

Examples of Success Attitudes With Adam and Eve

Practicing God's Power-Attitudes

God's power-attitudes are the foundational tools that we have to not only possess, we have to learn how to use them in real life. First we have to understand what they are and what they do. Then we have to allow God to put them in our lives so they are ready for use, when we face a life situation that requires them.

We are taking the people God handpicked to be in His Bible and using the main ones as examples. Some of these people succeeded in using these principles and won at life. Others failed to use them and were damaged in various aspects of their lives. By our being able to see how God's power-attitude tools work in these Biblical examples, we will see how to use them in our own lives. But, before we move into Adam and Eve's life, let's take a quick look at the definitions of the power-attitudes of God.

God's Power-Attitude Definitions

Poor In Spirit is a power-attitude that is extremely teachable but only as it relates to truth.

Mourning empowers us to allow God to show us what our real problem is within ourselves. It gives us an attitude that is willing to feel dissatisfied, unhappy, and willing to mourn over it.

Meekness is being able to accept professionals and experts we put some part of our life in their hands. God's **power-meekness** makes Him our expert or authority on life's subjects. This attitude makes God our final authority on everything.

Righteousness is the attitude and act of only doing those things that are good for us, those around us, and God's plan. It is also the total avoidance of all those things that are bad for us, others, and God's plan. And, it only allows God to establish what is good and what is bad. However, this isn't **righteousness;** it is God's power-attitude to **hunger and thirst** for it.

Mercy is God's power to always give people good things they don't deserve, or, power to refuse to punish them for things they deserve punishment, retaliation, or brought to justice for.

A Pure Heart is God's power that is filled with love and **righteousness**. It is to have God's love that is listed in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a and the **righteousness** listed in Galatians 5:22-23.

A Peacemaker is a person who has God's peace-attitude already in their own heart and life. They are those who are willing to share this peace with those who are struggling with having peace in their own life and in their relationships with other people.

Persecution God's power to resist any human attack against what we know God has told us to believe, know, and do. It is the power to suffer for what we believe and for sharing it with everyone. Regardless of the consequences, we present Jesus' message to everyone.

Adam And Eve
Chapter One

The First Humans
This example comes to us as a couple; they are our great, great, great….grandparents. They started out just like us, even though they were created rather than being born. Even though they didn't start out as a baby and then grow into teenagers and then become adults, they still had the same basic type of life we did.

The First Law
They started out being innocent (not knowing the difference between right and wrong); they weren't responsible for any spiritual mistakes they made. But then God gave them a law stating that they were not to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; that made them responsible. They, from that point on, knew what was right and what was wrong concerning that one law. God's words spoke power into them to resist any temptation.

The First Temptation
Once Adam and Eve received this law, they faced the same temptations we face. As the Holy Spirit speaks certain laws into our conscience, we are tempted to go against them. Satan tempted Adam and Eve just like he tempts us; but, he came to them in the form of a serpent. However, the words he spoke to them are very similar to the thoughts he puts in our mind. So, let's get started comparing their life with ours as we see how to use God's power-attitudes to win at life.

Setting The Stage For Adam And Eve Exercising Their Free Will
Gen 2:7 (NIV) The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Gen 2:8 (NIV) Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.

Gen 2:9 (NIV) And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. <u>In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil</u>.

Why Are There Laws?
Why would God put a tree in a garden and then forbid Adam and Eve eating its fruit? Why has God allowed there to be things we can do that are wrong and damaging to us? Why wouldn't He get rid of them or program us to only do good things to ourselves and other people? Why did He give us a free will and then allow us to choose things that weren't good for us? Why would He allow someone like Satan to exist and be able to tempt us to do wrong things?

Understanding God

Before We Try To Explain The Things Of God

We will see, as we look at Adam and Eve's situation, that they didn't understand God at all. They didn't even try to look around them and see what a wonderful creation they were living in. They didn't appreciate the love, generosity, opportunities, and provisions they were surrounded with. If they had just taken out a few moments to look at God's creation, they would have had a lot more desire to use God's power to resist Satan and his arguments. God's power-attitudes help us be willing to stop and take inventory of all the GOOD things we have.

Yes, we have trouble, issues, difficulties, challenges, and problems; but, we ALSO have blessings, miracles, successes, benefits, opportunities, skills, talents, and power to win at life. We can look at all the things Satan is doing to us and the people around us and blame it all on God. Or, we can look at all God has and is doing and appreciate God. We can see Satan's evil, wrong, and bad and reject them; and, we can see all the great things of right, good, and righteousness and embrace them. Having a God-given free will means we have A CHOICE!

God's Power-Attitudes Are The Doors To Understanding

God uses the Bible to explain WHY He does WHAT He does; but, there are a few things we need to consider, as we start on the journey into moving from KNOWING there is a God to UNDERSTANDING Who God is. We are getting ready to try to explain why Adam and Eve failed the test concerning good and evil. We will be taking Biblical concepts from all over the Bible to provide the reason why God put a tree in the garden and then made a law that said they couldn't eat the fruit from it.

We will also be looking at why the world is in the condition it is in. Why are there wars, killing, stealing, cheating, lying, rape, hatred, rejection, and pain? Are these things representative of God; or, are they an indication of who Satan is and those who are yielding to him? We will take a look at why we have a God-given free will and how it keeps us from being a robot or slave. To be a human with a God-given free will is a VERY complicated scenario. It takes God with His incredible mind, power, and love to be able to run a world full of people with a free will.

Human Limitations

There are two problems with us understanding why God does anything He does. First, it has to do with the incredible, supernatural knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and power of God. **Isa 55:8 (NIV) For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. T**he main reason why we don't think like God does is because we can't. It would be like an ant trying to think like a human or understand human concepts.

Second, God KNOWS what are the right things to do. He doesn't make any mistakes about right and wrong. He KNOWS how everything will turn out. He KNOWS what is the very best for every person. But, He LETS us decide whether or not to listen to Him. **Prov 14:12 (NIV) There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.**

The Communication Barrier
How is God going to take His incredible mind, power, and abilities and help us understand why He does what He does? How is He going to explain to us humans, who are so much less than He is, things that are so complex and way over our heads? The incredible wisdom of God is demonstrated in His ability to take God-sized concepts and communicate them to us humans. So, let's see if we can see what the problem is for God communicating His concepts to us in a way where we can grasp them.

The Communication And Training Barrier
How do we train an animal that has a far inferior brain than we do? First, we are faced with the problem of being able to communicate what it is we want them to do. If we are able to work though the communication barrier, we then have to help the animal learn how to do what is we are trying to teach them. Then we have to deal with their attitudes; if we can communicate with them and we can teach them; but, they don't want to cooperate, all is lost.

The Attitude Barrier
Just like an animal must have good attitudes about us communicating and training them, so we must have the power-attitudes of God prior to communication and training. If we want to hear from God, that opens the door to communication possibilities. If we like Who God is and want Him to empower us to be like Him, that opens the door to His training.

It is easy to understand how difficult it might be for the concepts of God to be "translated" into human understanding; but, nothing is impossible with God. He will help us learn how to get the information we need, provided that we have a **poor in spirit** attitude. He isn't trying to get our approval or blessing on what He is doing; He is just helping us understand it so we can feel good about getting it. So, with this purpose in mind, let's see if we can get the help we need.

Adam And Eve Had Bad Attitudes
As we look at the mistakes Adam and Eve made, we can see that they pretty much failed in yielding to any of God's power-attitudes. When this happened, sin entered into their bodies and their life. They contracted the highly contagious, deadly disease of sin. God's creation was perfect; everything He did was all good. Now look at what us humans who have this highly contagious, deadly sin have done to God's creation. JUST ONE SIN DID IT! It spread to every person born on this planet. Since God knew this was going to happen, why would He be willing to even create beings like us?

God Has Wonderful Attitudes
We can look at the world and come up with our own opinion as to what this world's problems are. We can look at God and decide what we think He should have done to make things better. But, if we were God, we probably wouldn't have been willing to create humans in the first place. Why take a perfect existence like God's and complicate it with what we have here on earth? Why set something up that is going to take Jesus coming down here and having to die for our sins? It is doubtful that, if we were God, we would have been willing to do it.

Creating Humans
Chapter Two

Getting A God-Given Free Will
Being human means we must get a free will from God; but, there are four aspects that have to exist in order for us to REALLY HAVE a God-given free will.

1. God has to be willing to make us humans rather than robots or slaves.

2. We all have to have something to exercise our free will on.

3. We need to know what is good for us to choose and what is bad for us.

4. There must be a being that will give us opposing views on the subject.

So, God was willing to allow us to be humans rather than robots or slaves. We are all given the ability to analyze things; we are given the confidence to make choices; and we are given the ability to see ourselves as individuals. We want what is best for us through a desire for self-preservation. We have a conscience explaining what is good and what is bad. And, God has allowed Satan to exist so we can choose between God's good or Satan's evil.

Neutral, Right, And Wrong Spiritual Issues

Neutral Choices
And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. There are things that are spiritually neutral; God made things for us that are good for us from a natural standpoint. They aren't spiritual issues that we have to make moral choices over; they are just normal, natural human needs. You can like lemons, if you want to; or, you can hate them, if you want to. It isn't a wrong, bad, or evil decision; and, it isn't a good, right, or righteous decision; it's just a personal preference.

Right And Wrong Choices
In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These two trees are different from all the other trees; these two offer spiritual choices. If we humans were able to see things from God's perspective, the choice between these two trees should be obvious. However, we humans lack powers and abilities that God has decided are too great for us to possess. He started Adam and Eve's life without the ability or responsibility of having to cope with ALL the issues of right and wrong. God wanted them to just deal with ONE issue of right and wrong. He spoke the power into them through a spoken law that COULD have protected them from sin and the burden of being responsible for good and evil.

The Power Of Free Choice

Limited Power

We don't allow children to play with explosives; we don't let them drive cars; and we don't allow them to have certain rights and privileges until they are mature enough to be able to be responsible for them. That is the way God is with many of the things He has.

