____ has to make the children peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, fish sticks, pudding, etc. all day. I really admire her for sticking with this fast!

Well, just thought I'd drop a quick note. We've been paying for your healing, so I won't even ask how you feel today. I'm sure you feel great.

Friday

I guess I'm over the hump. After staying up to around 12:30 a.m. reading Isaiah 40, I Corinthians, Philippians and praying, I awoke refreshed, relaxed and feeling great. When my stomach growls now, it sounds more like an apologetic growl rather than a demanding growl. It's weird, but when I look at food, especially some of the food I like, I sense a certain amount of disdain for allowing something like that to become such a powerful part of my life. Now don't get me wrong, I can't wait to sink my teeth into a Sonic Hickory Cheese Burger and a medium order of onion rings, but I see how anesthetized I keep myself with food. I have been carrying around the same \$30.00 in my pocket that I had last Sunday. I guess I buy more crackers and chips and drinks than I thought I did. I have allowed my body to dictate to me what it wants and when it wants it.

The fact that I only eat one time a day in my usual schedule, has just kept weight off. My body was in control of my mind. I think now, my mind is in control of my body. _____. I have enjoyed this so much we may continue into next week. Not every day, but at least a couple of days a week. Suffering, is it to be met with open arms? _____ has found herself feeling compelled to pray for outcomes and situations she personally wouldn't want. That was a huge revelation to her yesterday. she has a friend that is having serious marital problems. Everyone has told her that she needs to get out. _____ is now having to pray for reconciliation for the family if that's in God's plan for them. That woke her up.

My hand is still great. I can't believe I would pray for other's healing and not expect it to work for me. Oh well, there is another of those amazing truths revealed to me this week. We are just experiencing something as a family we never had. I truly believe the Spirit is moving through our church; not just those of us fasting, but everyone. Some who can't participate in the fast due to medical reasons or because they are still growing, have given up things like sweets, radio, TV, movies, etc. It's great for all of the kids to see what's going on and even participate in ways they can.

I have no idea what God has in store for our church family or my family. But you know what? I don't really care. I have a church family that loves and affirms us, picks us up when we fall; no matter how many times that may be, cries with us, is tolerant of differing views and wants nothing more than to serve God and introduce as many as possible to the amazing victory that has already been won.

Just a side note; when we all get to heaven, _____, the kids and I will have to spend a few thousand years with our friends from this church family!

Monday

Well, it's over. As strange as this may sound, I felt a little sad while breaking my fast last night. The Hickory Cheese Burger was good, but not great. The onion rings were good, but not what I thought they would be. I guess it was because I really didn't want to end the fast. After our service, all the members who fasted stayed and we broke the fast together by

taking the Lord's Supper. It was a great time. We had sung until we were all hoarse, laughed, cried, prayed, praised; then we, as a family, broke the fast together. There were between 300 and 400 people there. Not everyone had gone all seven days, some one, some two, some four and those who gave up TV, etc., we all broke bread together.

Saturday and Sunday were amazing days. I never had one hunger pang either day. It was just an amazing feeling of finally being focused on what was truly important. _____'s and my relationship, although already strong, reached a level that we didn't know was possible. There really isn't any one big difference; however, there are noticeable changes. The way we treat each other a little better; the way we communicate; receiving (and giving) hugs and kisses for no particular reason. I worked in the yard on Saturday and Sunday and still felt great. Oh sure, my arms and legs were sore and I took frequent breaks, but I never got dizzy or sick. And, thinking back, pretty much all day long I was praying the same prayers from the previous days with the new ones for those areas of focus for Saturday and Sunday. The themes were:

Monday	-	praise/worship	Friday	-	intercession
Tuesday	-	confession	Saturday	-	unity
Wednesday	-	families	Sunday	-	harvest
Thursday	-	healing			

Thursday night, the elders anointed about 30 people with oil and prayed for their healing. An older lady has not had a single epilepsy episode since Thursday night. Her husband told us Friday night that she usually had one, from mild to severe, almost hourly. Go figure. Addicts, alcoholics, troubled marriages, illnesses: whoever wanted anointing was able to receive it. Although I was unable to attend Thursday night, my hand is still perfectly normal. The steroids are still stapled in the bag just as I picked them up from the pharmacy Friday a week ago and they are going to stay there as a visual testimony to God's healing power, as well as a testimony to answered prayer.

Glad you had a super weekend.
Love,

Module 2 -- Option 4

Physical Aspects of Fasting

When practiced with due care and sense, fasting is beneficial to the physical body. Here are some points to observe if you wish to obtain the physical benefits of fasting:

1. Always remember “your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit,” I Corinthians 6:19. It pleases God when you take proper care of your body, seeking to make it a clean and healthy temple for His Spirit.
2. If you are on a regular medication, or suffer from heart, circulatory or diabetic diseases, it is wise to obtain medical advice before entering into any fast that extends beyond a meal or two.
3. In the early period of a fast, you may experience unpleasant symptoms, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, etc. Usually, these are indications that your fasting is overdue and that you need the purifying physical action of fasting in various areas of your body.
4. Remember that hunger is partly a matter of habit. In the early stages of a fast, hunger will probably return at each normal mealtime. But if you hold out, missing a few meals will not create permanent injury.
5. During a fast, some people drink only water. Others drink various kinds of liquids, such as fruit juices, broth or skim milk. Work out for yourself the particular pattern of fasting that suits you best as an individual. It is wise to abstain from strong stimulants such as tea and coffee.
6. It is scriptural to abstain at times from fluids as well as from solid foods. However, do not exceed seventy-two hours. This was the limit set by Esther and her maidens, Esther 4:16.
7. Break a fast gradually. Begin with foods that are easy to digest. The longer the fast, the more careful one will need to be when breaking the fast.

Guidelines for Individual Fasting

1. Enter into fasting with positive faith.
2. Remember that “faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God,” Romans 10:17. Fasting should be based upon the conviction that God’s word enjoins this as a part of normal Christian discipline, Matthew 6:16-18.
3. Do not wait for some emergency to drive you to fasting. It is better to begin fasting when you are spiritually “up” rather than when you are “down.” The path of progress in God’s kingdom is, “from strength to strength,” Psalms 84:7.
4. Do not set too long a period of fasting to begin. If you are fasting for the first time, begin by omitting one or two meals. Then move on gradually to longer periods, such as a day or two days. It is better to begin by setting a short period as your objective, and achieve it. If you set too long a period to begin, and fail to achieve it, you will become discouraged and give up all together.
5. During your fast, give plenty of time to Bible reading. Where possible, read a portion of scripture before each period of prayer. (See Module 8 Praying in the Psalms.)
6. It is often helpful to set certain specific objectives in your fasting and to make a written list of these.
7. Avoid religious ostentation and boastfulness, Matthew 6:16.
8. Keep a check on your motives each time you fast. Do not vow to God without strong intentions of keeping your vow.

Guidelines for Collective Fasting

For periods of collective public fasting, all the guidelines given above for individual fasting will normally continue to apply. In addition, here are a few special points to observe in connection with collective fasting:

1. In Matthew 18:19, Jesus emphasizes the special power which exists when believers “agree” together in prayer. To this end, all those participating in a collective fast should do everything in their power to achieve and to maintain agreement with each other.
2. People participating in a collective fast should make a commitment to pray specifically for each other during the period of the fast, Acts 14:23.
3. A meeting place should be chosen where those participating in the fast can come together at times mutually agreed upon for prayer and exhortation.

Dr. D. Prince **Prayer and Fasting**

**Module 2 -- Fasting, A Definition
Notes**

Module 3 -- The Prayer Of Faith

Mark 11:20ff

INTRODUCTION

1. Faith defined: Hebrews, 11:1, "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. 3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."
2. Audacious statements of Jesus Christ regarding faith:
 - a. Matthew 19:26, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."
 - b. Mark 9:23, "'If you can believe', said Jesus, 'everything is possible for him who believes.'"
 - c. Luke 17:5-6, "The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!' He replied, 'if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, be uprooted and planted in the sea, and it will obey you.'"
 - d. Luke 18:27, "And he said, 'The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.'"
3. Prayerless hearts tie divine hands. It is easier to pray than to believe.
4. Faith is unbreakable confidence in the person of God and is the chief element in prayer--which assures an answer. There are no limits to the power of prayer, except the limits of faith.
5. There is nothing impossible with God. All the impossibility is with man when he tries to measure God by the limitations of unbelief. Nothing ideally is impossible. Human power is limited by human thought. Faith is another word for the power and might of God in the human soul.
6. "Faith is the capacity of the human heart which, when activated by the Word of God, enables a human being who has not seen God to know that God is real." AGL
7. Beyond Belief
 - a. Seeing God beyond belief.
 - b. Seeing God in boldness and in crisis.
 - c. Seeing God while walking through fire.

DISCUSSION

I. Faith - Inherent In the Nature of God Himself.

A. Deity is possessed of faith.

1. Mark 11:22, "Have faith in God, Jesus answered." Or, have the faith of God, marginal reading (this is in the genitive/possessive case in the Greek language). There is immense diversity in the usage of this case in the original text, but the idea of the faith of God is often used in the same framework as the love of God.
2. Galatians 2:20 is only one correlation to be examined in reference to the above.

B. Deity utilized the principal of faith in creating the celestial and the terrestrial realms.

1. The Father (God) possessed the thought or idea of creation.
2. The Son (Logos) spoke creation into existence.
3. The Spirit (Ruah) brooded or gave life to creation.

C. God created the universe with words. Words filled with faith are the most powerful entity in the universe.

1. The same principle by which God created animate life is the same principle by which man creates inanimate objects. The difference in quality of the created has to do with the faith dimension of the creator.
2. Unbelief, *apistos*, is the greatest sin. Faith is Satan's greatest enemy. Doubt is a virus to faith affecting spiritual health, as a viral infection affects the state of one's physical health.

II. A True Relationship With God.

A. Habakkuk 2:4b, ". . .the righteous will live by his faith."

B. Saved by grace of God. Ephesians 2:8, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast."

C. **Identity** versus **performance**, a grave religious struggle.

1. Identity - who you are.
2. Performance - what you do.
3. Shame - who you are.
4. Guilt - what you do.

- D. One is saved by the grace of God giving status or sonship. The believer obeys, loves, serves, and worships God because he is saved. The gratitude, mercy and forgiveness he extends to others are only possible because of what Jesus did at Calvary. Psalms 116:1, "I love the LORD, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy."
- E. When one is saved by performance, he/she can never do enough or be good enough resulting in anger, an unforgiving, judgmental attitude, and insecurity.
- F. The privilege of prayer is the birthright of the meekest child of God who has experienced the sacred privilege of the believers' baptism. Peter tells us in Acts 2:38, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
- G. Build your self-worth on the forgiveness and unconditional love of Jesus Christ, never on circumstances of life, good or bad.
- H. Qualifying for right standing before God:
 1. Jews - based on covenant with Abraham.
 2. All - faith.
 3. Many religious people - traditions/rituals.

III. The Prayer Of Faith Glorifies God.

- A. Keep channel/access to God clear of self and sin.
 1. Psalm 66:18 KJV, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me."
 2. Psalm 24:3-4, "Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart."
 3. Galatians 5:5, "By faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope."
- B. Prayer and faith allow God to work out His purpose in our lives.

IV. Confidence in the Character of God.

- A. Believe he will do what he says. He is a covenant-keeping God.
- B. Isaiah 45:11 KJV, "...command ye me".

- C. Faith and Prayer.
 - 1. Much faith, much prayer.
 - 2. Little faith, little prayer.
 - 3. No faith, no prayer.
 - D. Faith is a response to the nature of God just as:
 - 1. The eye implies light to see.
 - 2. The ear implies sound to hear.
 - 3. The wing of a bird implies air to fly.
 - 4. The conscience of a heart implies God.
- V. The Prayer Of Faith Believes God **HAS** Answered.
- A. Mark 11:24 KJV, "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you **have** received it, and it will be yours."
 - B. All true prayer is the expression of a desire for the will of God to be done.
 - C. God's will **IS** done.
 - D. In patience wait on God, then faith will demonstrate God's answer that before was not visible.
 - E. The object of all true faith is our Holy God.

CONCLUSION

1. The fires of many altars have gone out because the prayers of faith have ceased.
2. The prayer of faith is a means by which God chooses to intervene in history.
3. Luke 7:50, "Your faith has saved you, go in peace."
 - a. **Say** it in faith
 - b. **Do** it in faith.
 - c. **Receive** it in faith.
4. Luke 18:8b, "When the Son of Man comes, will he find **faith** on the earth?"

Module 3 -- Option 1

How Faith Comes to the Heart

INTRODUCTION

1. "So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God," Romans 10:17.
2. Words used to describe an experience with God are called theology.
3. A serious problem arises when we impose an English word on certain Hebrew or Greek words and by such action attempt to tell those ancients what we think they should have said, whether they said it or not. This study deals with one of those problems.

DISCUSSION

I. Etymology of Relevant Words.

A. Jehovah, as He communicates with man in the Old Testament.

1. The voice of God (קוֹל) *Qol* "sound, voice, utterance..."¹
2. "Qol primarily signifies a sound produced by the vocal cords (actual or figurative); the sound of God's voice going on the wind that Adam heard in the Garden of Eden."²
3. The Word of God (דְבַר) *dabar*, speech, "word, message, discourse, Word of God, as a divine discourse or communication in the form of commandment, prophecy and words of help to his people used three hundred ninety-four (394) times..."³ "the word of Yahweh came unto...."³
4. In their writings, Bible Scholars, Bauer, Koehler and Baumgartner, pages 839 and 109, are in agreement with the above interpretation.⁴

B. Jehovah as He communicated with man in the New Testament.

1. ῥῆμα (*Rhema*). That which is said, word, saying, expression, the sound of words, a voice, profuse in speech, talkative, the mighty creative word, pay attention to what I am proclaiming, preaching, objective genitive (τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως), Romans 10:8b. The word of God, with subjective genitive, Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 6:5 (θεοῦ ῥῆμα).⁵

2. **ῥῆμα** - That which is spoken, declaration, saying, speech, word...command, mandate, direction, narration.
3. **ῥήτωρ** – “an orator, advocate.
4. **ῥητῶς** – in express words, expressly”⁶
5. “The significance of **ῥῆμα** (as distinct from **λόγος**) is exemplified in the injunction to take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word **ῥῆμα** (voice of God).” In Ephesians 6:17 the reference is not to the entire Bible, but to the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of need, a prerequisite being the regular storing of the mind with Scripture.”⁷
6. **λόγος** (*Logos*), a word, statement, message of faith, treatise, the Christian message, the gospel, the word of the kingdom.
7. “It is the distinctive teaching of the Fourth Gospel that this Divine Word (**λόγος**) took on human form in the historical person of Jesus Christ. There is one God, who has revealed himself through Jesus Christ his Son, who is his Word proceeding from silence.”⁸ “The Word (*Logos*) is Jesus Christ.”⁹

II. The Voice of Jehovah God.

A. The voice (Qo/) of God broke the silence of eternity.

1. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים and God said. In Genesis 1, “God said” appears eight times. Of greatest importance is the who – God, and the what - said. His voice uttered forth. His voice was the first sound in this physical universe and that same voice will be the final sound in the ultimate consummation.
2. God said, then He saw, is written three times in Genesis 1. What He saw or witnessed was good, it happened.
3. The said was the cause, the so was the effect.

B. God exercised a Divine dimension, a quality of His very nature, the God-kind of faith.

1. When a moral being chooses to do something never done before and from a thought, germ or idea, has the energy to bring such into contingent or material existence that is Faith!
2. Millennia after millennia existed before the voice of God was inscribed as a record in some earth form.

3. An authentic record was revealed by Moses in Deuteronomy 4:13, "He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets."
 4. More detail is added in Deuteronomy 5:22, "These are the commandments the LORD proclaimed in a **loud voice** to your whole assembly there on the mountain from out of the fire, the cloud and the deep darkness; and he added nothing more. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me."
 5. The saying and the writing were two different things.
- C. The Logos is the voice of Yahweh.
1. John 1:1 and 3 affirm that the word (Logos) was in the beginning with God. All things were made by and through Him. Both then and now His creative word (Rhema) voice upholds or sustains this physical world, Hebrews 11:1-3.
 2. His voice is the glue that holds this world together.
 3. "For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him," Colossians 1:16.
 4. This material world was created with faith filled words. "Let there be...and it was so."
 - a. The Father thought it.
 - b. The Logos articulated it.
 - c. The Ruah gave it life form, Genesis 1:2b.

III. God's Revelation From the Old Testament.

- A. Articulate non-literary, Deuteronomy 4:1ff.
 1. Clearly uttered, spoken, pronounced.
 2. Prophets and teachers preached and proclaimed messages received from God.
 3. I Kings 13:1ff is a classic illustration of the man (prophet) from Judah who came to Bethel and "cried out against the altar by the Word of the Lord."
- B. God and the Patriarchs.
 1. God spoke to Adam and Eve.
 2. God's covenant with Noah was a verbal agreement.

3. "God said to Abram..." Genesis 12:1ff. In Genesis 15 God and Abram came to a mutual agreement on a very important issue. There was no scribe or written copy to that pact. However, it includes all history from Abram until the end of time.
4. Holy Spirit filled men captured the voice of Jehovah as they wrote on vellum or parchment the words He spoke.
5. "For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit," II Peter 1:21.

IV. The "Last Days".

A. The Voice of God.

1. "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son," Hebrews 1:1.
2. The voice of God was heard by John the Baptist and others present at the most celebrated baptismal service in all history.
3. "As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased,'" Matthew 3:16-17.

B. The conversations and sermons of Jesus were first spoken.

1. The Canon (the body of Scripture) known as the New Testament was "God breathed" *Theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος), II Timothy 3:16.
2. The spoken words of Jesus, his messages, prayers, exhortations and sermons by holy men of the first century, became the books of the New Testament, John 5:25.

