



*Foundations for Victory 1
Relationship with God*

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Relationship with God

I Jesus paid the price to reconnect us with God

We are reconciled to God the Father through Jesus Christ, who died on the cross, in our place, fulfilling the required punishment for our sins.

1 Peter 3:18

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit

1 John 2:1-2

1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

Propitiation: Atonement, Appeasement.

Jesus took the sins of the whole world on the cross, both the sins of the just and the unjust. It is important to note this because God is no longer going around looking to punish people for sin, He has already punished Jesus. It would be unjust for God to punish Jesus for a sin and then turn around and punish you for the same sin. Even our broken human courts do not do this!

Romans 5:1-2

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5:9

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

We have peace with God through Jesus, God is not angry with us!

I (i) We were all sinners, separated from God

Romans 3:23

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Ephesians 2:1-3

1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Ephesians 2:11-12

11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— 12 that at that time you were without Christ,

being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

We need to be clear that everyone needs the salvation from sin provided by Jesus on the cross. There are no exceptions, all of us, no matter how many good deeds we have done, fall short of God's perfect standard. When we try to be right with God through our own good actions, we fall short. Only by accepting the free gift of Jesus, are we made right with God. Jesus is the only way to God and the only way God has ordained for the salvation of mankind.

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

I (ii) We are saved by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ

Ephesian 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

We are saved by the Grace of God, which we receive through faith. God's Grace is His provision for our salvation – the finished work of Jesus on the cross. It is a free gift from God, it is not earned by good works, and because it is not earned by good works, it can't be lost by bad works.

Romans 1:16-17

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

The Christian life is one lived by faith alone. Everything is about God's provision, received by us through believing and agreeing with Him. Faith is saying: Yes God, I agree that what you say is true, no matter what I feel. If I feel guilty of sin, but God says that He has taken my sins away, then I choose to live from the truth of God, I can't be guilty, my feelings are a lie, I choose to believe God.

John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Romans 10:8-13

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

We receive our salvation, through acknowledging Jesus as our Lord, our King and through believing in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead. When we believe in the risen Jesus, we not only believe that He died from our sins, but that He rose from the dead, demonstrating that He has the power over sin in death and that all His promises are true. We serve a living King!

Don't talk about Jesus in the past tense, He is alive and with you now! We don't have some photocopied Jesus passed down to us through the generations, we have the very same Jesus that the first disciples had. He is just as powerful today to do for you, what He did for the early church!

Note that although Jesus died for the sins of all, not all are saved. The gift must be received through faith.

I (iii) Eternal life is knowing God (Relationship)

John 17:3

3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Eternal life does not just begin when we die and go to heaven, eternal life begins when we receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour and begin to know Him.

Knowing God, relationship is what it is all about. God is not interested in rituals and performance, He is interested in family. The language God uses with us is the language of family and relationship.

2 Corinthians 6:18

18 "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty."

John 1:12

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name

Galatians 3:26

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

When we try to approach God through performance, not relationship, we get into trouble. Ladies, don't be confused by the use of the word "sons" in the verses above. If men can be the bride of Christ, woman can be sons of God. The reason "sons" is used is that in the culture of the day, it was sons that inherited from their fathers. The writers want to make sure that we understand that we are children that inherit all the father's good things.

Roman's 8:16-17

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

(To suffer with Jesus is to join together with and identify with His finished work on the cross. See Romans chapter 6. We do not have to add our personal extra suffering to what Jesus did to make it effective. If this was the case, we would not be saved by faith in Jesus alone, it would be faith in Jesus plus our works. Thinking you need to add your personal suffering is wrong and will undermine your confidence in your relationship with God)

Look at the verses below, see how the people did great miracles and attended all the right meetings. They thought their performance was what would get them in.

Matthew 7:22-23

22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Luke 13:25-27

25 When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' 26 then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' 27 But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.'

It's not about the great miracles or other acts that we perform, it's about knowing God and being known by Him, it's about relationship.

We begin our relationship with Jesus, when we are born again. Through inviting Jesus to be our Lord and Saviour, we become one spirit with Him. This means that we are joined together with Him in such a way that you can't see where you end and Jesus begins.

1 Corinthians 6:17

But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

II The true nature of God

There are many ideas out there about what God is like. It is important for us to understand the true nature of the God of the Bible because you can't trust someone you do not know or someone who you think might harm you. Without an understanding of the totally good and benevolent nature of God, you will never fully be able to draw close to Him and receive from Him.

II (i) God is 100% good, there is no evil in Him

1 John 1:5

5 *This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.*

James 1:17

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

John 10:10

10 *The thief [the devil] does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. [Jesus speaking]*

God is not mostly good, He is totally good. The Bible is clear that there is no darkness, variation or shadow in God, He is only good and He only gives good gifts. It is the thief (the devil), who steals, kills and destroys. Jesus said He came to give us abundant life, with all the goodness that that entails. Do not be fooled by the devil's lies, God is not going around killing babies with cancer and destroying people's lives. We will look more closely at how this all works when we study God's Kingdom.

