

# **LOST**

***'You will hear a voice behind you say,  
'This is the way...'*** (Isaiah 30:21)

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To my niece, Vashti, safe in the name of the  
Lord. (Proverbs 18:10)

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## 1. Introduction:

A father's acceptance. A father's delight in you. Listen, whether your father gives you this or not, it doesn't change your true worth, the true you.

Jesus said, **'Do not call anyone no earth father', for you have one Father, and he is in heaven.'** (Matthew 23:9)

You might have some DNA from an earthly parent, but that is surface stuff. The real stuff is that you have been **'made in the image of God'**, and that he has put eternity in your heart.<sup>1</sup> The deep truth about you comes from the throne room of your Creator, your Father in heaven. And your true and 'secret' name will be given to you one day by Jesus, **'written on a white stone, that only you know.'** (Revelation 2:17)

Do you feel lost in this lonely world? Do you long to find that safe world, that Garden of Eden, where you are known by all and know all, and every eye and soul meet in the same Spirit?

In this short book we look at what God has promised us, and how even now we can take it, touch it, by his Spirit.

**'Jesus said, 'I have come to seek and save the lost.'"** (Luke 19:10)

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:27; Ecclesiastes 3:11

## 2. What Remains

***‘The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.’*** (2 Peter 3:9)

Every good movie is about the true and the false, the good and the bad, the destined-to-destruction and the destined-to-endure. The passing, the lasting.

The Scriptures speak about exactly the same thing for history, for the universe, for souls. In fact, the movies come from this revelation, this truth, what we experience in our daily lives.

We see it in our moral lives. We make choices of right and wrong, and ultimately – let’s take a deep breath and admit it – the wrong we do, the wrong we are, turns putrid, corrosive, and takes itself out in the long run. Often it takes the wrong doer with it. Unless he or she is rescued, pulled from rolling wreckage, before hurtling off the cliff.

We know this is true. We live it. We feel it. We see it in our relationships. We hear the whispers in the darkness – the whispers from our secrets, our sin. What we are feeling is the destruction of all evil. Not a shred of it will remain.

If this is sounding far-fetched, you might need (and I say this respectfully) a reality check. A

gentle wake-up call. This is *Truth-101*. Honestly, this is the simple stuff, the obvious stuff. Your own soul and conscience testify to it, the daily news speaks it, and every good book and movie is an iteration of it. If there was a preschool lesson on ultimate destiny, this would be it:  
*Everything holy will endure, everything evil will disappear.*

Going just one level deeper on this – the ultimate destiny of the soul and history – God writes judgment into it. And people – victims – being part of the final blow:

***“The day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble,’ says the Lord... ‘Then you will trample on the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet...”***  
(Malachi 4:1-3)

There are nuances and expanses and moments and fire and fear when it comes to the final destiny of good and evil. But the outcome is simple. The holy remains, and all evil – nature and people – will be obliterated. What remains is heaven:

***‘Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away... And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people. He will wipe***

***every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”***  
(Revelation 21:1-5)

### 3. Saving the Soul

***‘Jesus said, ‘I have come to seek and to save the lost.’ (Luke 19:10)***

The first three chapters of the Bible spell out exactly how and why souls are lost – yours and mine. Here’s a simple summary:

God made the world and all life. He made people in his own image, put living spirit in them. Being in the image of God, cut from his Spirit, God calls us back to himself. He made us this way so that we would love him back, reach for him, find him.<sup>1</sup> This is what true relationship is.

To be in God’s image was not enough for us, however. We were not happy to have relationship with God; we wanted to be God. We wanted more. We stepped away from God, thinking we could be God. But when we stepped away from God, we stepped away from life. God had warned us that outside of him there was only death. We did not believe him, and we were not satisfied in him, so we turned and left.

It was at this moment death rushed into the world, into our bodies, into our minds, and even nature. It was like unplugging something. The power source is cut off. It’s over.

Turning away from God our Creator is called sin.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 17:27



It is the spiritual act of rejecting God and his truth and holiness. We do it every day in our hearts, minds, actions and relationships.

Sin – turning our backs on God – is why we die, why nature decays, why people kill, steal and destroy.

It is important to stay on this point for a moment. To ask God to open your eyes to see this truth. Let it sink in. Sin is everywhere. It is in everything and everyone. It corrodes, pervades, and takes life with it. Everywhere. In everything. This is not morbid thinking; this is a humble, honest look at life.