Unlimited Power

If our children need to benefit from things that are too powerful or dangerous for them, we either do it for them or we let them do it while under supervision. There are a lot of these things we need with and from God; we need the power, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding that are resident in Him. And, we can gain access to them through six things God requires of us. Through them, God either does them for us, or, He allows us to do them under His supervision.

Regulated Power

The six things God requires of us in order to get all our needs met is for us to desire them, study the Bible to find out what our needs are, pray and ask for them, let Jesus give us faith so we can know when we get them (believe), yield to God's love so we won't use them for selfish reasons, and then use faith-action so we can start living on the basis of the fact that we have them. Only those who PROPERLY use these six things gain access to God's power, provisions, and blessings. Using them PROPERLY means we use them legally.

God's Laws Inform Us

God's Laws Point Out Good And Bad

God's law, that He pointed out to Adam and Eve, was so they would know that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was bad for them. Laws point out spiritual issues; they define what is good or bad, right or wrong, moral or immoral, and righteous or evil. Those who understand the purpose of God's laws will at least DESIRE to obey them.

In order to have a free will that could be used effectively, God had to do more than just give us a free will. It was vital that Adam and Eve have that tree of the knowledge of good and evil to exercise their free will on. And, they had to have the right to decide whether or not they got the knowledge of good and evil. It was vital that they have God's law pointing out which choice was good (**And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden (Gen 2:16);**) and which one was bad for them (**but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die(Gen 2:17)**).

God's Laws Open The Door To Temptation

But, when God set out a law against eating fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that opened the door for Satan to use it to trap Adam and Eve. It wasn't good enough to have the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was vital that Adam and Eve get an opposing view on that tree. God gave them His view point and Satan gave them his. Then Adam and Eve were set up for FULL use of their free will.

God's Laws Can Be Varified
Adam and Eve didn't have to fall into that trap of Satan; they could have accessed the power that came to them when God spoke that law to them. They could have looked around them and evaluated all the wonderful things God had already done for them. They could have looked around and seen that Satan hadn't done anything for them. And, they could have run to God and got more of Him mighty knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and power. Instead they CHOSE to reason it all out based on their own experiences, knowledge, and intellectual abilities.

God's Laws Are Being Opposed
God GAVE Satan the right to present his principles, concepts, ideas, philosophies, and reasons. If there was no devil, then we would have a God-given free will, we would know what was good for us and what was bad; we would have opportunities for exercising our free will on good or bad things; but, we wouldn't have any opposing views to what God said. Satan is our enemy; he is a liar; he has never done anything good for us; we can see the results that is coming through all who are following him; but, we still have the right to yield to his temptations; and, he has the right to tempt us.

Trustworthy And Untrustworthy Sources

Free Will Decision Making
For us, we have a few more sources than Adam and Eve had that will be trying to trap us. In addition to Satan trying to push us toward things that would hurt us, we have our body wanting to take spiritual shortcuts, we have other people trying to involve us in things that are wrong, and we have the world system setting false rules, laws, and standards that lead us in the wrong direction.

A Teachable Free Will
Many grownups could save a lot of children from having to suffer those bad decisions children typically make. But, they often use their free will to exclude these adults and learn the hard way. That is because most children don't have a **poor in spirit** attitude.

The Free Will Stage Is Set
So, we have man's God-given free will, we have two things to choose from (the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), we have a law that points out what is good for us humans and what is bad, we have humans who have the ability to analyze things, we have evil resident in Satan, AND we have GOD Who embodies ALL good. Let's see what we can learn, as Adam and Eve take the same basic issues and make their decisions.

Creating Individuals
Chapter Three

The Power Of A Human

Gen 2:15 (NIV) The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. Here is a person who has individual awareness. They can see themselves as an individual that is separate from all the things around them. They have the ability to think for themselves, decide what they like and don't like, they have their own best interest in mind, they have self-preservation, they have opinions, and they can make individual decisions. **The man** here has been made in God's own image. He has abilities that a robot, a machine, a computing device, or an animal lacks; his mental and spiritual abilities are very powerful. God did a great job in creating this **man.**

What Will We Do With Power

God has already decided as to what kind of being He will be. He has already taken the fairness, justice, moral, and character issues and decided to only be a good God. He has absolute power, absolute knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, and absolute authority. Nothing and no one is powerful enough, knows, understands, or has wisdom that will defeat or subdue God. AND, with all this control, power, and authority, God decided to be only good. Now, the question is, what will we do with the control, power, and authority we have?

Spiritual Issues Are Relationship Issues

The Neutral Issue

There are neutral aspects of life; for the most part, taking care of the Garden of Eden doesn't have spiritual issues. As long as Adam isn't lazy and doesn't refuse to work it and take care of it, there are no real right or wrong aspects to this part of his life. We have classes on all kinds of subjects that are neutral issues. Language, math, natural science, technology, history, and all kinds of other subjects that CAN be presented in a neutral setting.

Things that aren't neutral have to do with relationships. There are three relationship categories: They are your relationship with yourself, your relationship with other people, and your relationship with God. Being **poor in spirit, mourning, meekness,** and **hungering and thirsting after righteousness** majorly only involve us and our relationship with God; they typically only deals with our being willing to listen and follow God's directions on how to succeed at life. Being **merciful, pure in heart, a peacemaker,** and a willingness to be **persecuted** mainly have to do with our relationship with people.

The God Relationship: The Good Issue

Gen 2:16 (NIV) And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; This is the commandment concerning good; God is telling Adam what will bring happiness, peace, satisfaction, and success to his life; however, this IS a commandment or law. It is a law that points to good; but, it sets the perimeters for where good is.

If a parent tells a child that they can play in the yard, that sets the parameters for where they are safe and secure. It also sets the parameters for where they cannot play; it establishes where they are not safe and secure. But, what about the child's WILLINGNESS to listen. That is what God's eight power-attitudes are all about; how will we respond to God's good?

If the parent's laws are evil, then they will give the child permission to play in areas where the child isn't safe; or, they won't care where the child pays. In this case, there are NO LAWS. If the parent is selfish, then the laws over the child will only have to do with the child doing those things that make the parent's life better. The parent doesn't care about the happiness or wellbeing of the child, they just want the child to do those things that make them happy.

The God Relationship: The Evil Issue

Gen 2:17 (NIV) but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die. This is the commandment concerning bad; God is telling Adam what will bring pain, unhappiness, stress, disappointment, and damage to his life. He is free to disobey these two commands or laws; he has the God-given ability to analyze the situation; and, he has the God-given freedom to decide what he is going to do about them. Adam can reason, analyze, process opposing views, decide what he wants and likes, and have confidence in himself. How he uses these things will frequently have spiritual implications.

The Human Relationship: Adam Gets A Wife

Gen 2:18 (NIV) The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." We now move into the human aspects of God's power-attitudes; most of it involves us and our relationship with other people. Up until now Adam didn't have any human relationships; but, now there is a wife for Adam to interact with. This opens the doors for the two of them to need the rest of God's power-attitudes to yield to. We also have another relationship to always keep in mind…the devil.

The Innocents Period

Gen 2:25 (NIV) The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. We are all born innocent; but, unlike Adam and Eve, we are born with a sinful nature. Adam and Eve didn't get their sinful nature until AFTER they sinned. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil gave them their ability to know the difference between right and wrong. The moment they knew that, they became RESPONSIBLE for that knowledge; they were no longer innocent.

James 4:17 (NIV) Anyone, then, who KNOWS the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins. The moment they got this ability by receiving a conscience, they knew what was right and what was wrong. They knew why it was wrong; but, they lacked the power to do the right thing and resist the wrong thing. That is WHY God made the law that they were not to eat from this tree. All they had to do was trust God's words and they would have been happy.

Adam And Eve's Battle
With God's Power Attitudes
Chapter Four

The Temptations Of Satan

Gen 3:1 (NIV) Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The Bible doesn't spend a lot of time explaining about the origination and existence of Satan. We will pick up some knowledge on this as we go through the Bible. But, for now, we just need to know he exists and came in this form to Adam and Eve. We will now apply the principles of God's power-attitudes to this situation and show how these eight power-attitudes of God will need to be applied, when we face this type of temptation.

Questioning Our Spiritual Knowledge

He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from ANY tree in the garden'?" Being **poor in spirit** is the first attitude needed in order to win against this attack or temptation from Satan. When God says something, we hear it and learn from it. Being **poor in spirit** is similar to being teachable. Up to this point, Adam didn't know that he was **free to eat from any tree in the garden.** This information taught Adam that there were no poisonous, non-nutritional, or indigestible trees bearing fruit in the garden.

Gen 2:16-17 (NIV) And <u>the LORD God commanded the man</u>, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; BUT you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." This was additionally important training information for Adam. He didn't know that there was a tree in the garden that had the power to create spiritual results. Through being **poor in spirit,** Adam learned two very important things.

God's Poor In Spirit Power-Attitude

Being **poor in spirit** makes God's words to be TRUTH in our life. It isn't like **meekness** that makes God's words be the FINAL AUTHORITY in our life. Being **poor in spirit** just makes you aware that what God says is a fact, a reality, a truth, and the way life works. When Satan said: **"Did God REALLY say",** it sounded like Satan was asking if God said it. Adam and Eve knew God said it; but, what did God mean when He said it? Was that **really** what He MEANT when He said it?

We have three issues that come against us when Satan is trying to get us to sin:

1. Did God really say that?
2. Did God mean that; or, did He really mean something else?
3. Did God tell us the truth, when He said it?

Being **poor in spirit** solves all three of these issues. It makes us KNOW what God said, what He meant, and that it was true. If we aren't **poor in spirit,** we are headed back into those things that hurt us. <u>God has taken all the good things in life and made them a part of Who He is</u>.

Trying To Confuse The Issue
"Did God really say, 'You must not eat from ANY tree in the garden?'" This is Satan's effort to draw us into a debate, a discussion, a reevaluating of the truth. When someone asks us a spiritual question and is trying to bait us, WE CAN THINK they have just failed to understand all the facts. We assume we can show them how smart we are. But it is often a trick just to get us discussing things that are designed to pull us into areas that damage us. God's law said they could **eat from any tree in the garden** except **from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil;** that is the truth of the matter; being **poor in spirit** empowers us to accept that truth.