II (ii) God is love and He loves us unconditionally

1 John 4:8

8 *He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

God not only loves as an action but He is love. Love is God's very nature and we can say He is defined by love. God is fully motivated by love.

John 3:16

16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

Romans 5:8

8 *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Ephesians 2:4-5

4 *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),*

1 John 4:9-11

9 *In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

God loved us first, long before we loved Him. God's unconditional love can't be earned or lost, it's unconditional! God's love is not selfish or self-serving, it only has our benefit in mind.

Romans 8:37-39

37 *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Nothing can separate us from God's love. Since God's love for us was not because of our good performance, it can't be lost through our bad performance. We need to get this great truth deep into our hearts. If we don't we will always be afraid of falling short and losing God's love.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

4 *Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails.*

God's love is not like the love we see in the world. People in the world only love to get their own needs met. We see this type of love in the movies and on T.V. Once a person no longer meet's someone's needs, then they no longer love them. This is not God's type of love! Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and replace the word "love" with the word "God", to see how God loves you (God is love – 1 John 4:8).

II (iii) God is not angry or disappointed in you

God is not angry with us, nor is He disappointed in us. God sees us as totally righteous because we are in Jesus. When God looks at us, He sees Jesus' perfect score card. God is proud of us as His children.

Romans 5:9

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

2 Corinthians 5:17-19

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Romans 5:1-2

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 5:20-21

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Through Jesus, we have peace with God and His anger is no more. Jesus took all God's anger for sin upon Himself, in our place. Jesus took away our sins and gave us His perfect righteousness!

Zephaniah 3:17 (AMPC version)

*The Lord your God is in the midst of you, a Mighty One, a Savior [who saves]! He will **rejoice over you with joy**; He will **rest [in silent satisfaction]** and in His love He will be silent and make no mention [of past sins, or even recall them]; **He will exult over you with singing.***

God is rejoicing in us. He no longer remembers our sins, and is not disappointed in us. God has your photo on His "fridge". He is proud of you as His son or daughter, He only wants good things for you.

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

II (iv) God is a perfect father who cares for us

God is the father of those that believe in Jesus. God is a perfect father who does not turn His back on us and who does not allow us to be destroyed. We need to look to Him as our father, fully expecting Him to love and care for us.

2 Corinthians 6:18

18 "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty."

John 1:12

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name

Galatians 3:26

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Let's look at the parable of the prodigal son to understand God's father heart.

Luke 15:11-32 (especially verses 17-24)

Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. 13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. 14 But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. 15 Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. 17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."'" 20 "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 23 And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry: 24 for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry. 25 "Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' 28 "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. 29 So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. 30 But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' 31 "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. 32 It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'"

The story starts with a father who has two sons, an older and a younger one. The younger son asks for his inheritance early, effectively saying he wishes his father was dead! The father gives the younger son his inheritance and he goes off and wastes it. When the younger son is totally destitute, he remembers his father's generosity, even to the servants and he decides to go back and see if he can at least get a serving job with his father. This would be better than starving to death as he is now slowly doing.

He starts off towards home, and while he is still far away, the father sees him and runs to meet him. In the culture of the day, important, wealthy men, did not run (it was below their dignity). The father ran to the younger son, hugged and kissed him. The younger son tried to get a lowly job with the father but the father refused to receive him as anything else but as a beloved and treasured son. He dressed

him in the best clothes and shoes and put a ring on his finger (sign of authority and sonship). He then had a fatted calf killed and had a feast of celebration.

Many of us don't see God like this father. We think that when we sin God holds it against us and when we come back sorry, He finds a lesser place for us to teach us a lesson. This is not true! God embraces us as treasured sons and daughters and restores everything we have lost through our foolishness.

God takes care of us in every way. God lives by His Word, just as He expects us to. God takes care of His household (us, His children). For Him not to do so, would make Him not a father and a breaker of His own Word!

Psalm 138:2

I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

1 Timothy 5:8

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

II (v) Jesus shows us the Father perfectly

Hebrews 1:1-4

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

John 14:7-11

7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." 8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

Jesus is the express image of God the Father's person. This means that when we see Jesus, we see the Father fully expressed and revealed to us. No longer do we have to guess or debate what God is like, we can look at the life of Jesus and know!

John 1:1-5

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

John 1:14

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus is God (Triune God - Father, Son & Holy Spirit – Three but One) and so demonstrates God to us.

III Spirit, Soul and Body

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

III (i) Human Beings consist of three parts

Human beings are created in the image of God. It stands to reason that a God who is one but consists of three persons, would be represented the same way in us in that we have a (1) spirit, (2) soul and (3) body.

Genesis 1:27

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Some have taught that humans consist of two parts, a body and a soul/spirit. This is not accurate and will lead to confusion when we read the Bible. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 is clear that we are a three part being.