When we see it, we know we are lost. We know why we are lost. This is crucial to being found, being saved.

Look carefully at this exchange with Jesus:

***‘Jesus said, ‘For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.’***

***Some religious people asked, ‘What? Are we blind too?’***

***Jesus said, ‘If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.’***

(John 9:39-41)

Jesus is saying that if you don't see your sin, acknowledge your sin, you stay with your sin. If, however, you recognize that you are a sinner, lost in sin, well, there is hope to be found. There is hope to be saved.

Jesus called people to himself, but he first called them away from their sin. His first words in the Gospel of Mark are: **'Repent and believe.'** (Mark 1:15) If we claim we have no sin, then we are saying we have no need of Christ. And so we will not go to Christ.

Jesus calls us to make a 'turn' in our life and our lifestyle. He calls us to turn away from sin. This is repentance. In making that turn away from our sin, we turn to Jesus. It is the same turn.

Do you recognize you are lost in sin? Do you recognize you need to be found, to be saved by God?

We noted above that the first three chapters of the Bible spell out how and why we are lost. Well, the rest of the Bible is the story of how God came to rescue us. It culminates with the person of Jesus. Here is a summary of that rescue story, and it is here God's salvation comes off the page:

After the 'Fall' from heaven, from life itself, God moved towards us with a plan to save. We had immersed ourselves in blood and death, and it

would take blood and death to save us. God started by speaking to people. He sent prophets to both speak God's Word to us, and to show us God's power. Little by little – like a child understanding their parents – we received a picture, even a history, of God's Words, his commands, and his power on display.

In this journey of God revealing himself to the world, and preparing us for the ultimate rescue, God commanded people to offer sacrifices for sin – kill an innocent lamb and burn it on an altar. Our sin had to be paid for with this act, this symbol. Sin had to be paid for by death.

God whispered to his people that a day would come when God himself would set foot on the earth, and rescue people. We read powerful prophecies, such as Isaiah 9:1-7 and Isaiah 53, and so many more. Not just the words, however, but the acts of God, and these commands of sacrifice for sin, foretold the life and mission of Jesus Christ – **'God with us.'**<sup>1</sup>

Jesus was born, God in the person of Christ. Fully God, fully man, touched down on the earth to save.<sup>2</sup> A mystery. Revelation, not reason.<sup>3</sup> Prophecies fulfilled, the soul in the balance. When Jesus began to show himself to the people and move in ministry, miracles and

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 7:14/Matthew 1:23

<sup>2</sup> John 1:1,14, Colossians 1:15-20; 2:9; John 10:30-39; 14:1-9

<sup>3</sup> 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; 1 Corinthians 1:18-23

teaching, John the Baptist pointed to him and said, **'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.'** (John 1:29) Jesus would be the final – and only real – sacrifice for sin. He came to pay for sin once for all, and to defeat its consequences – death.

**'Jesus Christ defeated death and brought life and immortality to light.'** (2 Timothy 1:10)

The life of Jesus is Spirit. It is **'God with us'**, and the ultimate rescue of the soul. He lived as God, then died as God, and then pulled himself back to life – defeating death – as only God could do.<sup>1</sup>

And he then turns to you, to me, and asks if we want to come back to life also. Do we want that life that once had no sin, no death in it. Do we want that **'life that is truly life.'** (1 Timothy 6:19) You see, we don't *have* to take it. We can motor on with this mortal life, live it out, die, be judged and punished for our sin, and then exist no more. We have this option. Or, we can take the rescue, the salvation that Jesus offers. We can step away from the mortal, sinful life that we find ourselves in, and take the hand of Christ, and be forgiven, be made new, be made immortal again, and go back to our original state of peace and perfection in paradise.