Trying To Get Us To Correct The Mistake
God didn't say, **you must not eat from ANY tree in the garden;** and, Satan knew that all the time. But, if he can get us to talk about it, discuss the issue, or debate the subject, he stands a change of changing our mind. He can't make us do it; we have a God-given free will; but, MAYBE he can get us to change our OWN mind. You can't reason with evil; you can't out argue it; you can't change its mind; and you can't use it to come up with the truth.

Knowing Where Our Power Is
The only power we have is located in God; if we get into a debate, start reasoning with the temptation, or start wondering whether or not what God said in the Bible is true, we are on our way to defeat. It is very important for us to know HOW we end up making decisions that take us down a wrong path. If you allow God to empower you with His power-attitude of being **poor in spirit,** you will ALREADY know what the truth is; it won't be open for discussion.

When Satan causes a question or doubt to come into our mind that challenges a statement of God, we only have one recourse. Quote the statement of God to ourselves and to the thoughts of doubt. God is the only One Who loves us with a sacrificial love; He loves us more than we love ourselves. Being **poor in spirit** with our heavenly Father is vital for our future.

Don't Even Think About It
Here are some similar questions or doubts that can come up in your mind: Did God really mean that? Is that what He really said? These two questions can either be asked of your mind or they can be asked before God. If we ask God, He will empower us to be strong in them.

I Believe God Wants Me To Be Happy!
This statement has a truth and a lie in it; it is true God wants us to be happy; however, it is not true that, that thing we think will make us happy will actually make us happy. Only God knows what will make us happy. If you go to God with it, He will show you what to do. Don't just assume you know what will make you happy.

I Can Quit Anytime I Want
We start out just discussing or just thinking about the sin. We don't see any harm in at least looking at the issues, dreaming about the possibilities, thinking about what it would be like, or pretending we are doing it. But, it is like taking a floatation device and getting in a river. The current of the river takes over and we go where it takes us. But, if we refuse to even think about it, discuss it, argue about, or try to resist it with our own strength, we will never have to repent and get healed from something that has taken us over.

We Must Know The Enemy's Techniques
It looked like the fruit on the forbidden tree would make people happy; but, instead it put a sinful nature in Adam and Eve and all their posterity. If we trust and yield to the God Who wants us to be happy, we will LET Him lead us into TRUE happiness.

We Must Know What The Enemy Looks Like
The devil isn't likely to be coming to us in the form of a snake and talk to us. Instead,

- He will come in the person of a "friend" who is trying to talk us into going against what the Holy Spirit is telling our conscience.

- He will come in the form of a thought that tries to get us to do something that we feel is against what we have read in the Bible.

- He will come in the form of a feeling that is drawing us into experiences or relationships that will addict us or trap us.

- He will come in the form of our body's desires that will pull us into extreme pleasure that we will want to experience for the rest of our lives.

- He will come in the form of TV programs, movies, magazines, novels, internet sites, or video games that trap us in things God is trying to protect us from.

- He will come in the form of our emotions and try to depress us, get us angry, create fear in us, make us feel hopeless, or try to destroy us with great guilt and condemnation.

- He will come in the form of conflicts in relationships with friends, relatives, associates, spouses, children, business partners, and even enemies.

Adam And Eve's Battle With Pride

Chapter Five

What NOT To Do BEFORE The Temptation Comes
Gen 3:2-3 (NIV) The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

Eve is on her way to defeat before she even enters into this battle with temptation. Why? Because she hasn't gotten HERSELF ready for such an issue. She thinks she can handle this issue herself; she thinks that all she has to do is add a little extra protection to her mind and she will win. So she added, **"and you must not touch it"** to God's command. She figured that if she even feared touching it, she would have enough protection from being tempted.

What To Do BEFORE The Temptation Comes
God's power-attitudes are the characteristics we must ALREADY have WHEN we face this kind of temptation. We don't want to just learn what Adam and Eve SHOULD have done, we want to learn how to get ourselves ready. We get ready by studying and learning how to USE God's power-attitudes to help us win at life. If we are convinced that WE can handle it, we won't apply ourselves to these things; but, if we know we can't do it on our own, we will learn these things. We can't determine, promise, brace ourselves, or figure it out.

Using God's First Four Power-Attitudes To Get Ready BEFORE Temptation Comes

Poor in spirit, mourning, meekness, and **hungering and thirsting for righteousness** are mainly about our relationship with God. They empower us to be teachable, get rid of the bad attitudes in our lives, make God our final authority, and get us into a right relationship with God. So, let's look at the first four power-attitudes of God and see what they CAN do.

Poor In Spirit

God I Need Your Help
Poor In Spirit is having a teachable attitude. If we were in Adam and Eve's situation we would need being **poor in spirit** to help us BE WILLING to learn. It helps us ask God to get us ready for the battle. It helps us be ready for temptation before we get into it. If we come into this battle in Eve's condition, we will approach it with self-confidence. We will use human effort to argue with our thoughts, feelings, friends, or whatever is presenting the temptation. God's power-attitude of being **poor in spirit** helps us see God as our ONLY source of truth.

Poor In Spirit Or Human Effort
If we are tempted with depression, for example, we get negative feelings. Then our mind tries figure out why we are depressed. Rather than allowing God's **poor in spirit** attitude to take us to Him with it, we try to diagnose and solve our own emotional problem. We try to encourage OURSELVES; we try to do things that are fun; we try to prove to OURSELVES that there is nothing to be depressed about; and it is all being done through our reasoning.

Human Effort That Looks Like Poor In Spirit
The Eve problem kept her from consulting God; she fought the battle alone. So, let's look at the Eve statement and see what would have happened to her and what will happen to us if we make her statement with God's power-attitude of being **poor in spirit.** If we use God's power-attitude of being **poor in spirit** and say to the temptation: **"**I **may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <u>but God did say</u>, '**I **must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and** I **must not touch it, or** I **will die.'** We and Eve would then go on and say; "that is what God taught me, that is what I believe, and that is what I base my life on."

As we go on through God's power-attitudes, let's see how each one of them COULD make Eve's statement and our statement a proclamation of faith in God and His Word, rather than a statement just quoting God. Quoting the Bible isn't necessarily something we have accepted as a commandment from God to us; only by yielding to God's power-attitudes will this happen.

Poor In Spirit And Meekness Working Together
A **poor in spirit** attitude empowers us to quote God by saying: "This will happen to me if I do this." A **meekness** attitude empowers us to say: "This is what God said; and this is what I yield to. Then when put together, you would say: This is what God said; this is what I believe; and, as God gives me the strength, this is what I am going to continue to believe and do."

Poor In Spirit And Meekness NOT Working Together
But, in the Eve statement it was not a statement of faith; rather, it was just a point of clarification as to what God actually said. She didn't see it as what would truly happen to her. God's words were treated as words that were open for discussion. They weren't **poor in spirit** "truth" and they weren't **meekness** "final authority" words from the God of the universe. She didn't respect Who God is; she didn't take into consideration that He loved her, wanted the best for her, and spoke them for her benefit and safety.

Mourning

Being Willing To Feel Bad
Mourning allows God to show us what OUR problem is. It protects us before we make a mistake; and, it heals us after we make mistakes. If we are tempted with a relationship like friendship, clients, divorce, marriage, or child raising, for example, we may assume that the other person is the cause of the problem. Blame opens the door for a lot of mistakes and sins. **Mourning** keeps us from trying to excuse ourselves, justify ourselves, forgive ourselves, or get our friends to tell us it isn't our fault. Instead, we see OUR part in all problems.

Knowing When To Feel Bad
Now, let's make Eve's statement our statement as it relates to **mourning**: We can say to temptation, **"**I **may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'I must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and** I **must not touch it, or** I **will die.'"** Is there anything in this statement that we should **mourn** over? Yes!

Letting Mourning Do Its Work
We don't like being limited; we don't like being told what to do; and, we don't like being kept from happiness, pleasure, and fun. But, if God limits us, tells us what to do, or appears to be keeping us from happiness, pleasure, and fun, **mourning** helps us see our bad attitudes, our distrust in God, and our lack of seeing that God loves us more than we love ourselves.

Keeping Mourning From Doing Its Work
Satan didn't limit Adam and Eve; he gave them his permission to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He didn't tell them what to do; he just made some suggestions, some accusations against God, and lied to them about what the end result would be. He will cater to our bad attitudes against God. He will make us think that God is trying to cheat us and keep us from having fun. We will have a bad attitude; but, we won't feel bad about it.

Mourning shows us ahead of time where our disagreements, doubts, fears, frustrations, and misunderstandings are with God. Rather than letting us have bad attitudes and not realize it, it helps us start feeling bad about them BEFORE they corrupt our actions. This power-attitude of God would have saved Adam and Eve from distrusting God in the first place.

Meekness

Who Is The Final Authority In Your Life
Meekness is accepting professionals and experts to put some part of our life in their hands. If we are being tempted with an addiction, for example, we may decide to try to handle it with our own skills, talents, power, knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Or, we may choose some person who isn't a Christian to be our expert or give us professional help. **Meekness** is the power to accept God as our only expert in our life. If we are **poor in spirit** (teachable) with someone other than God and the people He picks for us, then we have become **meek** with the wrong person or group.

God Is The Final Authority In My Life
Now, let's see what could have happened to Eve and what will happen to us if we make this statement with God's power-attitude of **meekness**: We can say to temptation, **"**I **may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'I must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and** I **must not touch it, or** I **will die.'"** If we have opened our heart to accepting God as our expert or professional for doing things for us that we are not capable of doing for ourselves, this will be a statement of faith in God and His words. We will accept this as the FINAL AUTHORITY in the matter. We aren't OPEN for further consideration, additional thoughts, or other opinions.

Righteousness

A God Established Principle

Righteousness is the attitude and act of doing those things that are good for us, those around us, and God's plan. It is also the avoidance of all those things that are bad for us, others, and God's plan. However, what is good and what is bad is established only through what God says they are. He alone qualifies for establishing what is best for us and those around us. He is the only One Who has all knowledge, foreknowledge of the future, understanding, and wisdom.