C. Logos (λόγος) is the Greek word for New Testament scripture.

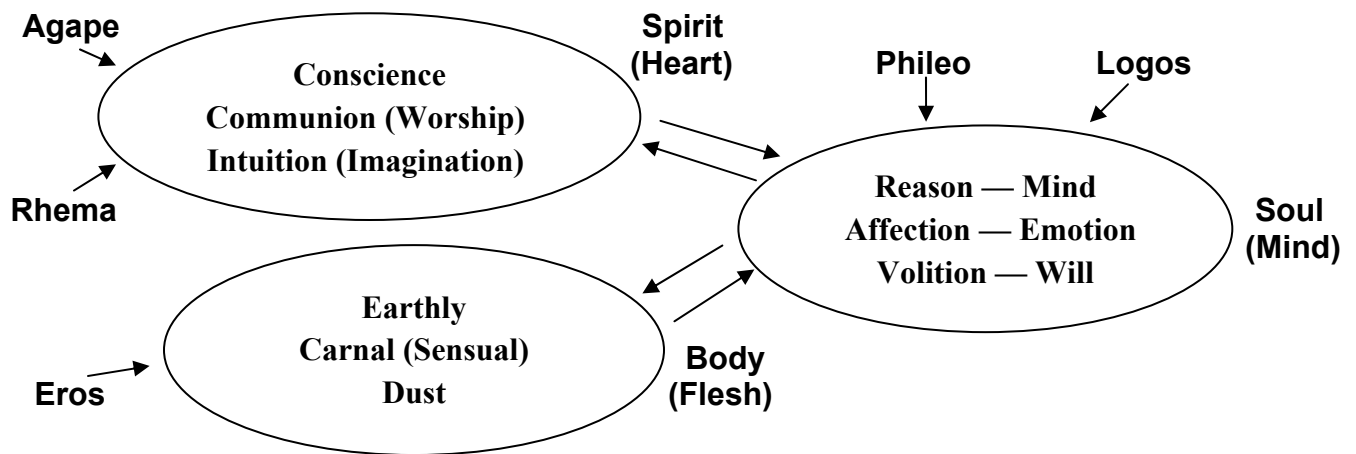
1. Logos has a broader use however, that is the primary meaning.
2. Definition:
 - a. Something of importance expressed in words and usually in written form.
 - b. Denotes expression of thought.
 - c. The Bible is called Scriptures, I Corinthians 15:1-4.

- d. The Bible claims to be the record of Jesus Christ, John 5:39.
 - e. The Bible claims to be the written word of God, II Peter 1:21.
 - f. The Bible is inseparably linked with the living word of God, Jesus Christ, Hebrews 4:12; I Peter 1:2
3. "Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God and the Bible is the written word of God. The written word of God testifies to the Living Word even as the Living Word (Christ Himself) testifies to the written word."¹⁰

V. Rhema, Logos and Faith.

A. What is man?

- 1. Psalm 8:4, "What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?"
- 2. I Thessalonians 5:23, "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
- 3. Romans 10:17, Faith comes by hearing the (ῥῆμα, *Rhema*) voice of God from the lips of Christ, the Messiah.
- 4. Man is a spirit. Man has a soul. Man lives in a body.



- 5. One hears a saying (Voice) – (Rhema) – word of God.
 One reads a writing (Bible) – (Logos) – word of God.
 One loves a Savior (Jesus) – (Logos) – word of God.

B. The difference between hearing and seeing.

1. "He replied, 'The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. This is why I speak to them in parables: Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them. But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it,' Matthew 13:11-17.
2. "...but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, 'I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure'. Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, 'Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it,'" Luke 10:20b-24.
3. "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind," I Corinthians 14:14-15.
4. The above scriptures set forth clearly that the human spirit (heart) is one thing and the human mind (soul) is another.
5. Faith comes by listening to the voice of God.

C. Practical teachings from Jesus.

1. In the Gospels, Jesus said seven times "having ears to hear and eyes to see." Jesus also said seven times to as many churches in Western Asia Minor, Revelation 2 and 3. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

2. He was not talking about physical ears, everyone has two ears, ears to hear.
3. He is talking about an inner condition of the heart. Hear God with one's spirit or heart.
4. This is different from seeing and knowing information in the mind. This is where very important information is found on the pages of twenty-seven books of the New Testament.
5. The study of the written inspired Word of God allows one to know about God.
6. This is the logical, rational, reason one knows about God. There is no substitute for continuous, respectful study of the written Word of God.
7. Knowledge of the written word forms the foundation or launch pad. If faith uses this as its sole source, the result may be that of a Thomas faith.
8. Thirty or more times Jesus told the twelve apostles he would die, be buried then be raised from the dead. When it happened, Thomas did not believe what Jesus had said even when ten of his fellow apostles confirmed his resurrection, John 20:24-29.
9. Jesus affirmed this when he said "because you have seen me, you have believed, blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed," 20:29.

CONCLUSION

1. When the inner ear hears the voice (Rhema) of God, it changes the heart. Authentic faith is the result, Romans 10:17.
2. Information from the written page forms the basis or extent of potential Christian service.
3. The levels of the knowledge of God in the mind constitute the faith potential of the heart.
4. The values of your heart, not mind, will set the ultimate course of your spiritual life.
5. The knowledge of the mind alone will set the course of man's intellectual life. Man has great capabilities. Example, Tower of Babel, Genesis 11. God came down to see what men were building. (This was man's faith in what he could do.)

6. The affluence and wealth of the western world is a strong temptation for church leaders to plan and do many great things when they “see it”. Often it may be said “Look what God has done.” It could be another Tower of Babel.
7. Faith comes from hearing the (Rhema) voice of God.
8. Ephesians 6:17, “Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the (Rhema) voice of God”. This is a key to understanding the necessary role of the indwelling Spirit of God. It often enlightens our insight. I call it our “now” word.

End Notes

1. Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, Oxford Press, London, 1953, page 876.
2. Harris, Archer and Waltke, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Moody Press, Chicago, 1980, pages 792-793.
3. op.cit., page 182.
4. Koehler and Baumgartner, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1951, pages 839 and 109.
5. Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, University Chicago Press, 1957, pages 742-743.
6. Harper, Analytical Greek Lexicon, Samuel Bagster, London, page 359.
7. The New Strong's Dictionary of Bible Words, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, page 1354.
8. Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich, pages 479-480.
9. Practical Word Studies in the New Testament, Leadership Ministries, Chattanooga, TN, 1998, page 2335.
10. Webster Concise Dictionary, 1993, page 36.

Module 3 -- Option 2

I. Heroes Of Faith

- A. **Noah** - Hebrews 11:7, "By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith."
- B. **Abraham** - Hebrews 11:8-11, "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised-land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith Abraham, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise."
- C. **Moses** - Hebrews 11:24-27, "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; **he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.**" Moses was not a victim of the visible.
- D. Hebrews 11:13-16b, "All these great people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things that God promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. They were longing for a better country--a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God."
- E. Hebrews 11:38-40, "The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of

them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”

II. The Power of Faith.

A. Isaiah. 1:18, "Come now, let us **reason** together', says the LORD: 'though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.'"

1. Faith is not the product of human reason alone. Romans 10:17 KJV, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

2. Matthew 16:6-12, "Be careful,' Jesus said to them. 'Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees'. They discussed this among themselves and said, 'It is because we didn't bring any bread.' Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, 'You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread, do you still not understand? Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees'. Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees..., beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. Why do you **reason** among yourselves?"

B. Men say "be logical, be reasonable, seeing is believing."

1. Believers are not led totally by logic or even by what the world says is good sense.

2. If this had been the case, Noah would not have built the ark, Moses would not have given up the throne of Egypt.

C. Faith includes:

1. Intellectual understanding.

2. Intellectual belief.

3. Expectation.

4. Trust and reliance.

III. Human Logic.

- A. Product of human reason by awareness that includes hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling and smelling.
- B. When more than human results are required, faith is the only answer. Faith begins where logic ends.
- C. Men reason on the basis of fear because they are not omniscient. What one does not know, he usually fears; and what he fears he seeks to destroy.
- D. Faith in its mature stage is not the product of human reason alone, but of a reborn human spirit, John 3:3-5.
 - 1. Faith is not the product of mind alone but also of the heart.
 - 2. Faith is a power force. Like agape love, it is tangible, conductive, it will move people, it will change people.
 - 3. Sin changed Adam's faith to fear and he said, "I was afraid."
 - 4. Doubt changed Peter's faith to fear and he said, "Lord save me."

IV. One Is Moved in a Greater Way By What He Believes Than By What He Sees or Feels.

- A. By virtue of its nature, faith excludes uncertainty and doubt.
II Timothy 1:12 KJV, "For which cause I also suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."
- B. In principle, faith involves confidence of conviction and firmness of assurance.
- C. Faith determines a man's condition and destiny.
- D. Faith looks to the purposes of God and the means of their accomplishment.
- E. God may have a life of faith for you as illogical as for Noah.
- F. Faith is nobility of the inner-life.

CONCLUSION

- 1. Who cares if God can do it, but doesn't?
- 2. The answer is faith.
- 3. The ark was built by an amateur. The Titanic was built by professionals.

Module 3 -- Option 3

- I. Faith That Survives the Test.
 - A. Faith is more than reasoned trust.
 1. The Christian heart is vulnerable when he/she has “prayed in faith, therefore believing he has received,” Mark 11:24, but before the answer has been given. That test is real.
 2. It is important to have faith in God because of who He is.
 - B. God allows time to do two things in such a circumstance:
 1. As days come and go, circumstances add up to question the faithfulness of God. Example of Abraham and Sarah, Genesis 12:3, 15:2, 16:1, 17:3-6, 18:10, 20:17, 21:1-2, 22:2.
 2. God in his providence (eternity over time) may bring to pass events that will only produce gestation with the passing of time. Example of Joseph.
 - C. We may cry, “but God, nothing is happening. I prayed. I believed. I have not received!”
 1. My admonition is to utilize the “measure of faith”, Romans 12:3, which God faithfully apportioned to you. The faith he gives you and me in any circumstance is adequate to meet the enemy, I Corinthians 10:13.
 2. Do not allow apparent contradictory circumstance to detract you.
 - a. Abraham believed God, Romans 4:17-24.
 - b. Thomas allowed his understanding of death to outweigh all the promises of Jesus' resurrection, John 20:24-29.
- II. Faith and Patience.
 - A. Hebrews 6:12b, “... imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.”
 1. The importance of patience is stressed as standing for the “time factor” in God’s sovereignty.
 2. Patience is God's gift which allows “faith to have her perfect work,” Romans 15:5.

B. God's gift of patience (waiting on Him) is the result of the reborn mind (new creation) that does not allow matters of time to overload or set aside the promises of our eternal God.

1. Patience in faith will allow one to step out into the water.
2. Mark 9:23, "Everything is possible for him who believes."
3. This continued faith is nurtured by confession. I Timothy 6:12, "Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

III. Faith and Patience Give Birth To Hope.

A. Romans 5:1-5, "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."

1. Hope fuels the soul for the journey that has a destination around the throne of God.
2. Hope in Christ is your staff.
3. Resist the devil's deliberate efforts to take away hope.
 - a. Accusing you of sin, unworthiness, etc.
 - b. Facing betrayal of a companion or friend.
 - c. Battling cancer or other serious illnesses.
 - d. Reality of economic ruin.

B. Hope undergirds faith until the promised answer is received.

CONCLUSION

1. Faith, love, patience and hope are not words of antiquity. They are present life for those who live here but belong somewhere else.
2. There was sin before there was death.
3. The prayer of faith will help us deal with our pain. Pain for mortals, is the privilege of having something worth losing. Jesus died to show the value of one human soul, and that it is worth saving.

**Module 3 -- The Prayer Of Faith
Notes**

Module 4 -- Types Of Prayer

Luke 11:1-9

INTRODUCTION

1. Man becomes like the God he serves, Deuteronomy 4.
2. The specific effort of a praying leadership is necessary.
3. Leaders who pray have praying followers.
4. God needs men who can set the church ablaze for God.
5. Lord, teach us to pray, and inspire us to expect great things.
6. Notice the ascent or progression -- lesser included in greater.

DISCUSSION

- I. **“Ask, and you will receive...”**
 - A. PETITION - “Give us this day our daily bread.”
 1. Our father enjoys hearing from his children, and it gives him joy to give to those who ask, Matthew 7:11; John 16:23-24; 1 John. 5:13.
 2. The gift of salvation, the fullness of the Spirit, wisdom, and all good gifts are from God, James 1:17.
 3. Ask God for greater revelation in His service.
 - B. CONFESSION - “Forgive us our sins...”
 1. Acts 8:9ff; Daniel 9:4ff
 2. Romans 10:9-10. Many confessions can be made, but if one is not sincere, it will not prevail. On the other hand, one can believe in his heart but if he does not "say it with his mouth", it will not prevail.
 3. Mark 11:25, "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."
 4. "A person who cannot forgive has forgotten how great a debt God has forgiven him. Forgiveness: You don't give--you don't get." *The Bait of Satan*, John Bevere, page 129.
 5. I confess, I was not in total agreement with God when

II. **“Seek** and you will find...”

A. DEVOTION - “Hallowed be Thy name...”

1. We must desire and enjoy God's companionship.
2. Seek the Lord, Deuteronomy 4:29.

B. TRUST - “Deliver us from evil...”

1. Trusting is more important than trying, Proverbs 3:5f.
2. Depend more on divine strength than human strength.

C. THANKSGIVING - “Which art in Heaven...”

1. Psalm 50:14-15, Psalm 100:1-4; John 11:41; Philippians 4:6.
2. Nehemiah 12:46, “For long ago, in the days of David and Asaph, there had been directors for the singers and for the songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.” Groups of worshippers whose purpose was to offer praise and thanksgiving were spawned by David five hundred years earlier.

III. **“Knock** and it will be opened...”

A. ADORATION - “Our Father...”

1. “Man becomes like the God he serves...”, Deuteronomy 4:15ff.
2. Ascribe glory, honor and praise to God. Not what He has or will do for you, but because of WHO HE IS, II Kings 19:5; Luke 11:2; I Timothy 1:17; I Chronicles 29:10ff.
3. “Worthy is the lamb,” Revelation 4:11, 5:12.

B. INTERCESSION - Hebrews 7:25.

1. Intercessory prayer works behind the scene (providence).
2. Intercessory prayer is grounded in love, Romans 9:1-3.
3. Intercessory prayer is intense, Job 42:8.
4. In this level, one shares the burden for another soul with Jesus.
5. When one is focused on God through faith, yet deeply concerned with persons, needs or circumstances, the Holy Spirit ENABLES according to the will of God, Romans 8:26f.
6. Example of Moses, Exodus 32:31-32.
7. Example of Paul, Romans 9:3.

CONCLUSION

1. Nights of prayer are followed by days of power.
2. Gandhi once said, "It is better in prayer to have heart without words, than to have words without heart."

Module 4 -- Option 1

Enter into his courts with praise.

INTRODUCTION

1. Romans 8:1-2, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death."
 2. Matthew 21:16, "'Do you hear what these children are saying'?, they asked him. 'Yes', replied Jesus, 'have you never read, from the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise?'"
 3. Psalms 8:1-2 RSV, "O, LORD, our LORD, how majestic is thy name in all the earth. Thou whose glory above the heavens is chanted by the mouth of babes and infants, thou hast founded a bulwark because of thy foes, to still the enemy and the avenger."
 4. These two verses equip praise with strength.
 5. Therefore God ordained praise--it stops Satan.
- I. Usher In The Presence Of God.
- A. Hebrews 13:15, "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name."
 1. Praise of God is ordained.
 2. "Let us offer continually a sacrifice of praise."
 3. Praise is a sacrifice by which the Christian accesses God.
 - B. Psalm 9:1-4, "I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders. I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High. My enemies turn back; they stumble and perish before you. For you have upheld my right and my cause; you have sat on your throne, judging righteously."
 1. When my enemies are turned back. . .
 2. True praise turns back the enemy by upsetting the climate that fuels the growth of life's sufferings, confusion, turmoil and strife.

II. Draw Near In His Presence.

- A. Abraham drew near to God, Genesis 18:23 AV.
 - 1. Worshippers become like the God they serve, Deuteronomy 4:14ff.
 - 2. Praise is intended to compliment God.
- B. Praise is an instrument of power.
 - 1. Praise beats out hell's brush fires.
 - 2. Praise breathes heaven's life into pain and death which sin produces on earth.
 - 3. Jesus is very near.
 - a. His saving nearness. ". . . I will be with you always," Matthew 28:20b.
 - b. His personal return. "I will come again and take you to myself," John 14:3.
- C. God is not stern, hypercritical or impossible to please. He is not trying to see how wrong you are, but how right you can be. "God is not very far from anyone of us. . .", Acts 17:27b.

III. God Resides In The Praise Of His People.

- A. Psalm 22:3 KJV, "Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel. O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel."
 - 1. *Yashab* means to sit down, to dwell, or remain, to be enthroned.
 - 2. Jehovah God is enthroned in the praise of his people.
- B. Praise is vital because it reverses the prevailing rulership in an earthly situation.
 - 1. Music (praise) stills the avenger, Psalm 8:1-2.
 - 2. Since the praise of God's people is where God dwells, this establishes His rule in Satan's territory.
 - 3. Praise makes a place for God's rule, and thereby begins to overrule the lies Satan is working around us.
 - 4. Psalm 8:2, "From the lips of children and infants, you have ordained praise. They silence your enemies who were seeking revenge."
- C. The Word of God and prayer open the doors for God's power to work. Praise keeps them open.

CONCLUSION

1. We are priests under God, Revelation 5:10.
2. As we offer the sacrifice of praise, this brings God to the scene.
3. Abraham is the father of us all, Romans 4:16b. He grew strong and was empowered by faith as he gave praise and glory to God, Romans 4:20.
4. As we draw near your presence, Holy Father, between the humble contrite heart and the majesty of heaven, there are no barriers. The only password is prayer in the name of Jesus.

Module 4 -- Option 2

An example of private devotion time.

One of the ways we show our love for God is the desire to spend time alone with him.

I. Focus

“These are the words of the Lord God... Come back, keep peace, and you will be safe; in stillness and in staying quiet, therein lies your strength,” Isaiah 30:15 NEB.

Center on the presence of God. This is a decision you make, regardless of feelings. Open yourself to God. Pray something like this:

“Here I am, Lord. I'm here to meet you. I acknowledge your presence. I'm going to spend this time with you. Help me to realize that I am in your presence; that you are with me, even though I may not feel your presence. Amen.”