It's not free. It *does* cost you your life. It cost

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<sup>1</sup> John 2:19

Jesus his, and he asks for yours. Look at these words of Christ:

***'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.'*** (Mark 8:34-38)

It's not free, and it's not easy, either. Jesus described this road to life as a ***'narrow road that only few find.'***<sup>1</sup> To come to Jesus, is to walk against the winds and ways of the world. It is to step up to him when the crowd is walking the other way. The way of Christ is not the way of the world. Jesus put it this way:

***'If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.'***  
(John 15:19)

Every one of us has to make a decision at the

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 7:13-14

crossroads of Christ. We must. God has decreed this. We are told that Jesus, after he died, in that short space of two nights in the tomb, even went and revealed himself to the dead so that they, too, could decide. The living, the dead, everyone at some point will make this decision. But God decides on your time of revelation. That might be now? We are warned to **'call on the Lord while he may be found.'** (Isaiah 55:6)

You see, we think that when we want, when we choose, we will be able to call on God. But that's not the case. We have windows of opportunity, and they are windows that God opens at particular moments. God warns us that if we do not respond when he calls, he will not respond when we call:

***"When I called to you, you did not answer. So when you call to me, I will not answer," says the Lord.*** (Zechariah 7:13)

If Jesus is calling you now, respond. Say yes. He calls to you, to save your soul.

***'Jesus said, 'I am the door, and anyone who comes through me will be saved and have new life.'*** (John 10:9)

One way to mark the moment, to pass through the 'door' of Jesus, is to pray, to whisper to him. If you want to make this turn – the turn away from sin, the turn to Jesus – you can whisper this

prayer. If it comes from you, through you in faith, i.e. sincere belief and action, it is yours:

***Dear Jesus, I need this life you offer me. I need my soul to be saved, now and forevermore. I come to you now. I believe you are God and have died to pay for my sin. I ask you to forgive me for my sin, and to help me walk away from it every day. Thank you for your mercy. Thank you for this new life you give me. Thank you for pouring your Holy Spirit into me now. Amen.***<sup>1</sup>

If you have made this choice to come back to God, your soul is no longer lost in sin, but saved forevermore. You are a **'new creation'**. You are safe in the **'strong tower'** of Jesus Christ. You are a **'child of God.'**<sup>2</sup>

***'Jesus said, 'If you hear my words and believe, you have crossed over from death to life.'*** (John 5:24)

If this step of faith in Jesus is new for you, please do read a short booklet called, *'First Steps With Jesus'*. This is free in PDF and on the APP. You will find it under the BOOKS tab at [www.1peter1three.weebly.com](http://www.1peter1three.weebly.com)

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<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 1:13

<sup>2</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:17; Proverbs 18:10; John 1:12-13

## 4. Found

***'He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters.'***

(Psalm 18:16)

There are only two spiritual kingdoms – God's and the Devil's. In the Bible they are referred to in different ways at different times, like the ***'kingdom of light'*** and the ***'kingdom of darkness'***. But there are only two.

In this world, every way we look, there seems to be different 'kingdoms'. It seems like there are thousands of them, every nook, cranny, club, society, city, nation, culture, religion, etc. And yes, these are all distinct spiritual entities, expressions, might even have different 'spirits' in them, different little deities... but there are only two real kingdoms. Most of these little clubs fit into the dark kingdom. They don't know it, but that's all they are – backroom get-togethers in the dark kingdom.

Jesus said, ***'Broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many take it.'*** (Matthew 7:13)

This broad road of the dark kingdom is like a wide boulevard with thousands of clubs and hubs and lights and motels lining the streets. Many gatherings and buildings and memberships, but all on one big same broad street.



You are a person who has now seen Jesus as Lord and King of the universe. You have passed through Christ as God's door to life eternal. You are saved. You are safe. You are now and forever in the **'kingdom of light.'** (Colossians 1:12)

So whereas before you might have felt lost in the midst of thousands of options and 'roads', now your eyes see more clearly. You are 'found', you are safe, and there are only two kingdoms, two roads. Jesus said, **'Blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.'** (Matthew 13:16)

We will talk more about what this means, and some of the truths we now have and hold because we are 'found' and no longer lost. But in this short chapter we just pause and note that there are only two roads, and we have stepped onto the one that leads to life. It is narrow, it is hard, but it is true. Everything not on this road where Christ is King, is on the other road, is of the world, where the devil is the **'prince of the air'**. (Ephesians 2:2)

This understanding of God's truth gives us a firm footing in the battle – the battle for souls. People all around us are lost. They don't realize there are only two roads. They think there are thousands, and just can't find their way. But there are only two. Our clarity on this is key. It helps us help others.

## 5. It Has to Be Heaven

***‘For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.’*** (Hebrews 13:14)

It’s an incredible thing that you are safe in the arms of God. Not everyone is. You are. The world is busy all around you, people scrambling, striving, seeking, scattering, hoarding, wasting, trying to heal, abusing... Lost. God pities them, and is moved with compassion about their plight, and moves towards them with the healing gospel of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> But for a moment you should – you must – enjoy your rescue. It is like you have been pulled out of the raging sea, and sit on a calm beach by a fire, wrapped in a big towel, warm, fed, with a beautiful sky and life stretched out before you. Saved.