Being Helped With Our Knowledge Of Good And Evil

If we are being tempted to spend more money than we should, for example, to **hunger and thirst after righteousness** is to go to our heavenly Father and ask Him to show us what is the good way to spend our money and what is the bad way. We would ask Him to show us who is being benefited by the system of spending, we are using, and who is being hurt. This helps us see what good and evil look like in all our life situations.

Now, let's see what could have happened to Eve and what will happen to us if we make this statement with God's power-attitude of **righteousness**: We would say to temptation, **"**I **may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, '**I **must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and** I **must not touch it, or** I **will die.'"** If we say this sentence with God's **righteousness,** we mean we won't eat it because it isn't going to bring a win/win benefit for everyone involved. We don't do anything that just benefits us. This changes our whole approach to life. We will **in everything, do to others what** we **would have them do to** us **(Mat 7:12).** We will **love** our **neighbor as** our self **(Mark 12:31).**

Adam And Eve's Battle With Self-Esteem And Confidence

Chapter Six

Using God's Second Four Power-Attitudes To Get Ready BEFORE Temptation Comes

Mercy, pure in heart, peacemaker, and **persecution** are mainly about our relationship with other people. They empower us to be **merciful** to others, get rid of the bad behavior in our lives, get along with others and help others get along with each other, and not allow other's threats, mistreatment, bad opinions, and physical abuse keep us from living the Christian life and sharing it with others. So, let's look at the second four power-attitudes of God.

Mercy

It's My Decision

Mercy is doing good or forgiving someone when they doesn't deserve it. We don't punish, retaliate, or bring them to justice. In this case, Satan doesn't qualify for **mercy**; Eve and Adam haven't done anything YET that requires **mercy**; and God doesn't need **mercy**. But, God's power-attitude of **mercy** is still needed in Adam and Eve's heart.

Adam and Eve will need this one from God soon; they will need God to be merciful to them. But, they also need it right now in their own heart so they will be able to repent before God. Mercy in their lives would help them not blame someone else for their failures. We will see them want someone else to be punished for them yielding to their pressure. This lack of God's power-attitude of **mercy** will keep them from owning their own decisions. Satan didn't MAKE Eve sin; and, Eve didn't MAKE Adam take a bite of the forbidden fruit.

A Pure Heart

A Pure Heart is to have motives that are filled with love and righteousness. It is to have God's love that is listed in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a and the righteousness listed in Galatians 5:22-23. This is a place where we have to ask God to search our heart. Since our heart is buried in a deep place where it can't be analyzed by us, and since it can't be reasoned with by our mind, we need the Holy Spirit to guide us with the prayers we need to pray (Romans 8:26-27).

Only God Can Evaluate Our Heart

Jer 17:9 (NIV) The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? We are up against a part of us that is impossible for us to diagnose. We will NEVER be able to examine our own motives for why we are doing something, Without God's power-attitude of a **pure heart,** we will never know FOR SURE that we are doing it with pure motives. Trying to justify ourselves, forgive ourselves, get our friends to tell us it isn't our fault, won't do it. It is easy for us to believe we have **pure** motives.

You Have A Spirit-Driven Conscience

John 16:8 (NIV) When He comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment. This is the Holy Spirit telling our conscience whether or not our thoughts, feelings, words, or deeds are good. This is done on a moment-by-moment, issue-by-issue basis. A **pure heart** only stays **pure** by us yielding to God's power-attitude of a **pure heart.** If we don't take our heart to God, the One Who nothing is impossible for Him, we WILL be fooled by our heart. We MUST allow God to search our heart by us listening to our conscience ALL DAY LONG.

Our Heart Evaluated By Our Conscience

No matter what it is we are being tempted with, our heart will have a hidden agenda for why it is trying to justify doing the wrong thing. It can make us want to yield to the temptation with a very strong emotional desire. It will be irresistible without God's power to help us with it. So, when the Holy Spirit speaks to our conscience and it sends us a warning, we must STOP and pray for God's power-attitude of **a pure heart** to empower us to think, feel, say, and do the right thing.

Now, let's see what would have happened to Eve and what will happen to us, if we make this statement with a **pure heart:** We would say to the temptation, **"**I **may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <u>but God did say</u>, '**I **must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and** I **must not touch it, or** I **will die.'"** We would say this and not commit sin through a **pure heart** because we wouldn't want be damaged ourselves; and, we wouldn't want to pass it on to others. We quote God because He is **pure** and we are yielding to His **purity.**

Rom 8:26-27 (NIV) In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. <u>We do not know what we ought to pray for</u>, but the Spirit Himself intercedes <u>for us</u> with groans that words cannot express. And <u>He Who searches our hearts</u> knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints <u>in accordance with God's will</u>. This is a way of being presented heart motives that are typically hidden from us. We allow the Holy Spirit to TELL US what we should pray for, want, pursue, and study about. God's power-attitude of a **pure heart** helps us be able to listen to the Holy Spirit's direction in our minds.

A Peacemaker

A **peacemaker** is a person who ALREADY has God's peace in their own heart and life. They are Christians who are willing to share this peace. They share their peace with those who are struggling with having peace in their own life; and, they help these people with their relationships with other people. This is another power-attitude item like **mercy** that doesn't seem to apply in this situation with Adam and Eve. Satan doesn't qualify for it, God doesn't need it, and Adam and Eve aren't arguing about anything. However, it would have been good if Adam had put up some resistance concerning what Eve was doing with Satan.

Peacemaking Has To Do With The End Result

Being a **peacemaker** doesn't always look like you are being a **peacemaker.** Adam and Eve are about to do something that is going to create untold turmoil in their lives. They are going to pass on a sin nature to every person born on this planet. All the diseases, wars, sin, and pain are all coming from this decision they are about to make. If either Adam or Eve had turned to the other partner and resisted them, it would have been one of the most **peacemaking** moves known to man.

Peacemaking Has To Do With Righteousness

Luke 12:51 (NIV) Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. Now this doesn't sound like Jesus is a **peacemaker.** However, the Bible says that Jesus is the Prince of peace. **John 14:27 (NIV) Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. <u>I do not give to you as the world gives</u>. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.** God's power-attitude of **peacemaking** isn't just a matter of helping people get along with each other. If both of them get along but END UP doing the wrong thing, we have failed as a **peacemaker.**

Peacemaking Has To Do With Truth

Now, let's see what would have happened to Eve and what will happen to us, if we make this statement with **peacemaking:** We would say to the temptation, **"**I **may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <u>but God did say</u>, '**I **must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and** I **must not touch it, or** I **will die.'"** With **peacemaking,** this could have ended up with a major argument between Adam and Eve. They could have entered into a massive debate as to what they should or should not do. BUT, if their confrontation ended up with both of them taking this issue to God BEFORE they made ANY decision, it could have been the greatest **peacemaking** move on this planet.

Adam And Eve's Battle With Social Pressure
Chapter Seven

Persecution

Persecution consists of any outside HUMAN resistance against what we believe and know God has told us to believe and know. Temptation consists of any outside SPIRITUAL resistance against what we believe and know God has told us to believe and know. Adam and Eve are experiencing more of a temptation than a persecution. Rather than being attacked for what they believed and knew, they were being lured into changing their own beliefs and knowledge. Satan's approach is one of the most dangerous types of **persecution** we can face. If someone is nice to us, doesn't threaten us in any way, appears to have our best interests in mind, and shows us how much benefit we will get from sinning, we are being **persecuted** with BAIT.

Spiritual Bait: Good Used For Evil

Bait is something that is good; but, it has something bad in it. Being treated in a nice way with gentle tones, soothing words, and pleasant expressions on the face is a good thing. But, if all that is being done so as to get us to do something wrong, bad, or evil, it is bait. The END RESULT is suffering, pain, separation from good, and disappointment. Satan was persecuting Adam and Eve; but, they didn't have a clue that something VERY evil was being done to them.

Evaluate The Source

God had told them what they needed to believe and know. That could have saved and protected them from any kind of temptation. Satan couldn't force them to change their beliefs or training. All he was able to do was try to convince THEM to do the changing. Why would Adam and Eve listen to Satan; what had Satan done for them? Just because he was talking to them in nice terms didn't make him their friend. God had given them the heavens to look at, the garden to live in, and a wonderful body to use to experience all those gifts. Words are cheap; it's the actual provisions, relationship, and deeds that matter.

Verbal, Relational, And Physical Abuse

Persecution is usually more of an effort to FORCE us to change our beliefs and truths. It can come as a verbal attack of making fun of us, criticizing us, accusing us falsely, gossiping against us, and saying all kinds of evil things about us. It can come as a rejection socially, cutting us off relationally, or punishing us through governmental systems. **Persecution** can come as a physical attack of hitting us, torturing us, or even killing us. It is all aimed at trying to FORCE us to give up on Jesus, His words, and sharing them with others.

Making Commitment Statements
Now, let's see what would have happened to Eve and what will happen to us, if we make this statement with God's power-attitude of us being willing to be **persecuted: "I may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <u>but God did say</u>, 'I must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and I must not touch it, or I will die.'"** This would be a commitment of faith in God and His words even in the face of **persecution**, if we are able to see how important and valuable Jesus and all He has given us is. It empowers us to be so blessed and filled with appreciation and clarity as to all we shall inherit now and in eternity, that we would even be willing to give up our temporal life rather than deny Jesus as our Savior.

Using God's Power-Attitudes To Stay In Truth

God's Word Is Truth
We have not looked at the four power-attitudes of God that mainly deal with us and our relationship with Him; and, we have looked at the four power attitudes that mainly deal with our relationship with other people. We have seen how Eve's statement could have been a statement that embraced all these power-attitudes of God. But, her statement wasn't made with ANY of them. She just made the statement, **"We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <u>but God did say</u>, 'we must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and we must not touch it, or we will die.'"** just as a matter of clarification.

God's Truth Is Powerful
Adam and Eve were going to face Satan with no power-attitudes from God. This put them in a helpless position. Without the power-attitudes of God they didn't stand a chance of winning against Satan. Satan can't out argue God's Word; he can't out power God; God doesn't allow him to force us to do anything; but, we can't win against Satan on our own. We must be supported by these power-attitudes of God. So, let's see what happened to Adam and Eve as they dealt with Satan on their own.