II. Adoration

After centering **upon** God, our praise **becomes** adoration. To adore God is to worship and praise Him in our hearts and minds and with our lips. To begin, read aloud the following Psalm:

“Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

Let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In His hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are His also.

The sea is His, for He made it; for his hands formed the dry land.

Oh come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our maker!

For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his land,” Psalm 95:1-7 RSV.

III. Confession

Next, we move to confession as we examine ourselves and clarify our vision of who we are before God. “But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you so that He does not hear,” Isaiah 59:2 RSV.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness,” I John 1:9 RSV. Begin at a *personal* level. What do *you* need to confess? It may help to write your confession.

We are also involved in corporate sin. Confess now the sins of our church, community, and nation. “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of unclean lips...,” Isaiah 6:5 RSV.

IV. Thanksgiving

After confession comes thanksgiving, which is the overflow of a grateful life. This should always be a part of our praying. Paul reminds us: “Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you...,” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 RSV.

Prayerfully recall at least three specific things for which you are thankful. Speak those aloud, and after each, say “Thank you, Father.”

V. Supplication

Adoration, confession, and thanksgiving help prepare us for supplication. The scripture calls us to supplication (intercession):

“Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God,” Philippians 4:6 RSV.

Supplication is an intense word. It is intercession and petition combined--a kind of brooding, longing act of remembrance.

In your heart now, one at a time, name particular persons for whom you wish to pray. Hold each of these in your mind in the presence of God for three or four minutes, asking God to meet their needs.

Next, visualize your church. Center upon two of its most crucial needs. How can you help to meet these needs? Verbalize aloud your intense longing that you and your church will find fulfillment in ministry.

Now hold our nation and world up to God. Imagine that you are able to take our nation and world (as though it were a globe) tenderly in your hands. Do that physically and in a symbolic way, lift it to God.

Take your time as you ponder and pray one at a time for each of the following:

the hunger of the poor,
the desperation of those without jobs,
the anguish of a war-torn people,
the frustration of governmental leaders,
the futility of the wealthy whose lives have no meaning,
the despair of prisoners,
the helplessness of the elderly,
the fear of the terminally ill,
the confusion of the young.

Lift all your feelings in an act of surrender to God. If you sense the desperation of persons and feel the anguish of your own inadequacy as you cry out to God, you have experienced supplication.

Claim the promise of God:

“If my people who are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land,” II Chronicles 7:14 RSV.

Write what this scripture tells you to do.

VI. Commitment

As a final act in this time of prayer, in your own words, commit to God the new person you have just become.

**Module 4 -- Types Of Prayer
Notes**

Module 5 -- Prayer And Healing

II Kings 20:1-8; II Corinthians 12:7; Isaiah 53:5

INTRODUCTION

1. The role of miracles.
2. The role of “sign gifts” placed the inspired word in an inspired book.
3. All healing is divine.
4. All things were begun by miracles and perpetuated by law.

DISCUSSION

- I. King Hezekiah, II Kings 20:1ff.
- II. Paul, the Apostle, II Corinthians 12:9, “But he said to me, my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”
 - A. “I am debtor,” Romans 1:14.
 - B. “I am unashamed,” Romans 1:16.
 - C. “I am ready,” Acts 21:13.
- III. Healing and Providence of God.
 - A. Laws of nature and prayer are from the same God.
 - B. God may choose to set aside one law for the higher working of another law, cancer, etc.

CONCLUSION

1. The provisional nature of miracles, James 5:14-15.
2. Let us be more concerned about knowing God, than how he has performed in the past.
3. Pray for healing.
4. The point of all prayer is to reach God.
 - a. Answers are most meaningful when thought of least.
 - b. Prayers are most meaningful when God is thought of most.
5. Satan mocks your morality (who you are); your money (what you have); your education (what you know).
6. Satan trembles when you pray. **There is no substitute for prayer.**

Module 5 -- Option 1

Who's Afraid of the Holy Spirit?

By Daniel B. Wallace, America Online T365JKC

The uneasy conscience of a non-charismatic evangelical.

I am a cessationist. That is to say, I believe that certain gifts of the Holy Spirit-- namely, the "sign gifts" of healing, tongues and miracles--were employed in the early church to authenticate that God was doing something new, but that they ceased with the death of the last apostle. This is what distinguishes me from a charismatic Christian, who believes the Holy Spirit still uses "sign gifts" today.

While I still consider myself a cessationist, the last few years have shown me that my spiritual life has gotten off track--that somehow I, along with many others in my theological tradition, have learned to do without the third person of the Trinity-- namely, the Holy Spirit.

This has not hindered my academic work. Mine has become a cognitive faith--a Christian from the neck up. As long as I could control the text, I was happy. I lived in the half-reality that theological articulation is valid only if it is based on sound exegesis and nothing else. Like the proverbial frog in the slowly simmering pot of water, I did not sense that I was on the way to self-destruction.

I grew up in a conservative Baptist church in southern California. My youth was characterized by timidity: I was a Clark Kent with no alter ego. I was afraid of life, afraid to explore, afraid to question aloud. In spite of this, or, perhaps, because of this--I was a leader in the youth group.

Two-and-a-half years ago, the Almighty suddenly and graciously turned up the heat. One of our twin sons was diagnosed with cancer. God provided me a wake-up call to get me out of the pot. I am sharing my testimony in hopes that many others who are in cauldrons of their own making might realize the danger--and get out.

We weighed options and decided to go with the recommended treatment. I cannot adequately describe what the next six months were like for Andy, for me, his mother, and for his three brothers. But I can tell you that I was in an emotional wasteland. I was angry with God, and I found him to be distant. Here was this precious little boy who was losing his hair and losing weight. At one point, he weighed only 45 pounds. His twin brother at that time weighed 85 pounds. Andy was so weak that we had to carry him everywhere, even to the bathroom.

Through this experience I found that the Bible was not adequate. I needed God in a personal way--not as an object of my study, but as friend, guide, comforter. I needed an existential experience of the Holy One. Quite frankly, I found that the Bible was not the answer. I found the Scriptures to be helpful, even authoritatively helpful as a guide. But without my feeling God, the Bible gave me little solace.

In the midst of this “summer from hell,” I began to examine what had become of my faith. I found a longing to get closer to God, but found myself unable to do so through my normal means: exegesis, Scripture reading, and more exegesis. I believe that I had depersonalized God so much that when I really needed him, I didn’t know how to relate. I longed for him, but found many community-wide restrictions in my cessationist environment. I found a suffocation of the Holy Spirit in my evangelical tradition as well as in my own heart.

It was this experience of my son's cancer that brought me back to my senses-- that brought me back to my roots. And out of this experience, I have been wrestling with the practical issues of pneumatology (the study of the Holy Spirit). I want to offer two theses, which deal with the areas God is addressing in my own life. I hope and pray that this essay will help other cessationists avoid the trap I fell into.

THESES ONE and TWO

1. Although the sign gifts died in the first century, the Holy Spirit did not. We all can affirm this theologically, but pragmatically we act as though the Holy Spirit died with the early church. This is my fundamental thesis, and it is well worth exploring.

What can we, when speaking to cessationists, affirm that the Holy Spirit is doing today? What did Jesus mean in John 10:27 when he said, "My sheep hear my voice?" What did Paul mean when he declared in Romans 8:14, "Those who are led by the Spirit are the children of God?" What did John mean in I John 2:20 when he wrote, "You have an anointing from the Holy One?" In my own experience, I'm finding God communicating to me beyond the Scripture, but never contrary to the Scripture; not audibly, but nevertheless personally.

2. While charismatics sometimes give a higher priority to experience than to relationship, rationalistic evangelicals give a higher priority to knowledge than to relationship. Both of these miss the mark. Paul, in 1 Corinthians, condemns both. Knowledge puffs up; and spiritual experience without love is worthless. By overemphasizing the cognitive element of Christianity, my view of God became distorted, in three ways:

First, this emphasis on knowledge over relationship produced in me a bibliolatry. For me, as a New Testament Professor, the text is my task -- but I made it my God. As shocking as it may sound to many in the cessationist circle, the Bible is not a member of the Trinity.

Second, the net effect of such bibliolatry is a depersonalization of God. Eventually, we no longer relate to him. God becomes the object of our investigation rather than the Lord to whom we are subject. The vitality of our religion gets sucked out. In our minds we move from "I trust in" to "I believe that..."

Third, part of the motivation for depersonalizing God was my craving for control. What we cessationists dislike most about charismatics is their loss of control, their emotionalism. We take comfort in the fact that part of the fruit of the Spirit is self-control. By this we mean, "do all things in moderation"-- including worshiping God. Should we not throw ourselves on him, knowing that apart from him we can do nothing? God is still a God of healing and of miracles.

Module 5 -- Option 2

Prayer and Healing

Serious illnesses, disasters, etc., may be the thorns on roses. They may be “for your sakes,” Genesis 3: 17-18 includes the possibility. We will never be satisfied with this mortal life--we are here only for a while. We are encouraged to “always pray and not lose heart,” Luke 18:1.

1. We need to develop a praying habit. Hyde
2. We need to develop a praying confidence. Muller
3. We need to develop a praying consistency. O. Smith
4. We need to develop a praying effectiveness. St. Paul
5. We need to develop a praying passion. O. Hallesby
6. Hebrews 4:14-16, “Seeing then that we have a great high priest who has passed through the Heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”
7. “God has given us the privilege of prayer, not primarily as a method for getting things or changing circumstances, but as a means of cooperating with Him.” Tom Elliff, **A Passion for Prayer**
8. Five types of healing:
 - ◆ Natural
 - ◆ Assisted
 - ◆ Miraculous
 - ◆ Inner
 - ◆ Spiritual Freedom, I Corinthians 15:54-57.

Module 5 -- Option 3

Love Lines Volume 25 No. 48

Beauty from Chaos

by Rubel Shelly

When an artist begins a new canvas, he or she first puts down several broad strokes of basic colors. Someone watching him through an untrained eye might be confused and see no meaning at all to such a beginning. He might even walk away, convinced that nothing of beauty of so awkward a start.

As the artist works carefully to blend the colors and to introduce an occasional new one from his palette, though, what had originally seemed to be meaningless confusion begins to emerge into a beautiful painting.

The workings of our God are sometimes of the same order. He does this and allows that in his world. It might appear that in a given instance there is no possible good that can come from a situation. Then, as a skillful artist, he brings first this and then another influence to bear until something purposeful begins to emerge and some good work is done to his glory. This is the biblical doctrine of the providence of God.

Divine providence should never be interpreted as meaning that every successful effort is a God-approved one or that every disaster is divine judgment. Wicked persons, such as Haman in Esther's story, may prosper for a time and appear to be successful. At the same time, good persons like Job or Joseph may suffer as Satan attempts to undermine and destroy their faith in God.

We are not infinite in wisdom and thus cannot see things as God sees them. We cannot always discern his reasons for allowing the conditions that seem so unjust to us. We do know, however, that such unpleasant episodes as those which have been endured by Joseph, Esther, or many a modern-day saint have perfected faith and strengthened character.

God is working on the canvas of human history. We must not presume to know what he is attempting to achieve in particular cases. Neither are we wise enough to be critical of his methods. His workings in our lives are beyond our ability to discern, and we may not understand them until we look back from eternity.

Beauty from chaos. Victory from defeat. Life from death. God has a track record of doing it time and again. So don't despair that you cannot see his resolution to your present crisis. Just continue to live by faith not by sight.

Module 5 -- Option 4

Exodus 15:26

Jehovah Rapha - Jehovah, the Healer.

- I. Does the atonement of Christ, which deals with the moral and spiritual dilemmas of this life, also impact physical disease?
- II. Points for consideration /discussion.
 - A. Romans 5:12, "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned."
 1. The statement, sin entered the world and death through sin, implies that sin antedated or preceded death.
 2. Disease which is incipient death, therefore, owes sin for its beginning.
 3. In some way its ultimate solution must be found in the redemption of Christ.
 - B. Acts 10:38b, "Jesus of Nazareth. . . went about doing good and curing (*iomenos*) all the ones who were being oppressed (afflicted) by the devil."
 1. That Satan oppressed the bodies of mortals is further taught in Luke 13:16. "This woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept in bondage for eighteen years...should be set free from that which bound her." Verses 10-14 reveal that her physical body was crippled. She was bent over and could not straighten up. "Woman', Jesus said, 'you are free from your infirmity.'"
 2. His miracle caused her to straighten up immediately and praise God. The ruler of the Synagogue acknowledged the miracle, "because Jesus healed..."
- III. Jehovah is the God of the Impossible.
 - A. The impossible faces all of us at one time or another. It storms, looms before us, stalks us, bends our plans, stands across our future, pierces our present and hangs onto us from our past.

- B. There is a way to face the impossibility--**invade it!!** Not in anger; not in resignation, but with the violence of **importunate prayer!!**
- C. The prayer of faith is a journey. It is not a destination. It is a means, not the end or the objective--**God is!!**
- D. Nothing is more limiting than the self-imposing boundaries we clamp around our own minds and lives when we require God to fit into our plans as it pertains to life, health, children, jobs, etc.

Summary

- If sickness is only a physical condition, then it may be treated in natural ways. However, if it is included in the curse of sin, it must have its true remedy in the death of Jesus.
 - Since disease is the result of the fall, we may expect it to be embraced in the provisions of redemption.
 - The resurrection of Jesus is elevated above the cross (it could not have been without the cross). It is in the power of the resurrection that the good news of healing reaches the fountain of its deepest life.
 - The death of Christ destroyed the power of sin, the root of disease. It is the life of Jesus that supplies the source of strength for our redeemed bodies. "...but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,"
II Timothy 1:10.
 - There seems to be a relationship between the soul and the body. "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well,"
III John 1:2.
- E. Further considerations. Re: disease.
1. As soon as disease has advanced beyond the power of nature to recover, it will result in death, unless removed by the power of God.
 2. What is the difference in disease in the body of a human or an animal? Disease in a human body is a moral issue as opposed to the same disease in the body of an animal.

3. When disease has advanced beyond the power of nature, neither nature, nor the physician, nor even prayer will maintain the life of the sufferer. God may in His sovereign purpose choose to remove the disease. Since disease is the precursor of death, its remedy implicates the cross.
4. The only way God chooses to remove the curse, and still be just, is to do it through substitution.
5. What does it mean to be judicially released from disease?
II Corinthians 4:10-12, "We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you."
6. It is my present judgment that believers who fight the cancer battle and lose, will be in the Martyr's Hall of Fame in Heaven. They will be numbered along with those of whom John spoke in Revelation 2 and 3.
7. Resurrection power will be the ultimate healing for all believers.
 - a. Every blind eye will be open and see.
 - b. Every deaf ear will hear.
 - c. Every crooked limb will be straightened.
 - d. Every broken bone will be healed.
 - e. "Death will be swallowed up in victory," I Corinthians 15:54b.

CONCLUSION

1. It may be wrong to believe God is involved in something when He is not.
2. However, it is infinitely worse to believe that God is not involved in something when he is.
3. We are so caught up in the material and secular world that we may lose sense of spiritual reality.
4. "Therefore, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen. For the seen is temporary, but the unseen is eternal,"
II Corinthians 4:18.

Module 5 -- Option 5

Technical Note. Re: Isaiah 53:5-6

- A. "He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds (stripes) we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."
1. We have technically erred in applying Isaiah 53:5, "by His stripes we are healed," to physical healing.
 2. We rather should read verse 4, "surely he took up our infirmities," as referring to physical illness. Matthew 8:16-17 is an affirmation, "When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases."
 3. Isaiah 53:5b, "by his stripes we are healed," is also recorded in I Peter 2:24, "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to our sins and live for righteousness, by his stripes we are healed."
 - a. *molopi* - stripe/bruise.
 - b. *iathate (iaomai)* - heal, spiritually, restore from a state of sin and condemnation. The Analytical Greek Lexicon Harper & Bros., page 198.

**Module 5 -- Prayer And Healing
Notes**

Module 6 -- Laws Governing Prayer

I John 5:13ff; Hebrews 11: 32-40

INTRODUCTION

1. God created an orderly universe. God is a good God.
2. True nature and true religion come from a common father-God. Satan, sin, flesh and hell have fouled up things.
3. We expect laws to exist that govern both. The redeemed, those saved by the gift of Jesus, are God's channel of dealing in grace and goodness on this planet.
4. God's answer to man's problems is grace.
5. God answers all prayers, I John 3:21b-22, " we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him."
6. The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you.

DISCUSSION

- I. When God Says "Yes", II Kings 20.
- II. When God Says "No", II Corinthians 11:9.
 - A. In our weakest hours, we would rather blame God than trust Him. James 4:2-3, "You want something, but don't get it... You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives..."
 - B. Romans 8:28 does not say we know that everything is good, but that everything works out in God's will to the ultimate good.
- III. When God Says Wait Awhile, Acts 12:5ff.
 - A. Herod killed James and was prepared to kill Peter. The church was praying for his deliverance. It came as a result of answered prayer.
 - B. Peter arrived at the house of Mary. A child named Rhoda saw Peter and cried, "He's out there! You are out of your mind, they told her," verse 15. Peter continued to knock. God opened the prison gates, but the brothers had to open the garden gate.

IV. When God Is Silent, John 11:1ff.

- A. Mary and Martha asked for Jesus to come to Bethany and mourn the death of their brother, Lazarus, verses 1-3.
- B. "Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days," verse 6.
- C. Why did he wait two days?
- D. He knew he could trust them. When he arrived, he did not sympathize over death, he gave them a live brother.

V. Problem of Internal Contradiction.

- A. Two believers who are equally qualified apply for a single position.
- B. How does God decide who gets the job?

VI. Problem of External Contradiction.

- A. When believers have equal but different needs, what is God's solution?
- B. How does God resolve a church outdoor activity when Christian farmers need rain?

VII. Laws Governing When, What and How.

- A. God's provisional sovereignty always determines when.
- B. God's will, timing, human faith and prayer determines what and how.

VIII. Wasted Prayer.

- A. The church announced revival services months ago. One waits until the service begins to pray for lost souls.
- B. A student prays the morning of a test.