***‘The name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous run into it and are saved.’***  
(Proverbs 18:10)

We have a mission here on earth. A mission to pull others out of the raging sea onto land. We do this in partnership with the Holy Spirit and with the leading of the Father.<sup>2</sup> We will talk about our mission, our battle, in another chapter. But in this one I just want to focus on our ultimate destiny and inheritance: Heaven.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 9:36-38

<sup>2</sup> John 15:26-27; John 5:19

You see, no matter how faithful and hard-working we are to bring God's kingdom to earth, this earth is not – and will not be – our home. Nothing we 'build' here, other than souls in God, will remain. Nothing. We are told that earth itself will be razed to the ground by fire, and this by God.<sup>1</sup> A final purge. A final incineration of all evil. So although we strive to bring God's Kingdom to earth, we also keep our eyes on heaven.

***'So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen; for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.'***

(2 Corinthians 4:18)

Jesus told the disciples that he was going away to prepare heaven for them, and then would come get them and take them there. He said, ***'In my Father's house there are many rooms, and I am going to prepare a place for you...'*** (John 14:1-3) This is a childlike picture, a promise. It is literal and true. Jesus called us to be like children, and went so far as to say that unless we ***'changed and became like children'*** we would not enter the kingdom of God.<sup>2</sup> And Jesus is now saying to his hard-working, weary disciples, ***'There's a mansion, a paradise, and you are on your way there, I promise! I'm going ahead of you and preparing your own room, your own place there...'*** It feels like a kid trying to comfort a parent or a sibling in a hard situation,

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Peter 3:10

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 18:3

saying we are going to get out of here soon, and go to that beautiful place, that safe place, and we'll all be together...

Life is so hard! And then Jesus, in a way, calls us to an even harder road within it – i.e. to go against the flow and spirit of the world around us. He saves us, but in saving us he also stands us in a place that is **'hated by the world.'** (John 15:19) Jesus knows our sorrow and sacrifice in following him.

I think it is amazing how tender and humble Jesus was in his response when Peter asked what he would get for all his faith and following.

***'Peter said to Jesus, 'We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?'***  
***'Jesus replied, 'Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones... And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.'***  
(Matthew 19:27-29)

Again, it is almost childlike. Jesus says you'll get **'a hundred times more'**. This is like a kid in the playground trying to convince his friends to stick with him, to go with him. Jesus did not rebuke Peter for asking, or for wanting reward. He told

him to stay strong, that the reward, the final destiny, would be amazing, complete, compensating, forever.

There will come a day when we reach the end of this **'narrow road'**. We will literally step over the line of this life, into eternal life. We will literally leave this world and enter a new world – heaven. It is described in Revelation as a place of no sorrow, no death, no tears.<sup>1</sup> The streets and structures are of gold and precious stones. Trees have many different fruits on them, not just one kind. And this is my favorite image of heaven so far: **'There is a river of life, crystal clear, flowing down the middle of the great street of the city.'** (Revelation 22:1-2) I'm going to dive into that river!

I'm living for heaven. I focus on it. We are called to, it sustains us. Our inheritance is kept in heaven for us. (1 Peter 1:4) And we will be rewarded when we arrive there:

**'On that Day their work will be shown for what it is... the builder will receive a reward.'**  
(1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

I am encouraged daily by God's touch and blessings here on earth. We need them. We pray for them, and he provides. I love to see his kingdom come, his will done, here in life around me, souls and structures. He told us to pray for

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 21:1-5

this and live for this. (Matthew 6:9-13) But ultimately we leave this place. And thank God for that! Earth is condemned, like a condemned house. And God has it marked to be knocked down, burned to the ground.

Our eyes must be locked on the ultimate destiny and prize - heaven. This will keep us straight on the narrow path here and now, with eyes up ahead. It is how Jesus pulled through to the end, also.