Fighting A Losing Battle

Challenging What We Think We Heard From God
He [Satan] said to the woman, "Did God REALLY say, 'You must not eat from ANY tree in the garden'?" Now it is time for us to apply this type of temptation to our own situation. **Did God really say,** is the point where we have thoughts, doubts, or have people challenge the validity of what we "think" God is saying to us.

Knowing What We Heard From God
We can be talking to a person about why we do or don't want to do something; and, we can have them say: "Oh, God doesn't expect you to do or not do that!" They are acting like THEY are the authority for how the Bible is to be interpreted. They are saying that THEIR interpretation is superior to the one Jesus gave us. We will not be open to these attacks on our interpretation of the Bible, if we have gone over God's power-attitudes and allowed them to empower our spiritual attitudes.

Fighting A Winning Battle

Knowing The Bible IS God's Word

It is easy to be able to quote God's Word like Eve did. We can read a passage, quote it word for word, AND know God said it; but, what does it mean? Eve quoting God didn't save her from being deceived. Eve quoting God's words and knowing God said it didn't save her from being deceived. She knew God said it and what He said; but, there were a lot of problems inside her as to its meaning, its purpose, its power, its love, and its truth. How do we go from knowing God said it and knowing what He said and it take us into transforming our life? That is what these eight power-attitudes of God are all about. They give us a DOOR into the meaning of the words, the purpose of the words, the power of the words, the love of the words, and the truth of the words.

God's Power-Attitudes Aren't The Answer

God's power-attitudes aren't the meaning of the words, the purpose of the words, the power of the words, the love of the words, or the truth of the words; they are the door into these things. Being **poor in spirit** empowers you to be RECEPTIVE to these things. **Mourning** empowers you to get rid of those things that resist these things. **Meekness** makes God your final authority so you only listen to Him concerning these things. **Hungering and thirsting for righteousness** is a craving for these things. They make it possible for you to GET THESE THINGS!

Getting Ready For A Winning Battle

Don't Stop There!

Getting the power attitudes of God is just you getting into the room where all the wonderful things of God are. If you just get God's power to open all eight doors but don't go in, you missed the whole point. Once you allow God to help you open these doors, you need to GET the meaning of the words, the purpose of the words, the power of the words, the love of the words, and the truth of the words. Let's see what USING God's power-attitudes would have done for Adam and Eve; and, let's see what USING them will do for you.

Satan Trying To Be The Final Authority In Your Life

Gen 3:4 (NIV) "You will NOT surely die," the serpent said to the woman. That was a lie! But, Adam and Eve couldn't tell the difference. They lacked the ABILITY to be able to tell the difference between truth and lies. Being **poor in spirit** isn't exactly the same as being teachable. Being teachable can make you gullible. Being **poor in spirit** ONLY makes you teachable when truth is coming your way. It is the power to be receptive to truth but VERY resistant to lies. This one alone would have saved Adam and Eve.

Meekness Makes God Your Final Authority
Here is what God actually said: **"But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it <u>you WILL surely die</u> (Genesis 2:17)."** We will receive feelings inside us, thoughts inside us, and people's words coming at us that are DIRECT contradictions to what the Bible says. These thoughts, feelings, and words are satanic attacks; they are trying to take the AUTHORITY POSITION in our heart, mind, and life. They will speak authoritatively with great confidence trying to use it as a technique for stealing your faith.

Satan is evil, hateful, a thief, a liar, and a killer; yet, he wants us to trust and believe his words over God's. In other words, the way God's power-attitudes help us measure people, sources of influence, and temptations is based on how they fit into **righteousness**. Where does an idea, philosophy, relationship, or decision fit into right and wrong, good or bad, moral or immoral, and **righteousness** or evil? If God is your authority on deciding these issues, then you are protected. It becomes obvious to you which is truth--**you WILL surely die,** or, **you will NOT surely die.**

Hungering and thirsting for righteousness gives you the power-attitude to be LOOKING for how to love those around you like you love yourself. It give you the desire to do to others those things you want done to you. Adam and Eve weren't concerned about what this would do to anyone else. If it would make them happy, they didn't care what it would do to anyone else.

Adam And Eve
Allow God To Be Discredited
Chapter Eight

Attacking The Credibility Of God
Gen 3:5 (NIV) "<u>For God knows</u> that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be <u>like God, knowing good and evil</u>."

"For God knows" is saying that God has bad motives for trying to keep us from getting what is good or best for us. If Satan can get you to doubt God's integrity and honesty, he won! We may start asking ourselves, is this temptation something I want? Rather than judging and evaluating the SOURCE, we are judging and evaluating the INFORMATION. The true question is, is this a source I should base my life on? Should I trust it or them over God and His Word? ALL good comes from God; and, He makes all bad work out for our good (Rom 8:28).

Accepting The Wrong SOURCE As Being True
Gen 3:6a (NIV) When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom,

Accepting The BAIT
"When the woman saw" is the place where the temptation takes on a life of its own. There is always a point of no return; it is a place where we take the BAIT and swallow the hook. Bait is different from food; it is different from those things that meet our basic, daily needs for normal life. Bait looks like the very best food, benefits, blessings, help, and happiness a person can find. There is just one problem with it; it has a hook in it!

Our Body Ignores Consequences
Our body wants pleasure and prefers extreme pleasure; it does NOT take into consideration what the consequences are. It does NOT care if the end results will be damage, guilt, emptiness, and wrong deeds against others. It just wants to have fun, enjoyment, thrills, and happiness right here, right now. If we allow our body to take over some decision, any decision, it will be a choice based on happiness and pleasure WITHOUT consideration for the consequences later. We will get drunk without considering where it takes us. We will have sex outside marriage without considering what the consequences are; our body is animalistic.

Considering The INFORMATION Rather Than The SOURCE
"When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom" was the moment the battle was lost. When we allow ourselves to make decisions based on what looks good to us, we suffer many FUTURE consequences. Why? We CONSIDERED the issue rather than the source that was presenting the issue. Only God can be trusted as our source; even WE can't be trusted as our source.

Who loves us more than we love ourselves?…God does! Who knows everything--us, our friends, "experts," the world, or God? Who can see into the future and know what a decision's outcome will be?--God does. He says things to us like: **"But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it YOU will surely die."** He wasn't saying that if they did, He would kill them. He was saying that the CONSEQUENCES of eating that fruit would bring spiritual death; and it did!

Sin Spreads

Gen 3:6b (NIV) She took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Another bad thing about sin is that it spreads, God knew that! We usually give some of it to those around us. Sin is a VERY deadly, highly contagious spiritual disease; people see how we are living, assume it is a good thing, and fall into the same trap. Also, some sins HAVE to be committed WITH or AGAINST someone else.

Sin Has AUTOMATIC Consequences

Gen 3:7 (NIV) Then the eyes of BOTH of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. It isn't until AFTER we have done something the Bible tells us not to do that we see clearly why God said something. Learning the hard way is never the way to live life. The purpose of the Bible is to be our spiritual road map that keeps us from having to learn the hard way. If you are looking at a map, you know what to expect out in front of you; you don't have to use trial and error.

Righteousness And Sin Must Be Available

Adam and Eve had to have a God-given free will so they could be human. Something like a forbidden tree had to be in the garden for them to use their God given free will on. Satan had to be allowed to enter the garden or they wouldn't have had an opposing opinion to consider. But, Adam and Eve also had to have God's warning so they could make a KNOWLEDGEABLE decision. And, they had to have all those wonderful things in the garden, all the beautiful weather, and all that beautiful body so they could see WHO was the One they could trust.

What Does God Do When We Choose Sin?

God didn't kill Adam and Eve; sin killed them spiritually. He loved them enough to give them the warning about the CONSEQUENCE of the sin. He will provide them a cure for their sin; He will discipline them so they are trained for avoiding it in the future. But, He will allow them to reap the end results of their decisions.

The Consequences Of Sin

Gen 3:8 (NIV) Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, <u>and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden</u>. Death means separation; the moment Adam and Eve ate the fruit they were told would cause them to die was the moment they died spiritually. It created a breach between them and God. They no longer felt the same way about God. They no longer had the same relationship with Him. God typically walked and talked with them **in the cool of the day.** But, now they and God couldn't have the same close relationship.

Death Doesn't Mean To Cease To Exist

The death to a relationship happens when two people get separated over issues. The death to the body is when our spirit is separated from it. A dead battery doesn't mean it ceases to exist; it means that it has been separated from those things that make it work. Adam and Eve didn't drop over dead physically or cease to exist physically. They got separated from God and died spiritually. The moment we did something the Holy Spirit told us not to do through our conscience was the moment WE died spiritually. From that point on, we needed salvation to help us be BORN AGAIN!

They hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden: Both the unsaved and the saved have a tendency to hide from God because of the fact that they have sinned. But, that is the moment we desperately need to turn TO God. However, something happens to us humans, when we sin. When sin enters our life as a sinner or even as a Christian, it brings fear with it. It is a fear that tries to cause us to run from God and hide from God rather than TO Him.

We Must Diagnose Where Are We Spiritually

Gen 3:9 (NIV) But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" This is a spiritual question that is trying to help Adam and Eve look at where sin took them. This is the purpose of God's power-attitude item, **mourning**; it helps us diagnose WHERE we are spiritually. If we don't see anything wrong with what we did, we not only sinned, we are stuck in the sin. God is our only way out and we are running and hiding from Him.

Instead of **mourning,** feeling bad about it, repenting, and it setting us free, we try feeling good about it; we blame others; we forgive ourselves; we justify what we did; we get our friends to tell us it wasn't our fault; and, we try to hide it so no one will know what we did. A person will have an affair; that is a sin. But, some people don't repent of that sin; they want to stay in the adulterous relationship; that is a lack of **mourning**.

Some people come to God for salvation and then commit a sin. The next decision they make will decide whether they are a true Christian or are a person who was just trying Christianity out. If our want moves from desiring God and the things of God to wanting to stay in a sin, then we have established whether or not we are a true Christian. Yielding to **mourning** helps us BE a true Christian who wants the **righteousness** of God (those things that are good for us, other people, and God's plan).