CONCLUSION

1. God's delays are not God's denials.
2. Nothing is left to chance or accident.
3. Exercise this virtue or lose it.
4. Beware of short-cuts or placing something superficial in front of the one who suffered in Gethsemane.
5. No Gethsemane - No Calvary.

Module 6 -- Option 1

After God's Silence--What?

- I. The Absence of Audible Response.
 - A. John 11:5-6, "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days."
 1. Jesus stayed two days where He was without sending a word of comfort to Mary and Martha.
 2. One may say, "I know why God has not answered my prayer. It is because I asked for something wrong."
 3. That was not the reason Jesus did not answer Mary and Martha. They desired a right thing. They had the right to ask and receive sympathy from friends since their brother was dead.
 4. God wants us to stop measuring Him by our thoughts.
 - B. God's silences are often His answers.
 1. If one regards God's answers to be in the domain of our five senses, we are in a very elementary condition of grace, a victim of the visible.
 2. Can it be said of us as it was of Mary and Martha that He so loved them (us) that He stayed where he was two days, because He knew/knows whom He can trust.
- II. When God Speaks.
 - A. Mary Magdalene was weeping at the sepulcher.
 1. She was asking for the dead body of Jesus.
 2. In her humility and broken heart, she asked a man that she thought to be a gardener, Sir, where did you lay him? She was speaking to Jesus and did not know it until He softly said, "Mary!", John 20:13-18.
 - B. Did Jesus give her what she asked?
 1. He gave her something infinitely greater than she ever imagined.
 2. He gave her a risen, living Lord!

- C. God has trusted us in intimate ways with absolute silence, because He knew He would bless us with a greater answer than we ever dreamed possible.
1. Some prayers are not answered because they are outside the will of God.
 2. Others are not answered immediately because God has something greater.

CONCLUSION

1. Because God could trust Mary and Martha, they received a much greater answer than they asked - a brother brought to life rather than mourning his death.
2. Mary Magdalene was assured of a living Christ when she had come to anoint His dead body.

Module 6 -- Option 2

Love Lines Volume 25 No. 21

When Prayers Go Unanswered

by Rubel Shelly

In Acts 12, Luke tells us how James was put to death by an evil man and Peter was delivered from that same man's plan for his murder. Don't you think the same Christians in Jerusalem prayed for both men to be spared? Did they pray harder for Peter than for James? Was James less important to God than Peter? What gives here, anyway?

Have you ever prayed prayers that didn't work? Has that discouraged you from praying about other things? Have you ever wondered if you don't get what you ask for, why pray at all? Here are some things to think about.

First of all, our prayers are always to have as their bottom line this understanding: "Not my will, but yours be done." I suspect those Christians who prayed for James and Peter added that caveat. And I simply have to believe that God had completed what he had willed to do through James and was ready for him to enter his reward, whereas there were still unfinished tasks for Peter.

Second, prayer is not a way to impose our wills on God. Sometimes we may think our prayers didn't work because we didn't get what we asked. Maybe what we asked for wasn't what we needed. God answered out of his wisdom for the long term good rather than our ignorance.

Third, prayer is not a way to impose our will on others. You can pray for someone's salvation, but that person will have to open their heart to the Lord. I believe our prayers can help but some people seem determined to go to hell in spite of all the prayer in the world cannot change the wills of those people. A mother will never stop praying for her wayward boy, but she must be careful about blaming God when that boy makes it clear that he wants no part of what God has offered him again and again because of her prayers.

Fourth, our desperation in prayers most often assumes that nothing good can come of sickness, poverty, or death. But do you remember Paul's prayer to have his "thorn in the flesh" removed? What did God tell him? He said that Paul's uninvited and unwelcome challenge was keeping him humble and reminding him to put his full dependence on the Lord. It was teaching him that God's grace was sufficient. On this matter of healing, for example, every Christian's prayer gets answered. Some are answered this side of death, and the rest are answered on the other side. Death isn't the worst thing that can happen to one of us, you know.

"Ask and you will receive" is a faithful promise of God. It is always true. And what you receive when you ask will be God's best answer with a view toward your long-term good -- even if it first requires a disappointment.

When you are inclined to think your prayer hasn't worked, think again. Prayer always works. Issue rooted in the promise of God, and his promises are faithful. You can depend on it.

Think about the following:

- ◆ BEING must precede DOING.
- ◆ The evidence of gifts can become more significant than the existence of the giver.
- ◆ Prayer is to a person—faith is in a person.
- ◆ When answers do not come as we asked and expected, we keep on believing because we TRUST GOD—the Holy Spirit living in us makes this possible. He is our prayer, Ephesians 6:18 and Jude 20b.
- ◆ In the midst of trial and loss, be thankful. What?? You say be thankful, be thankful for what? Be thankful for what is left. Often what remains after a serious struggle is more than was take away.
- ◆ Prayer is:
 - to us, a weapon, II Corinthians 10:4-5.
 - to Satan, a barrier, Job 1:5-16.
 - to God, a fragrance, Psalm 141:1-2; Revelation 5:8b.

Module 6 -- Option 3

Love Lines Volume 25 No. 36

But why pray if.....

by Rubel Shelly

In Alexander Solzhienityn's, A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch, Ivan endures all the horrors of the Soviet prison camp. One day he is praying with his eyes closed when a fellow prisoner notices him and says with ridicule, "Prayers won't help you get out of here any faster." Opening his eyes, Ivan answers, "I do not pray to get out of prison but to do the will of God."

Prayer is not manipulating God to get what is wanted, but discovering what he wants us to do, and then asking the Holy Spirit to enable us to do His will.

The Word of God invites us to pray about our circumstances. And in certain instances those circumstances will be altered in response to our prayers. Thus we pray for the sick to be healed or for a struggling marriage to endure. We pray for rain during droughts. And we pray for our children to be spared temptation or harm.

More important than the power of prayer to change circumstances, however, it is power to change the person who prays. Every Ivan prays to be released from unjust sufferings--to be vindicated, to be allowed to resume a normal life. But Ivan, Paul, and Jesus all lived in a world that too often witnessed the crucifixion of innocent persons.

If prayer served as a guarantee of changed circumstances, none of us would ever get sick, go broke, or endure heartache. Nobody we love would have less than the most desirable mate, job, or life style.

But if prayer worked only as a means to alter our circumstances for the better, it would be an evil power to possess. It would corrupt us and make us shamelessly selfish. It would reduce the God of the universe to a Genie who grants wishes on demand.

More often than not, I believe one's life circumstances will not be changed simply because they are unpleasant. Perhaps they are serving a purpose we cannot see at the time. Maybe they are humbling us in giving us the chance to prove that our faith is real by trusting God through the dark times. Sometimes they are the outcome of prior bad decisions. And surely they are occasionally nothing more or less than the indiscriminate challenge of living as vulnerable creatures in a fallen world.

Was Paul a good man? Did he pray intensely for "his thorn in the flesh" to be removed? Yet God chose not to change his circumstances but him! "My grace is sufficient for you," was the answer Paul received, "for my power is made perfect in weakness," II Corinthians 12:9.

What are you praying about today? Whatever it is, pray passionately and expectantly. But be aware that it may be you rather than your situation that most needs adjustment.

**Module 6 -- Laws Governing Prayer
Notes**

Module 7 -- The Importance Of Prayer

I Thessalonians 5:17; Ephesians 6:18

INTRODUCTION

1. A soldier does not put on armor just to sit around, but to prepare for battle.
2. Every believer must recognize the need to develop a sensitive heart who knows the word and how to pray.
3. Prayer is important not only for the price a man must pay to be an effective warrior, but because of the supreme price our Lord paid. Isaiah 52:14, "...his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness."

DISCUSSION

- I. The Most Important Person Who Ever Lived Practiced Prayer, Mark 1:35, Mark 14:32-42; Luke 6:12.
 - A. Christ saw death written all over him. He felt the awful doom of God. No Gethsemane, No Calvary.
 - B. "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God," II Corinthians 5:21.
- II. The Apostles Regarded It Highly, Acts 6:1ff.
- III. There Is A Devil, Ephesians 6:10ff.
 - A. One may go in prayer where he is not wanted.
 - B. One may go into the heart of a rebellious child or friend, etc.
- IV. It Is God's Way For Us to Obtain His Blessings, James 1:5-6; Hebrews 4:14ff.
- V. Because Christ "lives to intercede for us," Hebrews 7:25.
 - A. Pray to Christ. "While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Then he fell on his knees and cried out, Lord, do not hold this sin against them," Acts 7:59-60.
 - B. When Jesus takes a prayer to the Father, He always gets results.
 - C. Song -- "I know that my Redeemer lives and ever prays for me."

VI. It Empowers For Service, I Samuel 1:10ff.

- A. Hannah's son, Samuel, was a child of answered prayer.
- B. Causes one to sense despair for the lost.
- C. Helps one sense God's calling, mission or purpose of this life.

CONCLUSION

1. "I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken," Psalm 16:7-8.
2. Leads to a deeper spiritual life.
3. Leads to ability to agonize over the world as God sees it.
4. Leads to "unlocking portions of God's storehouse".
5. Illustration from Dr. White's Journal.

**Module 7 -- The Importance Of Prayer
Notes**

Module 8 -- Praying In The Psalms

PART I - INTRODUCTION

- A. Poetry In The Old Testament (See syllabus on poetic books)
- B. The Age Of King David
 - 1. Rise of religious poetry
 - a. Political and religious reforms of Samuel created a new sense of national unity.
 - b. This spirit kindled the fire of religious patriotism.
 - 2. Music had a large place in the life of the schools of the prophets and was used in public religious exercises. I Samuel 10:5ff
 - 3. The victories of King David and economic expansion of the nation brought happiness and merriment, also pride, sin, etc.
 - a. This condition stimulated poetic genius.
 - b. Illustration: - England's Victorian and Elizabethan ages.
 - 4. Removal of ark from the house of Aminadab to Jerusalem caused ecstatic joy. In fact, so much so that David's wife, Michal, daughter of Saul, despised him. II Samuel 6:20ff.
 - a. This led to the organization of choirs of Levites to compose hymns of praise to Jehovah God (Hallel Psalms).
 - b. II Samuel 6; I Chron. 15, 16.

- C. "Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God." Ecclesiastes 5 1-2.

PART II - "MY SOUL CRIES OUT FOR GOD" PSALMS 42, 43

- A. God is holy - Psalm 99
 - 1. Adoration - 95 - 97
 - 2. Worship - 98 -100
- B. Thirsting for God - 63
- C. Praising God - 8, 20, 33, 34, 40, 57:7-11, 71:22-24, 92, 95:1ff, 105
- D. Joy in God's house - 84, 122, 137:5
- E. In the presence of God - 91, 23
 - 1. The presence of God delights the soul.
 - 2. God's protection is known.
 - 3. The Shepherd's gentle shield and comfort.
 - 4. The shadow of the Almighty is a safe place. The saints who dwell in the secret place of the Most High are secure.
- F. God in nature - 19, 29, 104, etc.
 - 1. Hear God's voice in thunder.
 - 2. Feel God's breath in each breeze.
 - 3. See God in a sunset.
 - 4. God's sword gleams in lightening.
 - 5. Watch God's hand provide all needs.

- G. Love for God and his word – 119.
 - 1. Last half of 19
 - 2. "Holy alphabet for Zion's scholars" - 119
 - 3. God's word is a lamp to guide; a spring of comfort and a fountain of hope.
- H. God's care for all.
 - 1. Faith in God - 121.
 - 2. God's care in sunshine and rain
 - 3. The river of God is always full.
- I. God, Our Refuge. - 46, 61, 62
 - 1. God is shelter.
 - 2. The might of God was the theme of the Hebrew poets.

Part III - THE PROBLEM OF SIN

- A. The Psalms deal with man as a sinner.
 - 1. Seven best-known poems are so charged with the sense of sin and of its deadly fruits that they have been known as penitential Psalms.
 - 2. 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143.
 - 3. While the Psalmist does not affirm sinlessness, he does sometimes say he is better than his foes. Of a Christian, Jesus requires a deeper understanding of sin than that in the Old Testament.
- B. Confessing sin.
 - 1. Individual sin - 32, 51.
 - 2. Collective confession - 78, 95, 106.
 - 3. God's kindness - 105.
- C. Seeking forgiveness.
 - 1. A cry for mercy - 51.
 - 2. Never did a soul plead more powerfully for forgiveness.
 - 3. God cannot despise a broken heart, crushed with the sense of sin like a lost child crying for home and mother.

- D. Conquering sin - 130.
 - 1. The Psalms begin with a cry out of the pit and ends with the joy of salvation.
 - 2. The greatest victory is triumph over sin in one's heart.
 - 3. This cry is heard - 19:13, 119:133, 139:23.
 - 4. From strength to strength. Victory over sin is sure - 84.

Part IV - WRESTLING WITH DOUBTS

- A. The problem of doubt.
 - 1. The ancient Hebrew found in the world one great difficulty.
 - a. He believed in God's wisdom and power.
 - b. How then could it be possible in a world over which a wise and just God presides that the wicked should prosper and the righteous suffer? This is the question debated by Job and his three friends.
 - 2. A partial solution of the difficulty is seen in 37. The theme is "brevity of godless prosperity and the certainty that well-doing will lead to well-being."
 - 3. These Psalms soar up to God: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14.
 - 4. A better solution is attained in 73, which depicts God's attitude toward the wicked and the righteous. This is also shown in 17, 22, 25, 26.
- B. The wicked will be over-thrown. The righteous will live forever in communion with God. Not even death can sever us from God. The pleasures of scoffers pale in insignificance with the glories of everlasting fellowship with God. 1, 2, 9; 20, 23, 139.

Part V – OUT OF THE DEPTHS

- A. 88 - Darkest prayer in the Bible. No hope.
- B. 31 - Out of the depths of persecution and slander the author of 31 climbed into his refuge as he exclaimed, "You will hide them under the cover of your presence from men in league together; you will keep them beneath your roof safe from evil men", verse 20. See also 33, 34, 35.
- C. 77 - is a stairway out of the depths of depression and anxiety. The experience of the author well illustrates Maclaren's epigram, "We shall cry ourselves out of the depths." For assurance read 80, 81, 84.
- D. The author of 116 looked into the jaws of death. Perhaps no other Psalm has so much to say about physical death. The singer is filled with gratitude as he reviews the deadly peril from which God has saved him.
- E. 88 - is unique because it is sad and plaintive from beginning to end. The singer has long cried for delivery from bodily weakness and from loneliness. For similar references, read 90, 91, 92:1-5.
- F. Out of the depths of disaster and defeat the authors of 60, 74, 79, 89 cry to God.
 - 1. The exile was a horrifying experience to Jews in 587-86.
 - 2. They mourned over the destruction of their beautiful temple and the Holy City in which their fathers had worshipped. The author of 60 closes with hope and confidence.

PART VI –ETHICAL IDEALS

- A. Unquestionably in the Psalms we reach the high-water mark of Old Testament practical piety, the best that the Old Testament can exhibit of heart-religion.
 - 1. What sort of man, then, would the Psalms acclaim as good? One opens with a vivid contrast between the righteous and the wicked.
 - 2. 15 – Is David's most complete description of a good man to be found in the Psalter.
- B. The picture is drawn in answer to the question, "What sort of man will the Lord receive as an acceptable worshipper?"
 - 1. The morality of the Bible is rooted in religion, and the religion of the Bible bears fruit in the highest ethics known to man.
 - 2. 131 - makes humility of prime quality in real goodness.
 - 3. 133 - magnifies the spirit of brotherly love.
 - 4. Social virtues had a large place in the psalmists' ideals of goodness.
 - 5. Humility and brotherly love are a guarantee of peace in the home, the church and the nation. 24:4 is a collection of ethics.
- C. The ethics of speech. Even a casual reader of the Psalms must be impressed with the fact that its authors felt very keenly the lies and the slander of the wicked. Stirred with righteous indignation, they call upon God to awaken and confront the foes of truth and righteousness, 12, 52 and 120.

D. Ministering to the needy. Bible readers are familiar with the ideal of the good man in Job 29:12-16; 31:13-22. 82 is a plea for justice. Evil judges are one day to confront the great Judge. Men need fair play first. Perhaps there will then be no occasion for the exercise of almsgiving. 41 is a plea for kindness. The Christian is reminded of the words of Jesus, "blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." The ideal ruler is both just and beneficent - 72:2, 12-14.

Part VII - OPPOSING THE WICKED - IMPRECATORY (PRAY AGAINST)

- A. To be a good lover one must know how to hate, 55, 58 and 59.
1. The excitement of battle throbs in many of the Psalms.
 2. The enemies of righteousness are victorious and defiant.
 3. Their taunts drive the psalmists to importunate prayer. God's honor is at stake and his cause in peril. See 83, 109, 137 and 140.
- B. More than 20 Psalms contain prayer for the defeat and overthrow of the wicked.
1. Warlike imagery of the boldest kind is found in many of the imprecatory passages.
 2. To the Christian, some of the curses pronounced against the wicked are startling and painful.
 3. Many are led to wonder how such imprecations ever found a place in the Bible.
 4. The most severe curses are found in 35 and 69.
 5. Become childless 109.
 6. Total financial loss 109:11.

C. Maclaren's words are well worth reading as an introduction to 109.

1. "For no private injuries, or for those only insofar as the suffering singer is a member of the community which represents God's cause, does he ask the descent of God's vengeance, but for the insults and hurts inflicted on righteousness."
2. The form of these maledictions belongs to a lower stage of revelation; the substance of them, considered as passionate desires for the destruction of evil, burning zeal for the triumph of truth, which is God's cause, and unquenchable faith that He is just, is a part of Christian perfection."

D. Two suggestions may be made to the student of the Psalter:

1. Study the Psalms of imprecation in the light of their origin. They are poetry, not prose; and DeWitt reminds us that the language of oriental poetry is that of exaggerated passion. Some of these pulse with the throb of actual battle. Swords are drawn and blood is flowing. The champion of God's people prays for the overthrow of His foes. The enemies cursed are men who break every moral law and defy God. The Psalmist in 139 identifies himself with God's cause. "Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD, and abhor those who rise up against you? I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies."