***'For the joy set before Jesus he endured the cross, scorning its shame...'*** (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Abraham had a calling of God, a mission here on earth. He worked hard in the prophetic, in the practical, conquering, building, investing. But we are told that his hope deep within, the thing keeping him going, was a city he would never find here on earth:

***'Abraham was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.'*** (Hebrews 11:10)

## 6. The Spirit of Money

***‘Jesus said, ‘No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve both God and money.’***

(Matthew 6:24)

It's not about the money you have; it's about the money that has you. When Jesus referred to the 'rich' in a challenging way, he was referring to people who yes, had a lot of money, but whose money ruled their hearts. There are also poor people who are ruled by money, and there are rich people who are not.

I know a man, let's call him Bob, who has acquired more money than we could count. I knew him before he had made this money, and still now after he has. What impacted me most profoundly over these last years as he made his millions was his humility, generosity, and faith. He loves Jesus more than anything. He never moved out of the neighborhood, but to this day remains in the humble house he, his wife and seven children lived in prior to coming into wealth. He uses his time now to manage his money and basically give it away to the needy, causes, and to advance the gospel of Jesus. I remember seeing him during his successful and exploding business days, taking time off work to care for a widow's son who had special needs and was very challenging. I would see Bob driving this boy around the neighborhood slowly, to entertain him and give his mother a badly

needed break. This is what Bob did with his money and time. This is a rich man who rules his money in faith and integrity, and is not ruled by his money.

***‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’***  
(Luke 19:17)

God is not impressed with amounts of money, no matter the quantity. In the verse above, the ‘manager’ is speaking to the man in the parable who had been given most money, and yet it is referred to as a ***‘very small matter’***. The question was whether he had been trustworthy with what he had. What Jesus looks for is whether we use money to honor God, and to keep the most important commandment: ***‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength.’*** (Matthew 22:36-40)

We sometimes use a ‘leveler’ argument when talking about money and wealth. For example, if someone accuses a man of being rich and not using his money for good, we might say, *‘Well, in some countries you would be considered super-rich, and you are not using your money for as much good as you could.’* And with this thought and comment, we are nullifying judgment on others. However, Jesus did not do this. This same argument could have been used about Jesus and his disciples, saying things like, well, there are people far poorer than you, and you



never go hungry and have money coming from Herod's household<sup>1</sup>, so really, Jesus, you and your disciples are rich in the same way relative to others...

But no. You see, Jesus was not concerned about quantities. He was concerned about the heart, and about the spirit of a person. Jesus did provide for himself and his people as he lived life and worked ministry. But he did not get into debates about comparisons and relative wealth. Jesus knew that he walked with the Spirit, and that the provision he enjoyed (yes, enjoyed) was from the hand of God, and he could enjoy it. He also knew that he was working within a measure given to him, blessed, and not everyone is given the same measure. And that everyone gets the same measure is not – should not be – our goal in this life. It is not the point, and it is not possible. (*see the parable of the Talents, Luke 19*)

It is easy to get caught in the spirit of money (which is a spirit of pride, greed, power, not actual money). You can get caught in this on both sides of the coin, excuse the pun! You see, a poverty mindset is not actually a charitable one. It can often look self-denying and humble, but it often is prideful and self-righteous.

When God ***'lays a table before you in the presence of your enemies'*** (in the presence of

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 8:3

life's pressures, etc.), and you refuse to eat because, well, there are starving people in the world, you are dishonoring God. He has laid a table before you, blessed you, and you are acting more righteous than God. Which is not righteousness at all. Paul says this kind of self-denial '**has an appearance of wisdom**' but is not true wisdom.<sup>1</sup> If God gives and you refuse to enjoy, sin is in the way, money holds you.

It's not about money. It's about your heart. Always. When the disciples tried to pull that self-righteous stuff on Jesus and Mary, when she poured expensive perfume on his head and they said it should have been sold and given to the poor, Jesus rebuked them. Sold and given to the poor might sound good, and there might be a time God calls you to do that, but if he is laying a table before you, and you are saying you need to sell the tablecloth and give the food away, you are serving money and not God. It's a spirit thing.<sup>2</sup>

So be careful about confusing 'fairness' with 'righteousness'. They are not always the same thing. Sometimes they do align, sometimes that is the leading of the Spirit, but not always.

If you want to be free in your spirit, and enjoy what God gives you, and enjoy life, and enjoy abundance that God gives you, well, make sure

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<sup>1</sup> Colossians 2:16-23

<sup>2</sup> Mark 14:1-11

you are in step with God. Obey him and follow him, and listen to him, and enjoy his company. And your spirit will see and know when it is time to simply receive with thanksgiving the abundant provision, even the excessive provision – like when God changes your water to wine.