Adam And Eve
Need To Be Brought Back
Chapter Nine

Sin Brings Fear
Gen 3:10 (NIV) He [Adam] answered, "I heard You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." Let's break this verse down and see the spiritual principles and characteristics of sin. Let's see what it does to us and what we have to do to get free from its control.

God Always Calls Us Back
I heard You. When we sin, God starts calling us back into a relationship with Him. He still loves us very much; but, He still honors our God-given free will. It is up to us as to whether or not we want His help; the problem is, we may not know what we want.

- We may decide that we are no longer WORTHY to have a relationship with God.
- We may decide that the sin is PROOF that we must not really want or love God.
- We may decide that GOD no longer wants or loves us.
- We may decide that we would like to postpone the relationship for a while so we can enjoy sin for a season. Then when we have had our "fun" we will come back to God and reestablish the relationship.
- We may decide that God loves us, we love Him, and we want to repent (make a U-turn) and make things right with God immediately. This, of course, is the right way to feel about God; and the right way to respond to a sin.

Sin Always Hurts Our Relationship With God
I was afraid. We can sin and fear or we can have this constant relationship with our heavenly Father: **Rom 8:15 (NIV) For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of SONSHIP. And BY Him we cry, "Abba, Father."** Abba means dear father; it is a special word for father that carries the feelings of endearment.

When we sin, whether accidently or on purpose, we can immediately run back to our heavenly Father for His help. Our relationship with God is one of freedom from fear that God has rejected us. Sin has caused us to reject God, to some degree; but, God has NOT rejected us. The ONLY issue is, do you still want God and the way of life God has to offer? Are you willing to allow **mourning** to empower you to see how evil the sin was and give it up? Are you willing to allow God to set you free from it? What do you want?

It's Either God Or Stay In Sin
When we sin, it is a moment where we are exercising our God-given free will and deciding what we want the relationship to be:

1. Do you want forgiveness through a desire to repent (make a U-turn)? This is the one that God would like for you to make your relationship to be.

2. Do you want to keep sinning but keep your relationship with God? This is the one that God will not offer as a possibility.

3. Do you want to quit God and go back to a life of sin? God does NOT want you to EVER choose this one. But, you have the God-given right to choose this path, if you want.

However, we MUST ALL make a choice between whether we want sin or we want God.

We will sin a lot of sins during our lifetime; but, we MUST always choose to either run back to God and desire His deliverance from it, or, we MUST choose to reject God and go on sinning. We CANNOT want to keep on sinning and expect to keep our relationship with God. So, let's all want to come back to God. What do we have to do to reestablish our relationship with Him?

We Get Confronted By God

Where Are You?
Gen 3:9 (NIV) But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" First, God will help you take an assessment of where you have gone spiritually. You may think you have just done something that doesn't really matter all that much. If you do, you won't repent and tell God you are sorry. You may think you have gone too far; if you do you won't repent and tell God you are sorry. But, if you know you sinned and you know you can be forgiven, you will be able to repent and tell God you are sorry.

What Kind Of Sin Did You Commit?
Gen 3:11 (NIV) And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? <u>Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from</u>?" God doesn't come to us like He did here in the garden. God's Holy Spirit speaks to our conscience and makes us feel guilt for the sins we commit. This guilt is to help us make a decision to repent and tell God we are sorry; but, are we willing to admit that we sinned and did the wrong thing? Can we see how deadly and contagious even the smallest sin is? Can we see that it can start small and spread throughout our entire life? Can we see that it can spread from us to large quantities of other people?

God knows where you are; and, He knows what you have done. He just wants to help YOU know where you are and what you have done. As long as we WANT to, we can repent (make a U-turn) and get God's forgiveness and power to stop doing what we are doing. But, <u>do we realize and admit that we have sinned</u>? And, <u>do we want to be forgiven and be set free from that sin</u>? These are some of the two most important questions in the world.

Where Are You: Do you know you are in a place where you can come to God and be forgiven? Do you know you are in a place where you can come to God and be empowered to stop doing what you have been doing? Do you know you are in a place where you can come to God and be healed in your heart from the damage sin did to it?

What Have You Done: Do you know you have sinned and need to repent? Do you know you have to want to be set free from what you are doing? Do you know you have to let God head your life in a different direction? If you want that, you can use the eight power-attitudes of God to help you get all you need.

1. If you want to keep growing in being **poor in spirit,** you will be teachable enough to allow God to decide whether or not what you did was a sin.

2. If you want to keep growing in being one of **those who mourn,** you will be willing to allow yourself to feel bad about what you have done and be ready to repent.

3. If you want to keep growing in being **meek,** you will accept what the Bible says is right or wrong, good or bad, moral or immoral, righteous or evil and admit it is the final authority on the subject. You will accept God as your Expert, your Lord, your God, and your Judge. You will allow Him to evaluate what you have done and let Him tell you whether or not it was a sin.

4. If you want to keep growing in being one of **those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,** you will want to pray and ask God to help you replace this sin with those things that are good for you and those around you. You will pray to be delivered from everything that is bad for you and those around you; such as the sin you just committed.

5. If you want to keep growing in being **merciful,** you will be willing to make it right with those who deserve to be asked for their forgiveness AND with those who do not deserve to be asked. You will also be willing to ask God for His help to forgive those who do not deserve your forgiveness for the sins they have sinned against you.

6. If you want to keep growing in being **pure in heart,** you will bring your heart before God and allow Him to inspect your motives. Sometimes God deals with you concerning something that typically ISN'T a sin. The Holy Spirit is making you feel bad about something; but, it is difficult seeing what it is you did wrong.

   Many times it is a **pure in heart** issue; you sometimes do the right thing for the wrong reason. This situation takes a lot of prayer and work with God. Since your heart is so hidden from you and impossible to cure on your own, you have to pray and ask God what it is you need to pray for (Romans 8:26-27).

7. If you want to keep growing in being a **peacemaker,** you will allow God to keep putting more and more peace in your life so you will be content with what you have. Often sin is caused be you wanting something God hasn't given you. God gave Adam and Eve every tree in the garden for food except one; so, which tree did they want?

   Peacemakers, who are growing as peacemakers, also help others who are creating problems because THEY want something God isn't giving THEM. Trouble makers are usually people who are trying to take matters into their own hands. They are trying to cause things to happen that they either don't want to get through God, they don't want to wait until it does come through God, or, they know God doesn't want them to have it.

8. If you are one of **those who are persecuted,** you may discover that persecution can actually CAUSE you to sin. When the forced efforts of evil people come against you trying to make you give up on God and His message, you may find yourself giving in to their pressure. However, this doesn't mean that, that was what you WANTED to do.

   You need to take the issue before God and let Him show you what went wrong in that situation. Did you expose yourself to people you shouldn't have been hanging around? Did you care more about people's opinions than God's truths? Did you allow fear of suffering to be more important to you than your relationship with God? What was it that happened that needs to be helped and healed in your heart and life?

Adam And Eve
Try Blame Instead Of Repentance
Chapter Ten

Respond To Repentance

Blame Keeps Us From Repenting And Going The Other Way

Gen 3:12 (NIV) The man said, "The woman You put here with me--she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." Very often there is another person involved in the sins we commit. And, very often that other person had a part in influencing our decision to sin. And, very often we are TEMPTED to put the WHOLE blame on them for MAKING us sin.

Having A Discussion With God

Unlike Adam and Eve, we can't take our "partner in crime" and have an audience with God to discuss whose fault it was. Our discussions with God are in our heart and in our mind; we feel guilty about something in our conscience; or, we get ideas in our head from the Holy Spirit that point out differences between what the Bible says and what we did or are doing.

Blame In Our Heart

If someone else was involved with what the Holy Spirit is speaking against in our conscience, or if they were influencing our decisions about something the Holy Spirit is bringing into evaluation through the Scriptures, we may blame the whole thing on them and not take it to God. <u>As long as we fail to find a reason for repenting before God, the sin problem remains</u>.

Deadly Sin Hiding In Our Heart

Sins that haven't been dealt with ARE very dangerous; they grow, get worse, produce bad consequences, and hinder our relationship with God. Even if we feel it wasn't our fault, wasn't all that bad, or someone else got what they deserved, we need to discuss it with God in prayer.

God Will Work With All Who Are Involved

Blame Only Postpones The Issue

Gen 3:13 (NIV) Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." We need to notice that God dropped the issue with Adam and went straight to Eve. But, we will also notice that He eventually gets back to Adam. Blame may make us feel better for a little while; but, God will always come back and make us face what is hurting and damaging us and those around us.

God Deals With Bad Influences

God cares about those Eve's in our life who have influenced us to sin; He loves them and wants to help and heal them. He wants them to see how they can be delivered from hurting themselves and other people. And, He will try to do whatever it takes to help them get set free.

God Deals With Those Who Yield
But, God also loves us; He isn't going to allow blame to cheat us out of getting the help we need. However, blame can make us struggle with our **poor in spirit** attitude. We may allow blame, excuses, self-forgiveness, and self-justification to cause us to be unwilling or unable to hear what God wants to say to us. We must never forget that God honors the free will He has given us. We could end up unforgiven and separated from God.

God Will Deliver Us From Satan

Don't Get Distracted
Gen 3:14 (NIV) So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. Satan and the serpent are two different entities; we don't know why the serpent allowed Satan to use it. These are subjects that won't help us grow in our relationship with God. They are spiritual issues that are to be accepted on face value. If we start studying and trying to learn more about them, they will distract us from the issues that God is very interested in.

Many things will be presented in the Bible on face value. They aren't the important issues so God presents them in His Bible matter-of-factly; He will explain all this in eternity. He wants us to stick with the important points so we can be transformed, healed, blessed, and prospered.