2. We ought to use the imprecatory Psalms in the light of our Lord's teaching. We cannot pronounce curses on our personal enemies. BUT we must not forget to pray for the conversion of those who are engaged in sinful practices.

Part VIII – PSALMS IN THE CHURCH

- A. In the New Testament, there is remarkable contrast between the OT and the NT on the Psalms.
 1. The Old Testament possesses a varied Psalter and enjoins its liturgical use. 68:4, 96:2, I Chronicles 9:33, 15:27, 16:9, 23:30, 25:1-7.
 2. OT Psalms were rendered by as many as 4,000 musicians. I Chronicles 23:5, one of the largest choruses with orchestra on record.
 3. The NT contains no Psalms designated for liturgical use, nor does it enjoin the OT Psalms for the Christian worship. They were used in NT worship.
- B. The OT Psalms were widely employed, but not used exclusively in the NT.
 1. Inspired New Testament Psalms were in evidence at Corinth. I Corinthians 14:26. "When you come together, everyone has a Psalm, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church".
 2. Together with the "revelation", etc., these Psalms were the result of the gift of I Corinthians 12:1ff in the early church and cannot, therefore, be identified with the OT Psalms.

- C. Moreover, there is no evidence in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" refer exclusively to the Septuagintal superscriptions of the Psalter.
 1. On the one hand, the Septuagintal Psalter was entitled only *Psalmoi*. There were other superscriptions besides these three, like "writing," LXX: Psalm 15, 16; "prayer," 16, 17; "instruction," Hallel, 31, 32; "testimony," 79, 80; "praise," 90, 91; "alleluia," 104, 105; while "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" was nowhere else a designation of the Psalter.
 2. On the other hand, each of these three terms has a broader meaning, going beyond the OT Psalter.

Part IX – THE FUTURE LIFE IN PSALMS

- A. "If a man die, shall he live again?" What answer do the Psalms give to Job's cry for light?
 1. There are expressions in the Psalter which seem to forbid hope of immortality. 6:5; 30:9; 39:13; 15:17.
 2. The psalmists are tempted to fear that fellowship with God would end at death.
- B. However, not one of the poets or prophets of Israel settled down to a final denial of immortality.
 1. Some had moments of joyous assurance of a blessed life of fellowship with God in the world to come. II Samuel 12:23.

2. Life everlasting in the presence of Jehovah is the prospect with which the author of 16 refreshes himself, 8-11.
- C. The vision of God's face after the sleep of death is better than worldly prosperity. 17:13-15.
1. The author received peace for his distressed mind in the assurance of an unbroken fellowship with God. 73:23-26.
 2. God will embrace the singer.
 3. It has been said that 49:15 registers the high-water mark of OT faith in a future life.
 4. Death becomes the shepherd of the wicked who trusted in riches, while God redeems the righteous from the power of Sheol and takes the believing soul to Himself.

Part X – THE MESSIAH IN PSALMS

- A. The Suffering Savior.
1. While hanging on the cross, the mind of our Lord turned to the Psalter.
 2. He voiced the terrible anguish of His soul in the opening words of 22 and breathed out His spirit at the end with the words of 31:5.
 3. He also invited the fulfillment of a Messianic prophecy in 69:21b by saying, "I thirst".
 4. Isaiah and the Psalms did not fail Him in the hour of His shame, when reproach broke His heart and there was none to comfort Him.
- B. Only Isaiah 52:13-53:12 surpasses 22 as a picture of Calvary and an interpretation of the significance of the cross.
1. 22 is usually regarded as a Messianic Psalm.
 2. Every sentence can be applied to Jesus without straining its meaning.
 3. If David or some other sufferer took up his harp to sing of his own sorrows, the Spirit of God guided him to describe those of a greater One.
- C. The Conquering King
1. 2 and 110, with which 72 may be compared, describe the Messiah as Jehovah's Son. He is a mighty Conqueror, who shall overwhelm all foes and reign with Jehovah.
 2. Some will oppose the Messiah, and perish. Others will enter His army as volunteers.
 3. In the end there will be victory.
 4. It is better to sit on His throne than to be His footstool. (Contrast men and angels)
- D. The Growing Kingdom.
1. There is room in the earth for no god other than Jehovah, the Creator and Redeemer of mankind.
 - a. 47, 67, 96-100 and 117 are proofs of the glorious missionary outlook of the Psalter.
 - b. All nations are exhorted to forsake idols and worship God.
 2. 47 closes with a picture of the whole world united in the worship of the God of Israel.

Module 8 -- Option 1

42 -- As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me all day long, "Where is your God?"

These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go with the multitude, leading the procession to the house of God, with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng. Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon--from Mount Mizar. Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me-- a prayer to the God of my life. I say to God my Rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?" My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, "Where is your God?" Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

43 -- Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation; rescue me from deceitful and wicked men.

You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy? Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.

Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you in the highest, O God, my God.

Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

32 - Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.

When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Selah

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"-- and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah

Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him.

You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.

Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.

Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!

51 -- Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.

Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

34 -- Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together.

I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.

Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.

This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles.

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry; the face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all.

37 -- Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away.

Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:

He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.

Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret--it leads only to evil.

For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.

A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found.

But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace.

The wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them;

but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he knows their day is coming.

The wicked draw the sword and bend the bow to bring down the poor and needy, to slay those whose ways are upright.

But their swords will pierce their own hearts, and their bows will be broken.

Better the little that the righteous have than the wealth of many wicked;

For the power of the wicked will be broken, but the Lord upholds the righteous.

I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.

For the Lord loves the righteous and will not forsake His faithful ones. They will be protected forever, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off.

73 -- Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. Whom have I in heaven but you? And being with you, I desire nothing on earth. My

flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge, I will tell of all your deeds.

15 -- LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill?

He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman, who despises a vile man but honors those who fear the LORD, who keeps his oath even when it hurts, who lends his money without usury and does not accept a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things will never be shaken.

20 -- May the LORD answer you when you are in distress; may the name of the God of Jacob protect you.

May he send you help from the sanctuary and grant you support from Zion.

May he remember all your sacrifices and accept your burnt offerings. Selah

May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed.

We will shout for joy when you are victorious and will lift up our banners in the name of our God. May the LORD grant all your requests.

Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he answers him from his holy heaven with the saving power of his right hand.

Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

They are brought to their knees and fall, but we rise up and stand firm...Answer us when we call!

90 -- Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth, the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. You turn men back to dust, saying, "Return to dust, O sons of men." For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night. You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning--though in the morning it springs up new, by evening it is dry. We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence. All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan. The length of our days is seventy years-- or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away. Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you. Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Relent, O LORD! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants. Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, for as many years as we have seen trouble.

May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us-- yes, establish the work of our hands.

91 -- He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only observe with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked. If you make the Most High your dwelling --even the LORD, who is my refuge-- then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread upon the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent. "Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.

He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation."

16 -- I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

22 -- My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, and am not silent.

Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel.

In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them.

They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed.

But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people.

All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads:

"He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."

Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother's breast.

From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother's womb you have been my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly; before those who fear you will I fulfill my vows.

The poor will eat and be satisfied; they who seek the LORD will praise him-- may your hearts live forever! All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD.

All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him-- those who cannot keep themselves alive.

Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord.

They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn--for he has done it.

23 -- The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside quiet waters,

he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Module 8 -- Option 2

Healing in the Psalms

The Hebrew Psalter is the manual of religious experience for the children of God in every age. We may therefore expect that its rich devotional pages will express the physical conflicts and blessings of the trusting heart as well as the deeper and more spiritual states. We are not disappointed.

What is more necessary to physical health and comfort than sleep? And so we find the psalmist like a tired and trusting child leaning upon his Father and often echoing the sentiment of Psalm 127:2, "he grants sleep to those he loves." This is better than all the sedatives and narcotics of medical science. We have not leaned far in the blessed gospel of healing if we have not yet learned the secret of going to sleep in the arms of our Lord. How well this is expressed in these two passages in the early Psalms of David, "I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety," 3:5.

6 - Our next reference is a prayer for healing: "Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am faint; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony... I am worn out from groaning all night long. I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears," 2:6. This is indeed a bitter cry, but it is soon changed into a joyful song of praise. "Away from me, all you who do evil, for the Lord has heard my weeping. The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer," 8-9.

18 - Psalm 18 is a sublime record of answered prayer. "It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect." "He trains my hands for battle; my arms can bend a bow of bronze," 32-34. David's physical prowess and victorious strength in battle were not due to the practiced muscles of the athlete, but to the supernatural power that fired his veins with divine strength and made his battles the battles of the Lord. The same strength is still available for those who trust in Him. In the consciousness of his power our lives may be multiplied tenfold.

27 - Here is a fine burst of praise for physical life and deliverance from danger and from death: "I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," verse 13. It was not in the land of the hereafter but in the land of the living that he believed to see the goodness of the Lord. And he saw it.

30 - In Psalm 30 we have again the double side of prayer and praise.

"O LORD my God, I called to you for help and you healed me.

"O LORD, you brought me up from the grave;
you spared me from going down into the pit.

Weeping may remain for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

You turned my wailing into dancing;

you removed my sackcloth, clothed me with joy," verses 2-3, 5.

32 - Psalm 32 is a testimony of pardon and healing.

"When I kept silent, my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my
iniquity.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble
and surround me with songs of deliverance," 32:3-5, 7.

34 - Psalm 34 is one of the favorite "Ebenezers" of every victorious life. It tells of deliverance both from troubles and from fears. There is one precious promise in it that some of us have literally proved in hours of peril. "A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all." He protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken...The Lord redeems his servants; no one will be condemned who takes refuge in him," verses 19, 20, 22.

39 - Here is a humbler and more sorrowful prayer that sometimes fits into the hour of deep depression.

"Remove your scourge from me;

I am overcome by the blow of your hand.

You rebuke and discipline men for their sin,

you consume their wealth like a moth--
each man is but a breath.

Look away from me, that I may rejoice
again before I depart and am no more", verses 10-11, 13.

But the next Psalm very soon turns the prayer into praise. "I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry...He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God," 40:3.

41 - Next is one of the sweetest of the psalms--one that should be hung up in every room of sickness and pain. "The Lord will sustain him on his sickbed and restore him from his bed of illness", verse 3. How gentle His care! How paternal His nursing! How thoughtful His provision for the turning of our very couch, when, as sometimes happens, the trial lingers.

42 - Psalm 42 has a fine expression in the 11th verse, "Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior (the health of my countenance, KJV) and my God." It is repeated in the following psalm and it may well suggest the bright and shining face which God's health gives to the countenance, and which we should ever wear as our testimony to Him.

50 - "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me", vs. 15. This is a promise that may well cover every day of trouble and every case of sickness, need and pain.

51 - "Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice", vs. 8. Here we see that spiritual trouble brings on us physical prostration and distress and that forgiveness and blessing bring healing and comfort to the mortal frame.

55 - Where can we find a darker picture of the sinking life than in 55?

"My heart is in anguish within me;
the terrors of death assail me.

Fear and trembling have beset me;
horror has overwhelmed me.

I said, 'Oh, that I had the wings of a dove!

I would fly away and be at rest'", verses 4-6.

But soon we hear once more the sweeter notes of praise,

"But I call to God,
and the Lord saves me.

He ransoms me unharmed
from the battle waged against me,
even though many oppose me.
Cast your cares on the Lord
and he will sustain you;
he will never let the righteous fall", verses 16, 18, 22.

56 - Again in Psalm 56 we have another testimony of God's deliverance from death. "I will present my thank offerings to you. For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life", verses 12-13.

63 - There is an exceptional expression in the first verse of Psalm 63: "My body longs for you." There is such a thing as the crying out of our physical being to God for quickening and strength. Just as a baby lives on the life of its mother, so God is the supply of our life. "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God", Matthew 4:4. David had learned this deep secret of the divine life, and it is because of this that Christ has become for us the Living Bread, that he who eats Him will live by Him.

68, 71 and 73

"Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior,
who daily bears our burdens.
Our God is a God who saves;
from the Sovereign Lord comes escape from death," 68:19-20.
"I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, O Sovereign LORD;
I will proclaim your righteousness, yours alone.
Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter,
you will restore my life again; from the depths of the earth,
you will again bring me up.
You will increase my honor and comfort me once again," 71:16, 20-21.
"Yet I am always with you;
you hold me by my right hand," 73:23.

All these are testimonies of the healing and strengthening touch of God.

General Promises

There are general promises in the Scriptures and in the Psalms that cover all our needs, including the healing of our bodies. Such a promise is Psalm 84:11, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless."

91 - But it is needless to say the richest and fullest of the psalms of help and healing is the 91st. It almost reads like a psalm of Moses. The drapery of it reminds one of the tabernacle and the Holy of Holies, the secret place of the Almighty. Let us look at three things in this beautiful psalm.

I. Who God Is.

1. He is the Most High, above all other power and therefore above all adversaries and evils.
2. He is the Almighty. This is the mighty Shaddai, the God who is.
3. He is a refuge and fortress, that is, the One to whom we fly in times of danger, either for offensive or defensive warfare.
4. He is our habitation, for having found him a shelter in danger we learn to dwell there as our abiding home when the danger is past.

II. What God Will Be To Us And Do For Us.

1. He will deliver us from Satan, sickness and fear.
2. He will guard us from evil by angelic protection and ceaseless providence.
3. He will answer our prayers, honor and bless us.
4. With long life will he satisfy us and show us his salvation.

III. What He Expects Of Us In Order That We May Claim His Blessing And His Healing.

1. That we should abide in him, dwelling in the secret place of the Most High and abiding under the shadow of the Almighty. This is the secret of every blessing, fellowship with Christ and abiding communion with our Lord.
2. We must confess Him as our Guardian and Deliverer. "I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress'", 91:2. We must say it as well as feel it and commit ourselves openly and unreservedly.

3. We must trust him. We must say, "in whom I trust," 91:2. "Under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and buckler," 91:4 KJV. The shield is the figure of faith. The buckler represents the sort of faith that is so fastened to us that we cannot lose it, and like the ancient buckler it is part of our very dress and inseparable from us. This is the faith that God gives and that overcomes all things and makes all things possible.
4. We must give up our doubts and fears. This is not only a promise, but a command. "You will not fear the terror of night," 91:5.
5. We must tread upon the lion and adder. We must take the place of victory. We must put our feet upon the necks of our adversaries. We must treat our spiritual enemies as conquered foes and we must do it in the very beginning, while they are young, before they get the mastery.
6. We must set our love upon Him, choose Him as our supreme object and desire and be wholly consecrated to His will and glory. It is of these He says, "I will rescue him," 91:14. He is proud of our consecration. There is nothing he will not do for the heart that wholly belongs to Him.

92 - Psalm 92 offers a precious promise of healing. "The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon," verse 12. Here we have both loftiness and strength. We have height and depth--the stature of the palm and the roots of the cedar. You may go through the woods during the spring days and you will see a little vine, the creeper, without any strength in itself, hanging to a great oak. That little creeper is just as strong as the oak. It has not any strength of itself, but has all the strength of the great tree. It is the picture of a weak, helpless disciple leaning on the great, strong Lord. You do not need to be strong, but God is strong, and he gives you His strength.

It continues to say, "planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green," verses 12-14. Surely, that is a blessed kind of healing as old age is usually barren and ceases to bear fruit. After time almost all sorts of vegetable and animal life cease to produce and bring forth fruit. But like the ivy you can cling to the giant tree, taking the strength of God.

105 - Passing over for a moment one or two psalms we come to Psalm 105. Here we find some references to the children of Israel, and God's dealings with them. "He brought out Israel, laden with silver and gold, and from among their tribes no one faltered," verse 37. He brought them forth out of Egypt. He has just been telling us of the death of the firstborn and the leading of the Lord, and this is the way He brought them. He supplied their money, and He supplied their strength because He had promised that He would do it. He had made a covenant at Marah: "If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you," Exodus 15:26. God kept them strong. Caleb tells that he was as fresh at 85 as a man at 25. And they would all have been kept if they had not disobeyed God. But God works both ways -- the covenant of death and the covenant of life -- and so they perished for their disobedience and unbelief.

107 - And so again in Psalm 107 we have a series of pictures of God's dealings with man. In the 17th verse, "Some became fools through their rebellious ways and suffered affliction because of their iniquities." They have done wrong, and God has no other way to wake them up. "They loathed all food and drew near the gates of death. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress," verses 18-19. He is a gracious Lord; He hears their cry. "He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave," verse 20. He did not send a drug or a doctor or a prescription; He sent His Word. "Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy," verses 21-22. This is a beautiful picture of God's tender mercy to the poor, troubled sinner.

110 - Psalm 110 is a psalm for the young as well as the old. "Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy majesty, from the womb of the dawn you will receive the dew of your youth," verse 3. It is a picture of Jesus Christ. And the one that is addressed here is Christ, the Son of Man. The dew of youth means that it is His youth, and He just bedews us. That is divine healing. It is a little of the life of the Son of God that gives freshness and fills us with His Holy Spirit. "Your troops will be

willing [or 'will be a free-will offering'] on your day of battle." Then this will be the result: they will be clothed with the beauty of holiness. They will be fresh from the womb of the dawn and sparkling with the dew of Christ's youth.

116 - The first nine verses of Psalm 116 are a peculiarly beautiful note of praise. "I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy," verse 1. It is not merely "I thank the Lord," but "I love Him because He is so good." Have you ever awakened refreshed and rested after weariness and suffering and said, "I love the Lord because He is so good?" Tell Him you love Him; do not wait until you get to heaven. "Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live. The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow," verses 2-3.

This is for hard cases! It is framed for people who are in a desperate physical condition. It is the testimony of people who have been dreadfully sick and recovered. He tells us what he did. "Then I called on the name of the Lord: 'O Lord, save me,'" verse 4. He did not lose heart. He did not say what is the use. He just called. He put his whole strength in it and was determined that God should hear him. He called. He put his whole strength in it and called on the name of the Lord. "Ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you," John 15:7. Do not say, "O Lord, Lord, Lord, why don't you help me?" But he says, "The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion. The Lord protects the simple hearted; when I was in great need, he saved me," verses 5-6. He knew enough to expect the Lord to help him. "Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the Lord has been good to you. For you, O Lord, have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before the Lord in the land of the living," verses 7-9. He will now live for the Lord.