***‘For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.’*** (1 Timothy 4:4-5)

If you want to be free from the love of money (not from ‘money’, but the love of money), do not look to money and fairness and world problems for guidance. Eyes off money, and eyes on Jesus. Receive from Jesus. Give when he calls you to give. Enjoy when he calls you to rest. Trust him.

You see, when David sent to ***‘count the troops’***, this numbering of his power, his wealth, came from a heart that was sinning. The counting was the symptom of sinning.

However, when the Psalmist admonishes us to ***‘count the towers in Jerusalem’***, this numbering of wealth and security, is from a heart of worship, a childlike heart delighting in a good Father God. So counting is not the problem. The wealth and power of the city is not a problem, in fact it was a blessing. The problem is when a man stops trusting God for provision, and stops

delighting in God as **'more precious than gold'**, as **'better than life'**. The problem is when a man, like David, is counting because he is delighting now in his own power.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus told us to assess things by the fruit. He said, **'You will know a tree by its fruit. Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.'** (Matthew 7:17) We assess ourselves and others by the fruit – i.e. that which ultimately comes out of our growth, that shows itself on the branches. What can we see in this rich man? Do we see generosity and peace? Do we see humility and concern for the things of God? Do we see this rich man **'doing nothing out of selfish ambition, but considering others better than himself?'** (Philippians 2:3)

**'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law... Let us keep in step with the Spirit, and not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.'**  
(Galatians 5:22-26)

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Chronicles 21:1; Psalm 48:12; 1 Peter 1:7; Psalm 63:3

## 7. Purpose

***'For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.'***

(1 Thessalonians 2:19-20)

Now that we are no longer lost here in this world, here in life, well, what's our ultimate purpose?

When Jesus prayed for his disciples, and those that would come to know the Lord through them, he said: ***'My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.'*** (John 17:15)

God has left us with a mission. This is great news! Listen, one part of us will hate this, we just want to live life and blend in and avoid conflict. That is natural. That is not sin. That desire to have peace – just peace in the world – is natural.

But then Jesus comes along, claims us, puts us on a 'narrow path', one the world hates, and tells us to tell others this same dangerous truth about Christ. That is a hard call! That is battle! I don't want that, and honestly, most of my Christian life I tried to avoid that space.

Now, it is important to draw our training and guidance from Scripture, not from thinking and philosophizing. If we 'theorize' on this, rather

than actually read and heed the ways of God in Scripture, we will come up with a dreadful and depressing way of life and way of ministry. But when we really draw near to Jesus in faith, and dive into his Word and consider how he lived, what he did, how he did it, we get a 'map' for this mission. It is extraordinary! It is packed with peace, guidance, joy and surprises.

The key is to stand with Jesus. Be shrewd, find ways to make it known in a quiet way that you are a Christian. For example, get a Scripture sticker for your car, or add a verse to the automatic signature line of your personal email, or put up a few nice, small framed Scriptures in your work space... Tell people, if they ask about your weekend plans, that you do go to church on Sunday, so that's at least part of the weekend plan... These type of simple, pro-active measures are an amazing way to stake your claim in this battle. People will talk behind your back in a good way, and this prepares the way for your identity to be more fully known, and softens the blow of your conversations about God when they do arise. So strike first with small, sensitive, Spirit-led testimonies about Jesus.

There is nothing worse than ***'hiding your light under a bowl'***,<sup>1</sup> and then God exposing you. This happens. If you don't set your light on a hill, God will make sure it comes out sometime, and

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 5:14-16

usually it is awkward. For example, trying to blend in and just be that cool Christian that doesn't 'Bible bash', one day you find yourself at a party you should not have gone to (*and honestly, if your little flags had been flying, you would never have been invited to*). But here you are, at the party now, and somebody says something or does something that really grieves your spirit and you have to say something, do something, so you do. And that's good! But now people are asking each other, *'Is she religious or something? I never knew that... Why would she even come to this party?'*

Jesus cares that we identify with him. It matters to him. He died to give you this identity. If you are ashamed of him, he says he will be ashamed of you. (Luke 12:8-9) On the flipside, if we are proud of him, walk quietly but boldly with him, growing in our understanding of being 'found' in him, and fishing souls for eternity in a shrewd and Spirit-led way, well, Jesus promises to ***'acknowledge you before the angels of God.'*** He is proud of those who are proud of him.