Each of these three parts functions in a different way and must be dealt with differently if we are going to see all that God has for us manifest in our lives.

- Our Spirit is the part of us that connects with God
- Our Soul is our mind, will, emotions and conscience
- Our body is the thing we see in the mirror and when we pinch it, it hurts.

While most of us can identify our bodies, we often find understanding the soul and the spirit and the difference between the two more difficult. We need to turn to the Bible to get our understanding.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

III (ii) The spirit

When we believe in Jesus and receive Him as our Lord and Saviour, our spirits are born-again and made new.

John 3:1-8

*1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" 5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is **born of water and the Spirit**, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is **born of the flesh is flesh**, and that which is **born of the Spirit is spirit**. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."*

Jesus speaks to Nicodemus about being born-again. He says we need to be born of water and born of the Spirit. We are born of water when we are born the first time from our mother (we speak of a woman's water breaking). We are born of Spirit when we are born the second time through faith in Jesus, through the working of the Holy Spirit.

When Adam and Eve sinned at the beginning, the result was spiritual death, a disconnection between them and God. All their descendants, us, inherit the same broken disconnected spirit when we are born the first time from our mother's womb. This broken, disconnected spirit can't connect to God and requires replacing with a new spirit. This happens when we are born-again.

1 Corinthians 6:17

But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

The Spirit of Jesus (and of God – they are one) joins with our human spirits to birth a new spirit within us.

2 Corinthians 5:17-18

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

1 John 4:17

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

Our new born-again spirits are totally intertwined with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus. This means that there is no discernible separation between the two. Our new spirit is perfect because Jesus is perfect. In our spirits, we are exactly the same as Jesus is right now. As we live in the light of this new reality, we can manifest this truth into our souls and bodies. This is how we overcome sin, the revelation that the old man (spirit) is gone and a new man (spirit) is in residence.

1 John 3:9

Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

Ephesians 1:13

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Our born-again spirits are perfect and sin free. Our born-again spirits are sealed by the Holy Spirit and can't be damaged by sin and the things of this world.

III (iii)The soul

The soul consists of our mind, will, emotions and conscience. This is how we think, choose, feel and how we process right and wrong. The soul is a link between the spirit and the body. Every blessing of God starts in the spirit and must flow through the soul to reach the body and manifest in the physical world. How we manage our souls is critical and will determine if we walk in the fulness of what God has for us here on the earth.

3 John 1:2

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

While our spirits are transformed the instant we believe and receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, our soul transformation is a process. Being born-again kick started our soul renewal, in that we started to think and feel of Jesus as our Lord and Saviour (which we didn't before). There is however still a process of changing all our thoughts, feelings and choices to match the Word of God. The more our soul lines up with God's truth, the more of the power which resides in our spirits will flow through into our earthly lives. Many of our thoughts as Christians are carnal (fleshly/earth based) and this interferes with our ability to receive from God.

Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Many people try to be a living sacrifice to God without renewing their minds. This has led to many strange doctrines of suffering for God and many have died early because of this. We need to renew our minds, change the way we think to line up with God's Word. This is how we get to walk in His will and power. You can't be an effective living sacrifice without also renewing your mind to the truths of God's Word.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5

*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, **bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.***

The battle is for our thoughts, we need to pull down every thought that does not match the Word of God. Strongholds are wrong thoughts that we have allowed to take root in our minds and hearts. They must be pulled down and cast out.

Ephesians 5:25-27

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

As we renew our minds through the washing of the Word, we will bring our souls into line with our now born-again unblemished spirits.

Philippians 2:12

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

This renewal of our souls is a process that we must take seriously and commit to with all our beings. God will provide the power needed, we must just choose to do it.

Galatians 2:20 (KJV)

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

We don't live this Christian life by our own strength or even our own faith. We live it by the strength and faith of Jesus!

III (iv)The body

Your body is the part of you that you see in the mirror. It's the part of you that gets old and eventually dies. Through the sin of Adam and Eve, the earth was cursed and along with it our physical bodies which are connected to this earth. While the work of Jesus on the cross, restored all things, these bodies will die and be replaced by an incorruptible, eternal body.

Philippians 3:20-21

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

In the meantime, we need to bring our bodies into subjection to our born-again spirits. Before we were born-again we were led by the desires of our bodies to do wrong things. The body was used to leading and having its hungers met without question. We must retrain ourselves to live from our new

born-again nature and not be led by the nose by our bodies which were slaves to sin. This is a new way of thinking (soul – mind renewal) and is critical for our success.

1 Corinthians 9:25-27

25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

As I renew my mind to the truth that I am a new creation, no longer a sinner but a saint (one saved by the grace of God), once I understand that I now have a new nature and I choose to live from that truth. Then I will act out of my new nature and I will no longer have to force myself to do right. Doing right will be a natural flow from my new nature. Actions always follow nature not the other way around!

Hebrews 10:16-17

16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them." 17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."