121 - Is there anything better for the home, the business or the journey than Psalm 121? Especially note the last verses.

He who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord watches over you--
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all harm--
he will watch over your life;
the Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore, verses 4-8.
He is our Preserver, our Keeper, keeping our spirits alive.

127 - Is there a sweeter sedative than Psalm 127:2? "In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat -- for He grants sleep to those He loves." What is more necessary for health than sleep? What is more needful than rest?

145 - We have here some precious promises for the time of physical need. "He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. The Lord watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy," verses 19-20.

102 - Now we go back to the two Psalms that we have passed over. They are like the 91st, the mountaintops of healing. 102 and 103 are linked together. Psalms often go in pairs.

In the 23rd verse of Psalm 102 we read, "In the course of my life he broke my strength; he cut short my days"-- sickness, decay, prostration, paralysis, helplessness, complete collapse, inevitable death. Everybody says so. Strength is gone. Constitution exhausted. "He broke my strength; he cut short my days." It was evident that his days were numbered. There was no hope. He might as well give up and die. That is the situation. He had made up his mind that it was death. Then came the reaction. There is not anything more pathetic than the prayer of helplessness. "So I said: 'Do not take me away, O my God, in the midst of my days; your years go on through all generations,'" verse 24.

Do not fail to see the point. Man has days, God has years. With God, he says, a year is as much as a day with me. I have just a little bit of life, Lord. You have all the ages. You have the ages of eternity, you are so rich in time, rich in life, let me have my little store. Is it not pathetic? Is it not beautiful? Is it not enough to touch the heart of God? It is like the cry of a child, "Save me because I am little." Humble yourself and then the Lord will save you. Don't try to be eloquent. It is upsetting when people say, "I cannot pray well." People who pray are trying to communicate with the Father.

“In the beginning you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. But you remain the same, and your years will never end. The children of your servants will live in your presence; their descendants will be established before you,” verses 25-28.

“Oh, mighty God; oh, Father of eternity; oh, rich Source and Resource of life, pity your little child whose life is like a span.” God hears the prayer, and the very next word is a burst of praise.

103 - Praise the Lord, O my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
Praise the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits--
who forgives all your sins
and heals your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion,
who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle, verses 1-5.

This will mean most to you who have lived it. Some know what that is-- health that is out of weakness made strong, and that lives on the lap of God.

Be impressed by the completeness of this doxology that includes healing and health. It is what God does, it is mercy and salvation from him "Who forgives all your sins," verse 3. He starts at the right place. There is always need for a fresh touch of grace. Do not try to walk on a plane of independence, but get right down at the foot of the cross. There may be things in your heart that you did not know were there. There may be hidden films from the influence of the world, but it is glorious to get right down at the feet of Christ and say, "He forgives all." He is so holy that the heavens are unclean before Him. And so, come, sufferer, come to the blood every time and take a fresh cleansing even for what you do not know, and just live under the blood stained banner of Jesus. And then the healing is complete: He "heals all your diseases," verse 2.

That is not half of the blessing. When all your diseases are healed it is complete healing. He "redeems your life from the pit", verse 4. Because we are walking through death all the time and the elements of poison and disease are always present, why don't we die? Why? The Lord "redeems your life from the pit." He continues to hold you up.

That is not all. He "crowns you with love and compassion," verse 4. That is the sweet nearness, the fondness and the oneness of the Father's heart. When he comes into your body he gets a hold on you. I do not know how we would know the love of God if we did not have him in our very bones. When he is in every throb of the heart, in every bone of the body, he seems nearer to the soul. Do not try to be stiff and cold. There is a place for love and emotion. The happy child and overflowing hallelujahs are conscious that the Lord is for the body and the body is for the Lord, 1 Corinthians 6:13.

The very best is still to come. He "satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle," verse 5. Divine life comes after divine healing. That is being lifted to a higher plane and kept there. That is being healed when you are well, as well as when you are sick. It is the overflowing life of God in the human body and in the human heart. This is the ideal life presented in this beautiful psalm. Most Psalms are far beyond the experience of our lives. May God help us to live in these promises.

I am indebted to Albert Simpson for the preceding section. He lived in the 19th Century with George Muller, R.C. Chapman, Adiniram Judson, and William Carey, some of God's greatest servants ever. He was born in 1843 and died in 1919. As a humble minister of God's word, he had a burning desire for world missions.

For forty years I have been praying through the Psalms. Option 2 of Module 8 is an overlay that may be integrated into the flow of the chapters in Module 8 Option 1. They move from "orientation to disorientation to new-orientation." Walter Brueggemann, **The Message of the Psalms, A Theological Commentary**. Augsburg Publishing Company, 1984.

Module 8 -- Option 3

The Message

42 – As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God? My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me continually, "Where is your God?" These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I went with the throng, and led them in procession to the house of God, with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving.... Why are you down in the dumps, dear soul? Why are you crying the blues? Fix your eyes on God—soon we will be praising him again. He puts a smile on your face. He's my God.

43 – Clear my name, God, stick up for me against ungodly people; from those who are deceitful and unjust deliver me! I counted on you God, why did you walk out on me? Why am I pacing the floor, wringing my hands? O send out your light and your truth; give me a map, so that I can find my way to the sacred mountain to the place of your presence, to enter the place of worship. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.

32 – Happy are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Happy are those against whom the LORD holds nothing and those who hold nothing back from him. (I acknowledged my sin to you and I did not hide my iniquity.) While I kept silent, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Then, I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore, let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress.

51 – Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Hide your face from my

sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. You do not delight in burnt offerings, or I would bring it...the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, Oh, God, you will not despise that. Going through the motions do not please you, a flawless performance is nothing to you. I learned God-worship only when my pride was shattered. Heart-shattered lives ready for love do not for a moment escape God's notice.

34 – I bless God at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. I live and breathe God, if things are not going well, hear this and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Never hide your feelings from him. This poor soul cried, and the LORD heard me and saved me when I was desperate and God got me out of a tight spot. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him and he delivers them.

37 – Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday. Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him... Less is more and more is less. One righteous will outclass fifty wicked, for the wicked are moral weaklings, but the righteous are God strong. God keeps track of the decent folk, what they do won't soon be forgotten. In hard times they will hold their heads high, when the shelves are bare, they will be full. But the LORD laughs at the wicked for he sees that their day is coming. The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows to bring down the poor and needy... I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.

73 – Truly God is good to the upright, to those who are pure in heart. Who have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire other than you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, to tell of all your works.

15 – God, who gets invited to dinner at your place? How do we get on your guest list? Walk straight, act right, tell the truth. Don't hurt your friend, don't blame your neighbor, and do not slander your brother. God honors the one who keeps his vow even when it hurts.

20 – Now I know that the LORD will help his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with mighty victories by his right hand. Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses, but our pride is in the name of the LORD our God. They will collapse and fall, but we shall rise and stand upright. Give victory, O LORD; answer us when we call.

90 – Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past... You sweep us away, like a dream, in the morning life flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers. For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance. For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sigh. The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. Have compassion on your servants that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. Make us happy for as many days as you have afflicted us. May your good deeds be shown to your servants and your splendor to their children.

91 – You who sit down in the presence of God, who spend the night with El Shaddi say this, "God, you are my refuge, I trust in you and I am safe. You will shield us from deadly hazards. Your out-stretched arms will protect us. We will not fear the evils of the night nor disasters that erupt at high noon. God you are our refuge and evil cannot get close to you, nor harm come through the door of your habitation. As you ordered your angels to guard and protect your Holy One, they will guard and protect us. If we stumble they will catch us, it is their job to keep us from falling. Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name. When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them.

16 – Keep me safe, O, God, I've run for dear life to you. I say to God, be my LORD! Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure. For you will not leave me in the grave... You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

22 – O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. But you are holy, enthroned in the praises of your people. In you our fathers trusted and you delivered them. To you they cried, and you saved them; and they were not put to shame. It was you who took me from the womb; you kept me safe at my mother's breast. Since my birth, you have been my God. All the ends of the earth will worship and praise the LORD. All who go down to the dust will kneel before him, and none can keep alive his own soul.

23 – The LORD is my shepherd. I have everything I need. You let me rest in green meadows and lead me beside peaceful streams. You restore my soul. You guide me along right paths, bringing honor to your name. Even though I walk through the dark valley of death, I will not be afraid, for you are close to me; your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You welcome me as a guest, anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD forever.

Module 8 -- Option 4
Praying the Psalms by Elmer L. Towns

42 – As the young deer being chased will thirst for water, so my soul longs for Your presence, O Lord. I thirst for You, O God. When will You let me stand again in Your presence? Day and night I have cried for You, while my enemies jeer, “Where is your God?” I remember when I used to come to You. Now it breaks my heart that I can’t come into Your house because I remember coming to You with a crowd of worshippers. I was singing and giving You thanks; I was praising You with other worshippers. Now I am discouraged in my soul, I am cut off from Your house. Yet, in the future I will return to Your presence; I will come again to Your house to praise You. Now I am depressed because I can’t drink from Your fountains, because I remember You sent us water from Mt. Hermon; where the head waters of the Jordan begins, and from Mizpah where Your presence first dwelt in the land. I hear the waves roaring in the sea, and I want You to refresh me again. So I must drink daily from Your love to me, I must worship You each night with songs and prayer. Even when I can’t come close to You in the temple, I feel lost in the darkness, and my enemies laugh at my commitment to You. They taunt me, saying, “Where is your God?” When I am discouraged in my soul and my spirit is sad, I will worship You in my heart; because You strengthen my confidence, you are my Lord, and my God.

43 – O Lord, examine me carefully; then tell the ungodly what You see. Deliver me from my deceitful enemies, and don’t let dishonest people trap me. You are my strength, O God; why have You not listened to me? Why am I hurting because of my enemies? Give me the light of Your wisdom. Let Your light guide me into godliness, I need to come into Your presence. I will come to the altar to confess my sin, then I will happily come to You; and then I will joyfully sing Your praises. But now I am miserable and lonely. Why am I so upset? O God, my hope and encouragement is in You. I will continue to praise You. You are my health and my Savior.

32 – Lord, I am blessed because You forgave all my rebellion. Lord, I am blessed because You cover my sin. Now I can enjoy Your presence. You bless me by erasing my errors from Your books, You don't even remember them. When I refused to recognize my sin, my whole body cried out with conviction. Day and night my guilt racked me with pain, my mouth was so dry I couldn't speak. Selah! I recognize my sin that made me a wreck. I can no longer hide my faults from You. Selah! So I confessed my transgression to You and repented. Then You forgave my terrible sin. Because You are gracious to forgive our iniquity, every godly person will rest securely in You when judgment comes upon us. I will hide in You when that day comes. I will worship You with songs of deliverance. Selah! Lord, teach me the proper principles of living. Guide me so I don't make mistakes. I don't want to be like a horse that can't understand so You have to jerk me about with a bit in my mouth. Those who rebel against You have a hard life but You show mercy to those who trust You. I am happy because I follow Your principles, and I shout for joy because You make me do right.

51 – Lord, have mercy on me according to Your loving nature. Because of Your mercy blot out my transgression. Wash me completely from my sin, so I will be clean of my guilt. For I acknowledge my terrible deed. I cannot get it out of my mind. Against You and no one else have I sinned in doing what was evil in Your sight. You are absolutely right to convict me and Your punishment is just. Behold I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin my mother conceived me. But You want us to be inwardly truthful because that is where You communicate with us. Cleanse me from my sins so I can be clean. Wash me so I can be whiter than snow. I want to be happy like I was before. I want my broken spirit to rejoice again. Hide my sin from Your face. Cleanse my guilty conscience from guilt. O God create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit in me. Don't kick me out of Your presence and don't take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and give me a new spirit to obey You. Then I will tell sinners how to be saved and they will turn to You.

34 – I will worship You, Lord, at all times. Your praise will continually be in my mouth. I will tell everyone that I trust in You. Those who hardly obey You will rejoice with me. Lord, I magnify Your greatness. I want everyone to join me in praising You. I searched for You when I was scared to death. You took away my anxiety. Others looked to You when they were afraid.

You did not disappoint them. When I was scared, I cried to You for help. You heard me and delivered me from all my troubles. You sent angels to protect me. You told them to surround me and deliver me. I have eaten the good food You provide. Thank You for satisfying me with Your presence. I want all Your children to trust You because I know You will take care of them. The young rebellious lions go hungry, but Your children enjoy the good things You give so I want everyone to listen to me because I can teach them how to find satisfaction. Lord, I know the average person doesn't want to die. They want to live a long time and have a good life. To get it they must quit speaking evil, and begin seeking the truth found in You. They must repent of their evil ways and live peacefully according to Your principles. I know You see everything that Your children do and You hear everything that they say. But Your face is against those who do evil. They die and You kick them out of Your presence. Your children that live right cry to You and You deliver them out of all their troubles. You are near to those who have a broken heart. You save those who are sorry for their sin. I know we who try to live right have many afflictions, but You deliver us out of them all. You protect us when they want to kill us. They don't do us any permanent harm. The sinners will agonize in their sins. Those that hate peace-loving people will never have peace. But You will redeem the life of us who serve You. You will never abandon us.

37 – Lord, I'm not going to worry about lawbreakers because I don't care what they get illegally. They will soon dry up like cut grass. They will eventually die just like new flowers wither. Lord, I put my trust in You and I live right. I know You'll protect me and provide for me. You satisfy me more than anything else and You fulfill every desire of my heart. I commit my days' activities to You. I know You will work everything out. You will make my sincerity bright like a sunrise. My decisions will shine like the noonday. Lord, I rest in Your presence. I wait patiently for Your guidance. I won't worry about those who make money off their illegal deals. Lord, I've stopped getting mad at those who cheat and I don't envy those who get ahead unlawfully because You will eventually cut them off. But You will prosper those who follow You. It won't be long till You get rid of deceivers and those who care about them won't be able to find them. But the meek will be rewarded by You. Then will they live happy and secure lives. The lawbreakers plan to deceive Your children and they tell lies about them. But You just laugh at them because You know payday is coming soon.

The wicked have made elaborate plans to defraud Your followers and to steal everything that they possess. Lord, use their cheating ways against them. May they lose everything they have stolen. I know it is better to be godly with a little than to get rich off evil schemes. You cut off the wretched hand that tries to steal while You are protecting Your children. You take care of Your children each day and You give them a reward they will never lose. They will not be ashamed when You judge them and in difficult times You will provide for them. But Your enemies shall be burnt up. They shall just disappear like smoke. They take from us and never give anything back but Your children are kind and genuine. They shall eventually inherit the earth. You will not judge them or cut them off. You direct the steps of good people as they delight to follow Your principles. Good people do not stay down when they are knocked down. You help them get up each time. Lord, You have let me live from infancy till I am old. I have never seen You turn Your back on Your children. You have always taken care of Your own. Lord, help Your followers to not follow evil but help them always follow good principles. Because You will love those who do right You never forsake them who follow You. You will cut off those who do wickedness. Those who do right will inherit the new heaven and new earth one day. They will live there forever with You. They will always say the right things. They will live by Your laws. Their feet will not be tripped up by sin. The wicked will keep their eye on Your children looking for ways to trip them up. But You will not abandon Your followers to evil people. You will remember them when judgment comes. Lord, I wait on You and try to obey You. I know I will inherit your possessions with Your children but You will cut off the wicked. Lord, the wicked seem to have great influence. They seem to prosper like a spreading oak tree. But I know they will pass away. One day I won't be able to find them anywhere. Lord, watch the one who obeys Your principles because that one will make peace. But the disobedient will be altogether destroyed. They will be completely cut off. You will save those who do right. You will strengthen them when trouble comes. You will help them make it through difficult times. You will deliver them from wicked ones because they trust in You.

73 – God, You are truly good to Israel. To those whose hearts are pure. But I almost gave up my faith. I came close to stumbling. I wanted what selfish people had especially when I saw their prosperity. They don't have the pressures I have. They have strong healthy bodies. They don't let ethics bother them nor do they have everyday problems. They show off their selfish pride. They will not stop at violence to get their way. They lust for everything. There is no satisfying their evil desires. They scoff at everyone else. They willingly use violence to get their way. They claim to be bigger than Heaven. They think everything on earth belongs to them. They have deceived people to believe everything they say. They say, "God doesn't know everything. The Most High doesn't know what I do." Lord, these are arrogant people who have a life of ease, because of their money. But, Lord, was I wrong to stay pure when I denied myself the pleasures of evil? I have had trouble all day long. Every morning I face a different trial. If I have the attitude of the wicked I would have betrayed Your children. I try to figure out why the wicked prosper, but I only become more confused. Then I come into Your presence in the sanctuary and I understand their future destiny. Now I realize they are on a slippery path. They are heading toward eternal destruction. One day, Lord, You will arise to punish their selfish desire. Lord, I acknowledge how bitter I had become. My whole outlook was poisoned by hatred. I was reacting like a dumb animal. I didn't know what I was doing. Nevertheless, I still follow You. You have always held me with Your right hand. You have guided me with Your counsel and one day You will receive me into glory. I don't have anyone in Heaven but You. I desire nothing on earth but You. My flesh will get weak and my heart will fail, but You are the strength of my life. Those who will not follow You will perish because You will destroy those who reject You. But it is good for me to be near You. I have made You my shelter. I will tell everyone of Your works.

15 – Lord, who will live with You in Your Tabernacle in the holy hill? Those who follow Your principles; those who do the right thing; those who tell the truth; those who do not lie about others; those who do not sin against their friends; those who recognize the enemies of God; those who don't retaliate; those who don't charge usury for loans and those who don't take bribes. Lord, honor those who fear Your name because they will live blamelessly for You.

20 – Lord, hear my prayers when pressures come. Defend me by the power of Your name. Come to me with help from Your sanctuary. Give me strength to endure rejection. Remember that I poured out my heart to You and see that I come with a yielded spirit. Give me what Your heart desires for me to have. Carry out Your plans in my life. Then I will rejoice when You save me. I will tell everyone what You have done. That You have carried out Your will in my life. Now I know You care for Your chosen ones. You hear their prayers in Heaven. You save them by Your strong hand. Some trust in chariots, some trust in horses, but I trust in Your name, Lord God. Then will my enemies be defeated and eliminated. Then will I be vindicated and stand before You. Save me, Lord, hear me when I call to You.