***'Let us go to him outside the camp and bear the disgrace he bore.'*** (Hebrews 13:13)

Being found (no longer lost), and having a mission to find others, is incredible! It is God's story at work, his power at work. In doing this, being this, you are part of the only history that is

going to last, going to come true, going to come to full fruition. Amazing purpose!

Now listen, although the end goal for every soul is salvation, there are many steps to that point. For this reason Jesus modeled for us a life of peace, kindness, gentle words, and often did not 'preach' at the same time. He even told his disciples at key moments to conceal the message, just be hands and feet. (Matthew 16:20) So although we are trying to get people to heaven, we are also trying to get heaven down here to people. That is why Jesus taught us to pray, **'Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'** (Matthew 6:9-13) Our mission has two aspects: 1. Bring heaven down through all kinds of goodness! 2. Bring souls to heaven, through testimony about Jesus Christ.

Let's end this book with this small but important piece. The enemy, the devil, will try to steal your joy. If he cannot get you away from Christ, then he will try to sour your walk with Christ.

Satan will try to take the Holy Spirit out of your faith and actions, so that you are left with religion and legalism. He will try to guilt you. He is an 'accuser', who stands before God night and day accusing the saints. And accusation is not the same as lying, right? Accusation is speaking true facts but with wrong spirit, guiltling you where Christ is freeing you. Who do we listen to?



The way the saints overcame this accuser was by believing in Jesus and his blood shed for sins, and speaking it out loud – ***‘the word of their testimony.’*** This is not witness to others, but witness to the spirit realm. I often need to silence the enemy by whispering at night, *‘I speak the blood of Jesus over this lie, this fear.’*

***‘For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.’*** (Revelation 12:10-11)

One of Satan’s greatest weapons - at work powerfully in the early church prompting the whole book of Galatians - is legalism. The freedom of Christ, together with his holiness, is such a mystery, and beyond any code or creed. His freedom in our lives is pure Spirit, the Holy Spirit. It defies even the laws of God, and this is why Rahab could be revered for lying, David for ***‘unlawfully’*** eating the consecrated bread, and even Jesus being misleading deliberately at times.<sup>1</sup>

How? Why? Because there is a Law higher than the law, and it is not rules of God, it is the Spirit of God. Pure, free, true, soaring, holy, and reaching. Does this rattle us a little? If not, it should! This is why we often reach for stuff that we can point to, in order to prove our Christian

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<sup>1</sup> John 7:1-10; Joshua 2/Hebrews 11:31; Matthew 12:3-4

identity, our levels of spirituality, etc. These tend to be self-imposed religious stuff, from circumcision to daily quiet times or witnessing. This is the substance of legalism, and is a killer!

Paul admonished us: ***'Do not let yourselves be subject again to the yoke of slavery!'***  
(Galatians 5:1)

What's funny is that in this chapter, Paul is saying that if they get circumcised ***'Christ means nothing to them.'*** (vs.2) And yet Paul himself circumcises Timothy in Acts 16:3.

How? Why? Because circumcision was never the issue. When Paul confronted Peter on the circumcision and discrimination issue, he did not mention either. He said that Peter was ***'not acting in accordance with the truth of the gospel.'*** (Galatians 2:14) Circumcision, a religious rule and action, was getting mixed in and mixed up with the gospel message.

So we need to discern. We are called to ***'practice discernment.'*** (Hebrews 5:14) And we need to peer through an issue and 'see' if it is in line with the gospel of Christ – not in just word but also Spirit – and is it what the Father is actually doing and saying at this time. (John 5:19) And then we call it. We are humble about our call, but yes, in the Spirit of God we exercise discernment and we call it. Maybe not vocally to others, but rather by simply turning and walking

away from that group, church, conference, teacher, teaching, whatever.

***'It was for freedom that Christ set you free. Do not allow yourselves [resist, push back] to be subject again to a yoke of slavery.'***  
(Galatians 5:1)

We will close out this short book by printing out eight verses from Colossians chapter two. There is so much here to ponder and soak in. The Spirit of it, not just the words, will crack and corrode the spirit of legalism in a lot of teaching today, a lot of harkening back to the Old Testament and the Sabbath, etc.

***'Do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.'***

***Since you died with Christ to the elemental***

***spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.’ (Colossians 2:16-23)***

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