The Bad Spiritual Influencer Was Dealt With
Gen 3:15 (NIV) And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

Jesus Gave Us The Victory Over Satan
This is a summary of the battle Jesus won over Satan through the cross. The cross looked like Jesus' head was crushed and Satan just got his heel struck. But, in the spirit realm, Satan got his head crushed and Jesus just got His heel bruised. Through the cross, all Satan's authority was taken from him and all authority in heaven and earth was given to Jesus. **Mat 28:18 (NIV) Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.**

See, God Deals With Everyone
Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed Satan; so, first God started with Satan and pronounced a punishment on him. Next he will go back to Eve; then He will come back around to Adam. We don't ever excuse, blame, justify, or hide sin away. God will always get around to all involved. Sin is very deadly and very contagious; <u>if we won't allow it to be removed from us, then we have to be removed from God's plan, His family, and His eternal Kingdom</u>.

Adam And Eve Get Disciplined
Part One
Chapter Eleven

Discipline Produces Spiritual Growth

The Bad Human Influencer Was Dealt With

Gen 3:16 (NIV) To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." When we put the blame on others rather than simply allowing God to deal with OUR PART in the sin, it only delays the work that brings the healing. This work that God does in Eve's life was just what she needed in order for her to be able to live a successful life. There were some characteristics in her that were killing her spiritually.

The Punishment Is Lifesaving

When God rebukes or disciplines us, it may seem harsh to us; but, it is like a surgeon cutting out a cancer. The surgery is very invasive and painful; the aftermath of recovery can be long and uncomfortable; but, it saved a person's life. The quicker the cancer is cut out, the less damage it does and the less surgery has to be performed. Let's repent quickly!

We see the mistakes, sins, shortcomings, misdeeds of our body, and things we do to ourselves and others while failing to see what kind of damage and pain it will EVENTUALLY cause. Adam and Eve had no idea what their sin would do to the human race; but God did. If we are **poor in spirit,** open to **mourning, meek** in our relationship with God, and have a **hunger and thirst for righteousness,** we will be able to appreciate and yield to all those things God does to bring healing to us. They open our eyes to the truth about life and the way it works.

Discipline Targets The Area Where We Need Help

Those Who Yield To Bad Influence Are Dealt With

Gen 3:17 (NIV) To Adam he said, "<u>Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it</u>,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

Discipline is vital to us from time to time; we all get careless and sometimes determined to damage ourselves. Pride, ignorance, and social pressure can all cause us to do things that will hurt us for life. Those that God has accepted into His family get special guidance that those who are rejecting salvation don't get. The question is, do you want discipline and punishment or do you want the total damage that sin brings. Sin is a spiritual cancer that grows, increases, spreads, gets worse, and contaminates others.

Remember back where Eve and Adam took the bite from the forbidden fruit and didn't drop over dead? That's the way we see things we do wrong and SEEM to get by with them. Since we don't see ourselves being SPIRITUALLY DEAD, God's surgery seems extreme and merciless. But, what we didn't realize was: **"when you eat of it you will surely die."** Adam and Eve were laying on the operating table "as good as dead;" and, so are we!

Discipline Makes Important Adjustments In Our Life

Gen 3:18 (NIV) It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. This may seem mean and harsh; but, spiritual death and eternal separation from God would have been a lot worse. If we will compare what God is saving us from with the discipline, the discipline will seem very mild. If Adam had been left to his own devices, he would have destroyed his own life. This new ability to know the difference between good and evil made him responsible for every action he took.

Discipline Makes Important Adjustments To Sinning

James 4:17 (NIV) Anyone, then, who KNOWS the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins. Prior to the forbidden tree, Adam and Eve didn't have the knowledge of good and evil. If they didn't anything wrong, bad, or evil, God would have been able to just tell them that it wasn't something they should do and everything would have been fine. But, once they knew the difference, if they did wrong, bad, and evil things, they did it while knowing that they are wrong, bad, or evil. If we accidently or ignorantly do wrong, bad, or evil things, people are more likely to forgive us. But, if we do it knowledgeably or on purpose, not so much.

Discipline Directs Us In The Right Direction

Gen 3:19 (NIV) By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." Adam needed to start working for a living; he needed to be kept busy so he wouldn't have too much time on his hands. Work kept him from doing more damage than was necessary. The discipline showed Adam what the consequence of sin were. But, the discipline is never NEARLY as bad as the consequences that sins would have produced in us. Plus, discipline helps us not feel like breaking God's laws are worth it.

Jesus Endured The Greatest Discipline For Us

The God-Concept Of Substitution

Heb 12:2 (NIV) Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Jesus took on our punishment for breaking the law; He took the wages of sin which is death and died in our place. He not only died for our sins, He was beaten for our emotional, financial, relational, and physical healing. Instead of going the route of Adam and Eve, He obeyed the laws of God and demonstrated what great blessings come out of that. Since He didn't sin, He was able to take our place as our substitute.

You may not be able to understand the need for Jesus taking the place of people like us. It would seem like all we would need was a good disciplinary procedure and we would see the errors of our ways. However, we have to understand the nature of sin. It grows, spreads, gets perverted, and eventually kills a person's conscience. They get to the place where they cease to feel bad about any of the wrong, bad, or evil things they do. We have seen whole nations run by people like that. World wars came through people like that.

This Is Serious!

Heb 12:3 (NIV) Consider Him Who endured such opposition from sinful men, <u>SO THAT you will not grow weary and lose heart</u>. Spiritual principles are VERY hard for us to understand; we see Jesus coming to earth, going to the cross, dying, and raising from the dead and can miss the whole purpose and plan for it. That was a very drastic thing for God to do. Why would He be willing to die for us? What makes it be the right thing to do? Why was it needed in the first place? Why do we need to accept it in faith?

We REALLY Messed Up!

The suffering, the cross, and the death are real attention getters. What we did was so wrong, bad, and evil that it took that drastic an action to "bail" us out. It is like us doing something that WE thought wasn't all that bad and the judge "throwing the book at us." We see sin like us doing something small and ending up in prison for the rest of our lives. We see sin like us stealing some little item from someone and being sentenced to death. We don't see these "little" sins as being all that bad. But, it is like having just one cell of a very aggressive cancer in your body. If you don't get it out quick, you are as good as dead. Sin is worse than that!

We Just Don't Get It!

You may not understand Jesus' suffering, dying on a cross, and raising from the dead. You may not understand why washing your hands is important. You may not believe germs exist; you may not believe soap or detergent kills germs. But, that is what it takes to be set free from the contaminants trying to get into your physical body. God knows what it takes to cure sin; Jesus knew there was no other way. If God said this was the only way, then there is no other way. Trust Him and follow His instructions; He knows everything; He has all wisdom; He has all power; and He loves you MUCH more than you love yourself.

We Need To See The Importance

If we really understood how contagious and deadly one sin is, we would **not grow weary and lose heart;** we would join Jesus and fight this thing with all we have. Just think, if such a violent sacrifice had not been made, we would have ignored and been unaware of the whole work Jesus did; it would have never got our attention. But, when we REALLY see how great a sacrifice Jesus made for us, it helps us look to God for **not growing weary and losing heart.** We had better see why God won't allow even one sin into His eternal family and eternal Kingdom. We better see why we MUST be cured of all our sins.

Adam And Eve Get Disciplined
Part Two
Chapter Twelve

Sin Is So Serious It Must Be Disciplined

Our Experiences With Discipline Are Easier

Heb 12:4 (NIV) <u>In your struggle against sin</u>, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. We inherited the sinful nature from our distant grandparents, Adam and Eve; this nature isn't sin; it is the pressure in our body where IT WANTS to sin. This pressure of our body WANTING to sin then pushes us into sinning. So, we not only sin and need salvation to get forgiveness for those sins, we STRUGGLE **against sin** after salvation; but, we **have not yet resisted to the point of shedding** our **blood.** We haven't had to fight it to the point where we had to go to a cross and hang on it until dead. No, Jesus was our substitute!

Our Experiences With Discipline Are Painful

Heb 12:5 (NIV) And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and <u>do not lose heart when He rebukes you</u>.

From time to time God has to do things with us like He did with Adam and Eve. Discipline is totally different from consequences; the consequences of sin are eternal death, destruction, hopelessness, massive depression, and unbearable pain. There is no family relationship with God in the consequences of sin; there is no love in these consequences. But with discipline there is a Father Who loves us enough to do what it takes to help us keep heading in the direction of great success and blessings.

Christians Get Discipline

Heb 12:6 (NIV) because the Lord disciplines <u>those He loves</u>, and He punishes everyone <u>He accepts as a son</u>." Why? Parents know things about life that children do not know yet. They keep their children from doing things that the child wants to do VERY bad. But, if the parents were to allow the child to have their way, great damage would take place. But, the child is mad at the parent because they didn't get their way.

Let's say the child goes ahead and rebels against the rule their parents set; the parents know that a bad thing may not happen right away; but, the potential for great harm is in the act that the child went ahead and did. So, when the child sins against their rules, rather than just allowing the child to go ahead and rebel until great harm happens to them, they discipline them. If the punishment fits the crime, they are good parents. If the child gets the message, they are good children. All God's punishments are perfect, transforming, effective, and are capable of creating a perfect result. The only thing that can go wrong is that we misunderstand or rebel.

Appreciating The Difference
Between Discipline And Consequences

As we have already said, discipline is totally different than consequences. God uses discipline to generate enough pain that His children get the point; but, the pain is nothing in comparison to the pain we would have experienced had God let us go on and rebel without discipline.

Undisciplined Sin Has Consequences

The CONSEQUENCES of sin are worse than anything else that could possibly happen to us. We can't in our wildest imagination think of what the consequences of sin will ultimately do to us. All we know is how much we didn't like the discipline we actually experienced. The problem is, because the discipline KEPT us from experiencing the consequences of sin, we don't have the RESULTS of these two to compare. All we have is the pain of the disciple and the wonderful results of us not experiencing the consequences.

Discipline Can Be Misunderstood

We may choose to not trust and believe in the love and care of our heavenly Father. We can assume that He is disciplining us unfairly; we can choose to disagree with His decisions and correction. But, the truth is, He loves us more than we love ourselves; He knows everything; He wants the very best for us; and He WILL NOT do anything that will damage us or those around us. If we allow God's eight power-attitudes to open our heart and mind, we will discover these truths.