90 – Lord, You have been our dwelling place throughout all the generations. Before You created the mountains, even before You created the earth, even from everlasting to everlasting You are God. You determined that all people will die. You decreed that we would all return to dust. A thousand years in Your sight is but yesterday that is gone. It's just a watch in the night. You carry away our years like a flood. Our life is like sleep after we awake. Our life is like grass that springs up in the morning. We grow throughout the day. In the evening we are cut down. Then we wither and die. Your anger can consume us. Your wrath brings us trouble. You see all of our disobediences. You shine Your light on our secret sins. When You are angry with us, our life passes away quickly. Our simple life does not amount to much. Like a tale that someone tells. We live approximately three score and ten years. Some reach the golden age of four score years, but they have physical difficulties and pain. Then their life is cut off and they fly away. No one knows when You are angry at them so we must always trust You in fear. So teach us to make each day count so that we can live wisely. Return to bless us. Don't be angry with us any longer. Show us mercy when we are young so we may rejoice all our lives. May we learn from the years You afflicted us and from the years we sinned against You. Help us understand Your works. Show Your glory to our children. O Lord God, let Your beauty be upon us. Establish the work of our hands. Yes, the work of our hands establish.

91 – When I live in the secret place of Your presence O Most High God who owns the universe I abide under Your protective shadows. O Almighty God who is more than enough. Lord, I will testify about the results of Your presence. You are my protection and fortress. You are my God in whom I trust. I know You will save me from all traps and from deadly diseases. You will cover me with Your wings. I will find refuge under Your protection. Your promises give me peace and security. I will not be afraid of the unseen terror by night nor of the ever-present dangers of the day, nor of the lurking plagues that threaten me, nor of the spreading epidemic around me. A thousand may fall at my side and ten thousand may die around me, but these dangers will not come near me. I will observe with my eyes and will see the punishment of the wicked. I will make You, O Most High God, my protective refuge. And when You are my refuge, Oh Lord, then no harm can destroy me and the epidemic plague will not touch me. Because You will command Your angels to guard me in all ways, they will protect me with their hands to keep me from falling. I can trample down lions and poisonous snakes. I will crush evil threats under my feet. Because I love You, Lord, You will rescue me from danger. Because I know You by name, You will be with me in trouble. When I call upon You for help, You will answer me. You will be with me. You will protect me and my honor. You will give me long life and satisfy me with Your salvation.

16 – Lord, keep me safe because I trust in you. My soul said You are my Lord. Apart from You I have nothing to hope for. Those who worship earthly gods will never find peace. I will not worship idols, nor confess them with my lips. Lord, You are my future inheritance, You are my satisfaction who will protect me in death. You have given me a good life. I follow the good heritage of my godly parents. I bless You, Lord, for guiding me throughout life. You showed me what to do in dark times. I have always made You my guide. I will not be shaken when death comes because You have been at my right hand. Now that I face death, I am satisfied. I will die with great hope in Your resurrection. You will not leave my soul in death. You did not leave the Messiah in the grave. You will raise us up to live again. We will have fullness of joy in Your presence. We will have pleasures forever.

22 – My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far away when I need You? Why don't You hear my agonizing prayer? O God, You don't hear My prayers in the day and in the night You are not near. O God, You are the Holy One of Israel. You come to Your people when they worship You. Our fathers trusted in You during troubled times, and You led them through their problems. When they cried for deliverance, You gave them great victories. But I am not equal to our fathers. People laugh at me and hate me. They reject me openly to my face. They make fun of me in front of others. They think I'm crazy for putting my trust in You. They tell me You won't come to me in trouble, nor will You vindicate me. But You are the One who formed me in the womb. You set me apart for a special task when I was a baby. I've had my trust in You since I was born. O God, You are the only hope I've got. So don't cut me off from Your protection. I don't have another way to solve my problems. My enemies are smart and they are powerful. They attack me at my weaknesses. Their accusations and lies are tearing me up. Their words hurt more than physical suffering. My spirit is crushed and I don't want to live. Evil pressure is worse than physical suffering. When my soul is attacked by the enemy's warfare, my body aches all over and I want to give up. I don't know what to say. Why have You allowed these trials to attack me? Like wild dogs, the enemy is chewing me up. They are trying to kill me. They are nailing me to a cross. All my bones ache from being pulled out of joint. They have stolen every-thing from me and they are gambling over my clothes. O Lord, don't stand so far away from me. Come near me to help me through this difficulty. Give me inner strength to stand up to them and give me inner confidence to overcome their tricks. I will tell everyone how You came to me. I will testify of Your goodness to other believers. They need to know that You take care of those that trust You. They need to trust You as I do because You will come to us when we are in trouble. You will not hide Your face from us when we need You. I will praise You to other believers. I will do everything that I promised. Then weak Christians will be encouraged to trust You. They will continue following You throughout their life. The unsaved will recognize what You do for Your children and they will turn to You for salvation. You rule over the nations and Your rule will be recognized by all. Your children enjoy Your kingdom and worship

You, but the unsaved cannot escape Your coming judgment. There will always be a small remnant who serves You. They are the ones You recognize and protect. They will declare to all how You take care of Your children and each new generation will contain more believers who will also declare Your goodness and care.

23 – Lord, You are my Shepherd. I don't need anything. You make me lie down in green pastures, You lead me beside still waters. You renew my spiritual energy. You guide me in the right paths to glorify Your name. When I walk through dark valleys, I will not be afraid of death shadows because You are with me, Your rod and staff protect me. You prepare a banquet table for me and my enemies watch me eat. You pour oil on my head to honor and heal me. You fill my cup so it runs over. Surely Your goodness and mercy will follow me as long as I live on this earth and in eternity I will live in Your house forever.

Module 8 -- Option 5

“Almighty God in heaven, you who imagined the birds and the waterfall, you who imagined the sunset and the snowfall, you who imagined flowers and mountains and a baby's cry; to you belongs glory and honor and praise. Savior of us all, Jehovah God, from your imagination and by your power you created the lakes and the mountaintops, the oceans and the deserts, the wind and the lightening. To you belongs all glory and honor and praise.

Our Provision, my Sustainer, from your imagination and by your power the planets are hung in their orbit, the stars show themselves from where you placed them, the rain falls and the sun shines according to your purposes and for your reasons. To you belongs all glory and honor and praise.

Father, you who spoke to nothing and created everything; you who tell the sun where to hide at night and the moon to hide during the day, you who direct the oceans where to begin and end are the God of all gods. You, who created the heavens and set the foundations of the earth, are indeed the God of all gods. You who created animals and trees from your imagination, man from the dust and woman from his side, you who exalt the humble and bring down the haughty, are the God of all gods. You, who on our behalf sacrificed yourself, your Son, before the foundations of the earth were laid, deserve all the glory and honor and praise. Praise be to your name forever and ever!

Our Father, you did all you did with your eye on mankind, on us, on me. You did all you did watching for our return, always watching for me to come home. And why? Who are we that you would be mindful of us? Who am I that you would consider me? Why, why would you do all of this for me a sinner, the one who shouted for your Son's death? The one who without mercy whipped and lay open the Son of man? I fashioned the crown of thorns, then beat them into Emmanuel's brow. Almighty God, Jehovah God, I am the one who fastened your Son to that cross. Who am I that you would consider me?

I am beginning to see, but do not yet fully understand that my relationship with you is what this is all about. I am beginning to see, yet not fully understand that my genuineness with you determines my genuineness with others. I am beginning to see that my transparency with others is indicative of my true transparency with you. I am only to others what I give to you. And I am only to you what I give to others. I see now that you want our full attention. You want my focus. You want your rightful place in our hearts. You want me.

Almighty God, I pray for our families. I pray for the marriages in our church family. I pray for a hedge of protection to surround each of us in our homes, our cars, our schools, our jobs and in our churches. Lord God, many of us has moved our focus from you to the waves that surround us. Some of us are watching the storm and have begun to sink.

I pray that in all of our relationships the focus of each of us is only on that old rugged cross. Because I see that only when each of us look upon you can you made our relationships what you have determined they should be. It is only when we are all looking upon you that unity in our homes and our church families may be achieved. Only when we are all looking upon you can we all finally see you and hear you say, "The world will know you are mine if you love one another". Only when what we want for us is what you want for us will we be able to affect this world for you. In that name that is above all names, the name of Jesus Christ. Amen."

Stephen Lemmons

Module 8 -- Option 6

Jude 20

“Holy Spirit, creator of the church and re-newer of the world, renew our hearts and recreate our church. Not with new or different teaching, but with new and exciting challenges. Our world is in some ways another Tower of Babel, where ambition and pride dominate. We seek for a spiritual life that honors Jesus and strives for community.

Call me to repentance so that any change I seek in others, will have first begun in me. Breathe on us, breath of God, and make us as fresh and new as the dawn.

Holy Spirit of healing, each of us needs your saving touch in our moral, emotional and physical lives. I ask to continue to be a healing presence to my family and friends. I know one of the greatest healings is the forgiveness of sins. Purify each of us of all sin, by your grace through the cross.

Generous Spirit, you have given us many gifts. May the Gamaliel principle teach me to keep an open mind and trust that movements among your people, those which are controversial and upsetting, will succeed if they are truly God's will, otherwise they will come to nothing.

Holy Spirit who watches over the church, you inspired servants of old to step forward and replace vacancies left in the ranks. Bless now, and strengthen many of these new families and members who will serve and build up the Body of Christ.

Help us to preach, teach, and serve whatever the calling with renewed wisdom and bring each to a more mature faith in the ministry of the Word. Give each one, as it were, the face of an angel.

Dearest Spirit of conversion, help us to discern the difference between magic tricks and authentic Divine wonders. You link the gift of your Holy presence in our communion with you and one another.

Powerful Spirit, you tackled the mighty Saul of Tarsus and re-directed his zeal on behalf of the Gospel. You turned a murderer into a martyr, the greatest persecutor into the greatest missionary. So complete was your victory over Paul's soul that nothing ever stopped his passionate desire to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus. Give us conversion energy and may nothing ever quench the fire of your Spirit in our lives. Lead us to share our faith and fill us with your Spirit of love.

Remove blind spots in my own soul so I may see those who need to be loved and taught. We sing of your protection and praise your guardianship of your church.

Your servants of old were led by you and sent by you. We are attracted to such leadership of you, blessed Holy Spirit. We have much inner sensitivity to acquire. Holy Spirit, warm us with your presence and lead us to both hear and follow your call. It seems that one of your gifts is the call to suffer for the cause. At first, dear Lord, that does not seem like a gift to me. We fear pain. But where you call me to bear the cross, give me the grace to carry it.

Spirit of Grace and Supplication, in almost every century you have called, inspired, equipped your anointed leaders to face issues that challenge the church. Upon prayerful reflection and wisdom from above you have moved your church forward in time. You have always been there to move them. I praise you, adore you and thank you. As I grow older my trust is stronger because I know you have done that. Move us forward, Holy Spirit, as we approach the final consummation.

May the peace of God, the love of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit rest upon your heart, Amen”

Module 8 -- Option 7

“I haven’t been able to get a song out of my head for a couple of days now. Not that I want to, but it just than I ever could. It was written in 1872 and set to music in 1881. Please let these words speak to you and always be there, playing over and over and over.

“Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand, the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land;

A home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way, from the burning of the noontide heat, and the burden of the day.”

“Upon the cross of Jesus, mine eye at times can see, the very dying form of One who suffered there for me;

And from my stricken heart with tears two wonders I confess: the wonders of redeeming love and my unworthiness.”

“I take, O cross, thy shadow for my abiding place; I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face;

Content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss, my sinful self my only shame, my glory all the cross.”

Today, I am asking you to look up. Stop what you are doing and look up. Do you see it? Do you see the rough-hewn timbers? Can you see and smell the fresh blood running down to the ground? Can you see the heads of those rusty, bloodstained nails? Can you hear the labored breathing of God among us? Do you see him attempting to raise himself for a breath of air? Do you see his feet? Oh, those feet! The feet that carried the good news of God to each of us are now held down and fastened by the nail I drove! Can you see his hands? The hands that touched and healed; that fed and held; the hands that caressed the forehead of Lazarus and ran through the hair of children: can you see them? Do you see the nails there? I put them there! Do you see how he strains against the nails to find some comfort; any relief? Do you see, even as he dies, that his arms are outstretched and his hands are open still welcoming all who will come to him?

Do you see his head? The head that once wore the crown of glory in heaven is now swollen and misshapen. And his eyes, the eyes that witnessed the amazing riches of heaven are now puffed and slowly closing in death. Can you see his ears? The ears that once heard heavenly praises and the new song of Moses can now only hear the quiet, irregular, labored beat of his heart. Do you see his mouth? The mouth that spoke of love, and tolerance, and grace and his Father's goodness is now dripping blood, swelling because of abuse.

Now look around you. The ground is level here. The ground here is also soaked with the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ and with the grace of our amazing God! This isn't the place for being prideful or boastful. This is the place to understand how much of a nothing I am, but because of that gift, that sacrifice; how much my God and Father must value me!

My God and my Father! When I think of what I did to your son, I can't understand why you would still call me a child of yours! When I look at the nails, when I hear the moans he makes, when I see the agony he is in, I can't understand why you would still want to seat me at your banquet table. When I see the pain he is in, when I see the pain I have inflicted on You, your Son, I don't know what to say to you. I don't know how to respond!

My God, thank you for your never-ending and ever reaching love. Thank you for seeing your Son in his glory and splendor when you look at me; not as he appears on that old, blood-soaked cross. Help me live to be worthy of the incredible price you paid for me! Help me live meekly, yet boldly for you!

In the name of Jesus Christ, my Sacrifice; the one I am looking at right now; Amen!"

Stephen Lemmons

Module 8 -- Option 8

Why pray scripture?

1. Jesus is our model. With Scripture, He countered temptation, answered his critics and even prayed the words of the Psalms from the cross.
2. Praying Scripture is talking to God in His own language. A baby learns to talk by listening to his father.
3. God's Word gives the Spirit its two-edged weapon. Ephesians 6:17, "Take the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God." Fill your prayers with a powerful weapon of God's word. No soldier dares report to duty without a weapon. His life depends on it. So does yours. Bring the power of the word into your praise and prayer. Amy Carmichael wrote, "The only thing that matters in our warfare is the faithful use of His precious blade, The Word."
4. God binds himself to His promises, so learn to plead the promises of God. D. L. Moody said, "Tarry at a promise and God will meet you there." Numbers 23:19, "Has God said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" Every promise is like a check, which is nothing more than a piece of paper until it is cashed at the bank. Praying the word of God "cashes" His promises. At the age of 90, George Muller said that he never had an unanswered prayer. His secret: "I always pray with an open Bible, filling my praise and petition with God's word. I pray God's promises, His declarations concerning Himself. I pray His names and titles by which He reveals His nature and character. I pray the rights He gave the believer to bold and confident access. When a need arose, I spread them all out before God who hears his children. My heavenly Father will not break His word to His own child."
5. Praying the word of God builds faith. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," Romans 10:17.

6. Praying the scriptures assures that you are praying the mind and will of God. Charles Spurgeon said that our prayers are according to the mind of God when they are according to the word of God.
7. Praying God's word seals the answer. Promises predict the answers. They point to what to expect. Isaiah 55:11 says that God's word never returns to him void without accomplishing what he desires. Don't worry on your knees and call it prayer.
8. Praying God's word brings God's power into our praying. In the Amplified Bible, Luke 1:37 says, "For with God nothing is ever impossible, and no word from God shall be without power or impossible of fulfillment." Mary clearly understood it this way. She replied, "May it be to me as you have said," verse 38.
9. Praying the Scriptures orchestrates prayer in agreement for multiplied power. Leviticus 26:8, "Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you." Deuteronomy 32:30 refers to one man chasing a thousand, or two putting ten thousand to flight.

Praying scripture.

1. Read a verse or passage of scripture. Ask God what He sees. He will give you a praise, a confession, or a petition based on the passage.
2. Pray it back to God. Praying the word of God is God-oriented praying a good antidote to self-centered shopping-list praying).
3. In praying a promise, focus on the God of the promise, whose name and character guarantee the fulfillment of the promise.
4. Seek His face, not His hand.
5. Gaze at God, glance at the requests.
6. Match His attributes and names to your needs.

"Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well."

Prayer Portions ©, Sylvia Gunter

Module 8 -- Praying In The Psalms
Notes

Module 9 -- Intercessory Prayer

Job 42:8b; Hebrews 7:25

INTRODUCTION

1. Genesis 18:23-33; Philippians 1:3; 9-11.
2. “Now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he (Abraham) will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all yours will die,” Genesis 20:7.
3. “But now, please forgive their sin--but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written,” Exodus 32:32.
4. “So he said he would destroy them had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him to keep his wrath from destroying them,” Psalm 106:23.
5. “So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me,” Acts 27:25.

DISCUSSION

- I. The Righteous Run to the Strong Tower and Are Safe.
 - A. Proverbs 18:10 affirms that God is our safe place in times of need and crisis.
 1. Many do not know about the Strong Tower.
 2. We must run there for them:
 - a. family, children, husband, wife, mother father
 - b. friends, fellow Christians
 - c. colleagues, pastors pray passionately for their people
 - d. enemies, Matthew 5:44
 3. It is a privilege to petition the Lord on behalf of others.
 - B. Show them the way to the Strong Tower.
 1. God will point the way through us.
 2. Intercessory prayer takes us there and we are safe.
 - C. Some view intercessory prayer to be the ultimate call of God.
 1. In everything God calls us to do, this may be our most important task and privilege.
 2. Greatest harvests for God are the result of quiet prayers on behalf of others.

II. Practicing Philippians 2:4.

- A. "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."
 - 1. This is intercessory prayer.
 - 2. The word intercede (*entugxano*) means:
 - a. to fall in with, to converse, to address
 - b. intercede, plead one's cause. Harper Greek Lexicon, page 142.
 - 3. In intercession, we pray for one another.
- B. Biblical examples of intercession.
 - 1. Isaac prayed twenty years for Rebekah to conceive, Genesis 25:21.
 - 2. "Samuel said to Israel As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you and I will teach you the way that is good and right," I Samuel 12:23.
 - 3. David prayed for a sick child.
 - 4. Jeroboam prayed for a sick son.
- C. The greatest intercessors, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. Jesus. My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, John 17:20. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them, Hebrews 7:25.
 - 2. Holy Spirit. In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will, Romans 8:26-27.