Hardship Is God's Discipline

Heb 12:7 (NIV) ENDURE hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? It sounds like God is going to force us to face discipline <u>against our will</u>. But, the word "endure" is talking about us NOT escaping and getting out of the discipline before it has a chance to do its work. We can start on a personal program that resists and works around God's discipline, if we WANT to. We can go through it and not grow or learn a thing. We can go through it and learn all the wrong things. But, if we see it as a life-class, we will be looking for what God is trying to teach us and apply ourselves to its purpose.

We Can Choose Discipline Or Consequences

Heb 12:8 (NIV) If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. There is no way to avoid disciple or hardships completely; and, there is no way to avoid the consequences of sin completely. We can reject being God's child and avoid HIS discipline; but, then we WILL experience ALL of the consequences of the sins we commit. And, everyone experiences hardships in life, whether they are Christians of not. In other words, if we would rather have the consequences of sin than God's discipline, we can reject God and go with the life of sin; these are the two free-will options.

Everyone Goes Through Hardships

John 16:33 (NIV) "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. <u>In this world you will have trouble</u>. But take heart! I have overcome the world." It is normal to have to face difficulties, problems, crises, emergencies, and pain. The question is, do you want to face them alone or with Jesus? **Rom 8:28 (NIV) And we know that <u>in all things God works for the good of those who love Him</u>, who have been called according to His purpose.** If you go with Jesus, He will force all these hardships and problems to work out for your good. If you decide to go it on your own, you will forfeit His supernatural intervention in your behalf.

There Are Only TWO Free-Will Choices

No Third Option

Heb 12:9 (NIV) Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. <u>How much more should we SUBMIT to the Father of our spirits and live</u>! This is a Scripture that is trying to help us CHOOSE God AND His discipline over the consequences of sin; but, the choice is ours. We may want to have more than two options; we may wish to be able to exercise our God-given free will on a third choice. But, God has already considered everything and has determined that all other options are not really options.

It's Either Good Or Bad

We may think we are choosing a third option only to discover that it was REALLY just a variation of one of the two choices; that is what God is telling us. There are ACTUALLY only two choices anyone, anywhere has; these two choices are: good or bad. <u>God has incorporated all the good there is in all of existence into Himself; and, He has rejected all bad outside of Himself</u>. That is why there are only two choices available to all of us. No matter what other choices we make, they are either a choice for good or a choice for bad; they are a choice for God; or, they are a choice for Satan.

God's Discipline Has A GOOD Purpose

Heb 12:10 (NIV) Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; <u>but God disciplines us for our good</u>, that we may share in His holiness. If we use our free will and choose God, we choose good; but, we also choose discipline. Why don't we get another choice as to whether or not we want discipline, after we choose God? This is because a lack of discipline WOULD NOT BE GOOD! **God disciplines us for our good.** Why? **That we may share in His holiness.** Holiness is a perfect manifestation of all those things that are good for us and others. It is like righteousness but is perfect righteousness.

Yielding To A Good Kind Of Pain

Heb 12:11 (NIV) No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. <u>Later on, however</u>, it PRODUCES a harvest of righteousness and peace <u>for those who have been trained by it</u>. Painlessness is one of our original goals; we all started out in life trying to find happiness and the absence of pain. All of the choices we have been making all the days of our lives have been motivated by these two goals--happiness and painlessness. If our goal becomes getting good and being set free from bad, then we will get a superior type of happiness called joy.

It Should Not Be Avoided

Those who face the realities of life know there also types of pain—one good and one bad. Having a goal of avoiding all pain removes the person from a lot of good. We all know about the pain athletes force on themselves, the pain students force on themselves, and the pain successful business people force on themselves. But, because their goal isn't avoidance of all pain but striving for success, they find a better way.

Our willingness to suffer good pain isn't just motivated by success; it is motivated by seeking righteousness. Wanting to think, feel, say, and do good things; AND, wanting to avoid thinking, feeling, saying, and doing bad things becomes our goal. This **produces a harvest of righteousness and peace <u>for those who have been trained by it</u>.**

We want to get involved in win/win situations for all who are involved. We want relationships that help everyone be able to succeed, if they want to. We want to be busy helping as many as possible cross the finish line. It causes us to cross the finish line last; but, in Jesus' race **the last will be first, and the first will be last (Mat 20:16).**

Adam And Eve
Pass On The Knowledge Of Good And Evil
Chapter Thirteen

The Family Of The Sinful Nature
Gen 3:20 (NIV) Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother <u>of all the living</u>. Even though God provides us with deliverance from and help with the consequences of sin. There are still some issues that are created from the sins we commit. Adam and Eve are now contaminated with the sinful nature. Eve is going to be **the mother of all the living** and Adam is going to be the father of all living except for Jesus. **1 Cor 15:21-22 (NIV) For since death came through a man [Adam], the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man [Jesus]. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.**

A Sacrifice By Substitution For Sin
Gen 3:21 (NIV) The LORD God made garments <u>of skin</u> for Adam and his wife and clothed them. This **skin** came by an animal giving up its life. This is the first sacrifice for sins; it was substituted for Adam and Eve; an animal paid the price for a human's sins; rather than the human dying for their own sins, an animal was substituted for them. This is giving us an illustration of Jesus dying as a substitute for our sins. And, shows how He is clothing us with His righteousness, His character and attitudes.

We had an innocence period just like Adam and Eve; we were naked and free from all knowledge of good and evil. Then one day, our conscience came alive and we sinned against it at some point. If we had been in the garden instead of Adam and Eve, we would have done the same thing they did. We all start out refusing to yield to God's eight power-attitudes, right?

Set Free From Adam's Sin Nature
Jesus was sacrificed; and, we were clothed with God's righteousness. It was a work of grace where our record was cleansed and we were forgiven of all past, present, and future sins. Now we need to take advantage of this grace period and learn how to put to death the misdeeds of our body. **Rom 8:13-14 (NIV) For if you live according to the <u>sinful nature</u>, you will die; <u>but if by the Spirit YOU</u> put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.**

That **sinful nature** presented in Romans 8:13 came from Adam. It is a pressure found in our body that makes sin seem good to us. If we have a clear picture of how bad sin is, we will turn to Jesus and allow Him to set us free from it. If you still think sin is okay, you will cooperate with this **sinful nature** and **you will die.** It takes a lot of work helping us to get a clear picture of sin. But, once we do, we accept Jesus' substitutionary death and get the power of the Holy Spirit inside us. Then, **<u>if by the Spirit YOU</u> put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.**

Forgiven But Reaping

Forgiven With No Consequences

Gen 3:22 (NIV) And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of Us, knowing good and evil. <u>He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever</u>." Wait a minute! Didn't an animal just die for Adam and Eve's sins? Yes! Aren't they now forgiven of all their past sins? Yes! Then why are they being kicked out of the garden? Let's take a look at the difference between consequences, discipline, and reaping. Consequences come from sins that the sinner commits and DOES NOT repent of them. Discipline comes from sins that a Christian commits but DOES repent of. Reaping comes from the natural sequence of events that doing something like this PRODUCES; it NATURALLY produces bad results, <u>even though you have repented of it</u>.

Consequences

If sin isn't repented of so we can take advantage of Jesus' death, it will keep spreading to other areas of our life. It will grow into worse types of sins; and, it will contaminate more and more people around us. BUT if we repent, Jesus' power kills it in our life and keeps it FROM DOING ANYMORE DAMAGE. The sooner we repent, the sooner the damage is stopped. But, if we don't repent, the CONSEQUENCES keep right on moving, spreading, contaminating, and mutating into worse and worse sins; plus, we KEEP infecting others.

Discipline

If sin IS repented of, the consequences are the same, we still get the same results from everything that has happened SO FAR from those sins; but, God stops their advancement THE MOMENT we repent for them. They don't go on spreading, getting bigger, getting more evil, and contaminating other people. And, God also makes them work out for our good. He takes all the bad things that ARE happening to us and uses them to create good things in our life, our relationships, and our circumstances. But, He puts us in a discipline life-class that teaches us why it is important for us to never get involved in that kind of sin ever again.

Reaping

Gal 6:7 (NIV) Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. <u>A man reaps what he sows</u>. God's forgiveness keeps us from the consequences of the sins we repent of; He disciplines us so we will see the importance of not heading in that direction ever again; but, we will still REAP the results of the decisions we made. If we bought the wrong thing, we will still have it. If we took the wrong job, we will still have to decide what to do about it. If we had an affair with someone, we will still have damaged relationships. God will empower us to stop continuing in the wrong direction. He will heal our heart from the damage the sin produced. But, the memory and the history of it all will still be there; that is the reaping part of sin.

We Need God's Help

Gen 3:23 (NIV) So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. We have to simply pick up life from the point of being set free from the consequences of sin, of yielding to the discipline of God for the sin, and then living on the basis of reaping the results of the sin. The Garden of Eden is gone; all the freedom of everything being provided is gone; Adam working the ground and Eve having children with birth pains was now the new way of life.

Reaping isn't a punishment for the sin; and, it isn't the consequence for the sin. The consequence of the sin would have been eternal separation from God (death). It isn't a part of the discipline of God for the sin; that would mean God would keep adding more and more things besides hard work and painful child birth. It is just the natural sequence of events of the sin producing a bad result that mistakes like that make. **He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and <u>live forever</u>.** This living forever would be in our human body; it wasn't eternal life in a heavenly body like Jesus is giving us; we will be getting a glorified body to live in forever. There's a big difference!

God Will Show Us These Things Later

Gen 3:24 (NIV) After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. It will never be found by us; we don't need to try to locate it; we don't need to understand how the **cherubim** are hiding it. We don't need to know who the **cherubim** angels are or when God created them. This is one of those Scriptures that we MUST just accept. Some have wasted their lives majoring on thing they will never REALLY understand. They ignore and neglect those things that will get them ready for eternity and study "interesting and fun" things.

Stick With The Vital Issues

Let us spend our time studying the Scriptures that prepare us for life and eternity. The eight power-attitudes of God will give you attitudes that will empower you to open your mind and heart to eternal issues. These types of studies bring great success right here, right now. And, they put you in powerful and wonderful opportunities in eternity. If you really apply yourself now, God will give you incredible rewards, blessings, miracles, and advancements here and in your eternal future. Just don't get weary or distracted.