III. Non-Biblical Intercessors.

- A. George Washington prayed for his troops at Valley Forge.
- B. John Knox (1505-1572) said "O Lord give me Scotland or I die."
- C. John Hyde (1865-1912) "Give me souls or I die."
- D. George Muller (1805-1898) prayed sixty-four years for ten thousand orphans who were in his care. Missionaries, Bibles and tracts were all around the world as a result of his prayers of faith.

Module 9 -- Option 1

Who Is An Intercessor

We are deeply indebted to Norman Grubb for the book *Rees Howells Intercessor*. He captures the essence of the Holy Spirit as intercessor in the lives of God's especially called men and women -- the call to intercession, the ultimate call of God to mankind.

That God seeks intercessors but seldom finds them is plain from the pain of His exclamation through Isaiah: "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; and His protest of disappointment through Ezekiel: I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before Me for the land...but I found none," Ezekiel 22:30-31.

Perhaps believers in general have regarded intercession as the same form of intensified prayer. It is, so long as there is great emphasis on the word "intensified"; for there are three things to be seen in an intercessor which are not necessarily found in ordinary prayer: identification, agony and authority.

The identification of the intercessor with the ones for whom he intercedes is perfectly seen in the Savior. Of him it was said "that he poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors;" and he bare the sin of many and **made intercession** for the transgressors. As the Divine Intercessor, interceding for a lost world, he drained the cup of our lost condition to its last drop. "He tasted death for every man." To do that, in the fullest possible sense, he sat where we sit. By taking our nature upon himself, by learning obedience through the things which he suffered, by being tempted in all points like as we are, by becoming poor for our sakes, and finally by being made sin for us, He gained the position in which, with the fullest authority as the Captain of our salvation made perfect through sufferings, and the fullest understanding of all we go through, "he can ever live to make intercession for us, and by effective pleadings with the Father is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him." Identification is thus the first law of the

intercessor. He pleads effectively because he gives his life for those he pleads for; he is their genuine representative; he has submerged his self-interest in their needs and sufferings.

There is another Intercessor, and in him we see the agony of this ministry; for he, “the Holy Spirit, makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” This One, the only present intercessor on earth, has no hearts upon which He can lay his burdens, and no bodies through which he can suffer and work except the hearts and bodies of those who are his dwelling place. Through them he does his intercessory work on earth, and they become intercessors by reason of the Intercessor within them.

Before he can lead a chosen vessel into such a life of intercession, he first has to deal with all that is natural: Love of money, personal ambition, natural affection for parents and loved ones, appetites of the body, love of life itself. Whatever makes even a converted man live for himself, for his own comfort, for his own advantage, for his own advancement, even for his circle of friends, has to go to the cross. It is no theoretical death but a real crucifixion with Christ, such as only the Holy Spirit himself can make actual in the experience of his servant. Both as a crisis and process, Paul’s testimony must be made ours: I have been and still am crucified with Christ. Self must be released to become the agent of the Holy Spirit.

As crucifixion proceeds, intercession begins. By inner burdens, by calls to outward obedience, the Spirit begins to live His own life of love and sacrifice for a lost world through his cleansed channel. We see it in Rees Howells’ life. We see it at its greatest height in the Scriptures. Watch Moses, the young intercessor, leaving the palace by free choice to identify himself with his slave brethren. See him accompanying them through the waste and howling wilderness. See him reach the very summit of intercession when the wrath of God was upon them for their idolatry and their destruction was imminent. It is not his body he now offers for them as intercessor but his immortal soul: If Thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy Book. He actually called this “making an atonement” for them.

The Apostle Paul was the greatest man of the new dispensation as Moses was of the old. For years his body, through the Holy Spirit, was a living sacrifice that the Gentiles might have the gospel; finally, his immortal soul is offered on the altar. The very one who was just rejoicing with the Romans that “nothing could separate him from the love of God,” Romans 8 later said the Spirit bearing him witness, “that he could wish himself accursed (separated) from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh,” Romans 9:3.

This is the intercessor in action. When the Holy Spirit lives His life in a chosen vessel there is no limit to the extremes to which He will take him in His passion to warn and save the lost. Isaiah, that aristocrat, has to go naked and bare-footed for three years as a warning to Israel. Hosea had to marry a harlot, to show his people that the heavenly Husband was willing to take back His adulterous bride. Jeremiah was not allowed to marry, as a warning to Israel against the terrors and tragedies of captivity. Ezekiel was not allowed to shed one tear for the death of his wife, “the desire of his eyes.” And so the list might be continued. Every greatly used instrument of God has been, in his measure, an intercessor: Wesley for backsliding England; Booth for the down-and-outs; Hudson Taylor for China; C.T. Studd for the unevangelized world.

But intercession is more than the Spirit sharing his groanings with us and living his life of sacrifice for the world through us. It is the Spirit gaining his ends of abundant grace. If the intercessor knows identification and agony, he also knows authority. It is the law of the corn of wheat and the harvest: If it dies, it brings forth much fruit.

Intercession is not substitution for sin. There has only been one substitute for a world of sinners, Jesus the Son of God. But true intercession so identifies the intercessor with the sufferer that it gives him a prevailing place with God. He moves God. He even causes Him to change His mind. He gains his objective, or rather the Spirit gains it through him. Thus Moses, by intercession, became the savior of Israel and prevented their destruction.

Mr. Howells would often speak of “the gained position of intercession” and the truth of it is obvious on many occasions in his life. It is a fact of experience. The price is paid, the obedience is fulfilled, the inner wrestlings and groanings take their full course then “the word of the Lord comes.” The weak channel is clothed with authority by the Spirit and can speak the word of deliverance. Greater works are done. Not only this, but a new position in grace is gained and maintained, even then that grace can only be appropriated and applied in each instance under the guidance of the Spirit.

Mr. Howells spoke of it, in Mr. Muller’s phrases, as entering “the grace of faith,” in contrast to receiving “the gifts of faith.” What he meant was that, when we pray in a normal way, we may hope that God of his goodness will give us the things. If he does, we rejoice; it is his gift to us; but we have no power or authority to say that we can always get that same answer at any time. Such are the gifts of faith. But when an intercessor has gained the place of intercession in a certain realm, then he has entered into “the grace of faith”; along that special line the measureless sea of God’s grace is open to him. That is the gained place of intercession.

Mr. Howells referred to George Muller’s experience. Mr. Muller had never gained a place of intercession over sickness, but on one occasion God raised up a sick person for whom he had prayed. On another occasion he prayed for another sick person, but there was no healing. Mr. Muller, however, said that his was not a failure in prayer because he had never gained a place of intercession over sickness, and therefore the answer to the first prayer was merely “a gift of faith,” which would not necessarily be repeated. On the other hand, he had gained a place of intercession for the orphans. He was always ready to be the first sufferer on their behalf; if there was enough food for all except one, he would be the one to go without; and in this realm of supply God held him responsible to see that the needs were always met, for the doors of God’s Treasury had been permanently opened to him, and he could take as much as he needed. Grubb, Norman, Rees Howells Intercessor, CLC Publications, Fort Washington, PA 19034, 2001, pages 81-85.

Module 9 -- Option 2

Contrasts of Faith

INTRODUCTION

1. Profound encouragement by studying the lives of prayer of God's greatest servants.
2. These prayers of faith are not merely windows into life but windows into eternity.

DISCUSSION

- I. Biblical Comparisons of Faith.
 - A. Abraham, Genesis 18:10 NIV, "Then the LORD said, 'I will surely return to you about this time next year and Sarah your wife will have a son.'"
 1. Romans 4:17a NIV, "As it is written: 'I have made you a father of many nations.'"
 2. Romans 4:17b NIV, "He is our father in the sight of God in whom he believed--the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were."
 - B. Thomas, John 20:24-29.
 1. Ten apostles had seen the resurrected Jesus.
 2. Thomas contradicted what they said because he had seen a dead body placed into a tomb.
 3. He was not able to process the truth of the resurrection beyond his five senses. He said "I will not believe until I see."
 - C. There is a difference between the spirit (heart) and the mind (soul).
 1. There are some circumstances in which "the spirit may pray but the mind is unfruitful," I Corinthians 14:14b.
 2. One may pray with his spirit (heart) or one may pray with his mind (soul), I Corinthians 14:15a.
 3. One may sing with his spirit (heart) or he may sing with his mind (soul), I Corinthians 14:15b.

II. Universal Test for Genuine Faith.

- A. Have God's word on a matter or principle.
- B. Believe what God says.
- C. Do not allow the apparent contradictory circumstance to throw you off track or dispute the fact.
- D. Give glory to God. Abraham did. Thomas did not.
- E. "Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and **gave glory to God**, being fully persuaded that God had the power to do what he had promised. This is why it was credited to him as righteousness," Romans 4:20-22.

CONCLUSION

1. These Bible characters are like actors on a stage. They have made their exit.
2. You are now on stage. What impact will you make on history?
3. Alter history by YOUR prayers of faith.
4. Abraham's faith is an example of a God-kind of faith.
5. Thomas' faith is an example of a man-kind of faith.

Module 9 -- Option 3

The Grace of Prayer

INTRODUCTION

1. This title was used by Rees Howell regarding George Muller's standing with God in regard to ten thousand orphans who were cared for by faith in the nineteenth century England.
2. Abraham is a classic biblical model of intercession. God called him a prophet, Genesis 20:7, and my friend, Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23.
3. Moses enjoyed unusual favor with God. "With no other have I spoken as with Moses."

DISCUSSION

- I. Abraham.
 - A. The call, Genesis 12:1-3.
 1. His unselfish heart toward Lot, Genesis 13:8.
 2. He rescued Lot, met Melchizedek and received a blessing from God.
 3. God's covenant with Abram. This is one of the most important events in the Old Testament. He was placed in right standing with God because of his faith, Genesis 15.
 4. Ishmael and the seal of his standing with God was completed with the rite of circumcision, Genesis 16-17, 23-24; Romans 4:11.
 - B. Three angels (men) visit Abraham.
 1. Two of them go on to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis 18.
 2. The principle one, called LORD in verse 10, confirms to Abraham that about one year later he would "return and your wife, Sarah, will have a son."
 3. Romans 3 and 4.
 - C. Abraham's bold prayer of intercession.
 1. The vulnerability of God, 18:17-21.
 2. Abraham remained standing before the Lord, verse 22.

3. The prayer
 - a. for wicked Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - b. the audacity of challenging God to do right, verse 25.
 - c. his humility – dust and ashes, verse 27.
 - d. his tenacity, from 50, 45, 40, 30, 20, 10...
4. How far will God go? It is as if he came down off his throne to commune with Abraham.
5. God stirs the heart of man to pray for others.

II. Moses.

- A. The call, Exodus 3:4.
 1. Preparation in Pharaoh 's house.
 2. The solitary years in Midian and the Negev.
 3. The excuses – Who am I?
 4. To Moses being a nobody in Midian and doing right was better than being a tyrant ruling Egypt.
- B. The commission:
 1. “I am sending you...,” verse 10.
 2. “I am the one who always is...,” verse 14.
- C. The courage of encounter, “Go”, verse 16.
 1. Signs for Moses, Exodus 4.
 2. Egyptian retaliation.
 3. The plagues, Genesis 7-11.
 4. The Passover and deliverance, 12-15.
 5. The journey to Sinai and The Ten Commandments, 16-20.
- D. Forty days of awe.
 1. Moses in the mountain with God.
 2. God said, “Go down....your people have become corrupt,” Exodus 32:7.
- E. One of the greatest prayers in the Bible.
 1. The setting: Moses descends the mountain and hears a noise – worship? Joshua joins him and hearing the same sounds calls it war.
 2. The condemnations, verses 19-29.
 3. The pronouncement, “You have committed a great sin. But now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sins,” chapter 30.

F. The prayer.

1. Climbing Sinai again, Moses had a heavier burden than any other man except Jesus.
2. At the foot of that mountain were people of Abraham's descent, covenant people. They sinned grievously against God. Moses had come to know God in his forty days and knew that God could not excuse their sins. They must be forgiven or condemned. He knew a sacrifice was required. He was willing to be the sacrifice. "So Moses went back to the LORD and said, 'Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive their sin--but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written,'" Exodus 32:31-32 NIV.
3. In our language, Moses said, Lord forgive your people and if not, send me to hell with them.

G. The Intercessor, Deuteronomy 10:11-20.

"At the end of the forty days and forty nights, the LORD gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant. Then the LORD told me, 'Go down from here at once, because your people whom you brought out of Egypt have become corrupt. They have turned away quickly from what I commanded them and have made a cast idol for themselves.' And the LORD said to me, 'I have seen this people, and they are a stiff-necked people indeed! Let me alone, so that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven. And I will make you into a nation stronger and more numerous than they.' So I turned and went down from the mountain while it was ablaze with fire. And the two tablets of the covenant were in my hands. When I looked, I saw that you had sinned against the LORD your God; you had made for yourselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. You had turned aside quickly from the way that the LORD had commanded you. So I took the two tablets and threw them out of my hands, breaking them to pieces before your eyes. Then once again I fell prostrate before the LORD for forty days and forty nights; I ate no bread and drank no water, because of all the sin you had committed, doing what was evil in the Lord's sight and so provoking him to anger. I feared the anger and

wrath of the LORD, for he was angry enough with you to destroy you. But again the LORD listened to me. And the LORD was angry enough with Aaron to destroy him, but at that time I prayed for Aaron too.”

III. The Call For Intercessors.

- A. The twenty-second chapter of Ezekiel describes a time of great moral breakdown in the nation of Israel.
 - 1. The priests had violated God’s law and lost the distinction between the holy and the profane.
 - 2. The leaders had become corrupt and abused their power, shedding innocent blood, oppressing the people and destroying lives for the sake of dishonest gain.
 - 3. The prophets were smearing whitewash, speaking lies and falsely representing themselves as spokesmen for God.
 - 4. It was a time when God’s people lost their heart for him, defiled themselves by idolatry and sexual immorality and oppressed and wronged others.
- B. During this time, the Lord declared, I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, **but I found none** (no intercessor). So I will pour out my wrath on them and consume them with my fiery anger, bringing down on their own heads all they have done, declares the Sovereign LORD, Ezekiel 22:30-31.
 - 1. Just think of the difference one faithful, holy, prayerful person could have made!
 - 2. Now think of the difference one faithful, holy prayerful person (Moses) did make.
 - 3. Do you sense that conditions are just as dire, if not more so today?
 - 4. Immorality, violence, greed, corruption, abuse of power, false teaching, ungodly leadership, oppression, dishonest gain, etc. are rampant in our culture.
 - 5. Various forms of judgment are already underway and greater judgment looms.

CONCLUSION

1. So he said he would destroy them-- had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him to keep his wrath from destroying them, Psalm 106:23 NIV.
2. If the intercession of one holy man of God kept the wrath of God from destroying an entire nation, what may a praying church do on behalf of their city?

Module 9 -- Intercessory Prayer
Notes

Module 10 – Discipleship In Prayer

Matthew 16:24-26; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 14:25-33

INTRODUCTION

1. Two divine imperatives: “Come” and “Go”.
2. Three invitations: "Come to me," Matthew 11:28ff.
 "Come after me," Mark 8:34ff.
 "Come with me," I Thessalonians 4:17.
3. God’s way is vastly different than the way of man.

DISCUSSION

- I. Discipleship In Prayer
 - A. Jesus is Lord.
 1. Jesus is first.
 2. Commitment is a part of conversion.
 - B. Spirit of service.
- II. Service in Prayer
 - A. Sin creates obstacles to service to God.
 1. Sin is ignorance.
 2. Sin is selfishness.
 - B. Matthew 19:16 - What shall I do?
 1. May I keep more commandments?
 2. What lack I yet?
 3. More interested in “being” than “doing”.
 4. “It is not what he lacked but what he had too much of.”
 - C. Every life has a throne in it - only one God at a time on the throne.
 1. When you say, “I will go to church”, etc., “but I will not do this or that,” God says, “That’s what I want.”
 2. We must guard against obsessions of western world.
 3. Jesus did not die on the cross to make good people better. He suffered Calvary to make dead people alive.
 4. Jesus does not need nicer people. He needs new people, II Corinthians 5:17.

III. Counting the Cost.

A. Priorities.

1. Examples of believers who counted the cost.
2. Elders/leaders called to spend less time in leisure and more in shepherding.
3. Ministers called to prayer, teaching and soul winning with a balance between family and recreation.

B. Give up good for better.

C. Jesus is Lord.

1. He did not draw the line on me.
2. I cannot draw the line on Him.

CONCLUSION

1. Do not give up on life. Give up self and find life!
2. Be zealous and repent.
3. Be joyful and fruitful.
4. To God be the glory!

Module 10 – Discipleship In Prayer
Notes

Prayer Request

NAME _____ DATE _____

PRAY FOR _____

WHO NEEDS

To Stop Sinning	A Closer Walk With God
To Be Saved	Financial Help
Guidance In A Problem	To Be Restored
Help In A Trial	Travel Mercies
A Job	_____

TO BE DELIVERED FROM

Alcohol	Marital Problems
Anxiety	Insomnia
Depression	Occult, Spiritualism
Disbelief	Smoking
Discouragement	Tension
Doubts	Weakness
Drugs	Worry
Fears	Family Troubles

Other _____

Partners in Prayer

Read the following, pray about it NOW, and sign your name.

I, the undersigned, have completed this course of study on prayer and fasting. I have applied my heart and received both instruction and motivation to pray and fast for as long as I shall live. The decisions of when to fast and pray are mine to determine. I enter this agreement with God and my brothers and sisters over the earth to help God save the lost. I have confidence and assurance that whatsoever I ask in faith according to the will of God, He cares, He hears, He answers. I have confidence in what God can do in and through my life and I claim the promise of II Chronicles 7:14:

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

Signed.....

Date.....

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