

HusBands

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# Class Information

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* **Office Hours**: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:30-5:30 by appointment only\*
* **Education**: Olympic Community College (Bremerton, WA), 1997 – AA; St. Martin’s University (Olympia, WA), 2000 -BA in Psychology; The Master’s University (Santa Clarity, CA), 2007 – MA in Biblical Counseling; The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (Louisville, KY), Projected graduation date summer of 2019 – D.Ed.Min.
* **Work Experience**: Youth Pastor, Christ the Rock Community Church, Port Orchard, WA 1997-2007; Pastor of Counseling, Canyon Hills Community Church, Bothell, WA 2007-Present; Board President, The Damascus House – A Gospel Centered Rehab Center, Bothell, WA 2014 – Present.
* **Publications**: Help! My Teen Struggles with Same Sex Attraction. Wapwallopen: Shepherd’s Press, 2014; Men Counseling Men (Chapter 19). Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 2013.
* **Additional Important Information:** My wife and I have been married for 20 years and we have six kids (yes you read that right). Therefore, most of my time outside of ministry and teaching is reserved for them. I mention this so that you understand and are not offended should you reach out after hours, and I don’t get back to you right away. I am also in a doctoral program that requires a significant amount of reading and writing (yes, I’m a student right alongside you).
* **Contacting Me**: I love to be available for students who have questions and concerns from class as well as personal concerns for which they need wisdom and prayer. Due to the nature of my job, it’s always best to call ahead and let me know that you are coming so that I am not in counseling. I do check my email regularly and try to respond within 24 hours. If it is an emergency, please put that in the subject line of the email and I will make it a priority to respond as quickly as I can.

# Letter to Students:

As the Pastor of Counseling, I am excited that you have decided to take this class. While there might be any number of reasons that you have decided to take the class, your willingness to be part of the class in the first step in the process of change. Please know that more than the teacher of this class, I am a pastor at heart. That means that I want to come alongside you as best I can help. If you are struggling to understand what is being presented, what you read in the Bible, the assignments that are given, or anything else that is presented, please do not hesitate to reach out and ask for help. I have provided numerous ways for you to get in touch with me.

I also know that your current living situation might be a very tough situation for you to be in. You might not be living in your home, you might have an order of protection in place baring you from seeing your spouse and children, you might be under church discipline…whatever the case may be, please know that God is using it all to help transform you more and more into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. That might sound trite and little Christianese, but it’s true. When you are struggling due to life circumstances, please reach out to me or someone else in the class so we can remind of what God is up to and give you hope.

Pastor Ben

# Course Description

This class is NOT a lecture style class. The goal of this class is personal transformation, i.e. change is expected. Regardless of where you are at in your walk with Christ, this class is intended and designed to move you close toward Christ. Specifically speaking, this class is designed to make you aware of those areas in which you are abusive toward your spouse, children, or any other significant relationship in your life.

# Classroom Expectations and Values

It is expected that all students understand, appreciate and adhere to the following values and corresponding expectations in order to allow for the best learning experience for all who are taking the class:

* Everything (learning, speaking, writing, and discussing) are to be done through the lens of 1 Corinthians 10:31 which says, “Whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, do all for the glory of God.” This means what you say and do in the class needs to be said and done for the glory of God.
* The goal for you as a student, regardless of where you currently are at, is that you are further made into the image of Jesus as Romans 8:28-29 states. It is expected that you will grow in Christlikeness through this class.
* All men are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), therefore love and respect for classmates and their opinions are always expected.
* The language that is used is a direct reflection of the heart (Luke 6:43-45). We value language that is respectful and edifying (Ephesians 4:26, Proverbs 15:1) even when disagreeing. This also means that negative talk about your spouse will not be tolerated.
* All things are to be done in an orderly manner (1 Corinthians 14:40), therefor class start times as well as assignment due dates will be followed as stated except for extreme circumstances as defined by the teacher

Your teacher holds without reservation to the following theological concepts, creeds and beliefs: The 5 Solas of the Reformation, The 5 Points of Calvinism, the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646), the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978), The Nashville Statement (2017). This course will be taught from his convictions which fall within the freedoms embraced at Canyon Hills Community Church. The Professor will state when his beliefs are not the exclusive beliefs of Canyon Hills Community Church.

# Learning Objectives

During this class we will…

1. Provide an adequate definition of Domestic Abuse in all its forms, physical, sexual, mental, emotional, spiritual, and economic.
2. Examine Scripture to understand God’s view on abuse.
3. Understand the biblical equation for change which is based on confession and change.
4. Develop a plan of change which will require you to have a change of mind about your abusive thoughts and actions, put off abuse thoughts and actions, and put on or start selfless acts and words.
5. Practice the personal plan of change that you will develop.

# Required Materials

All texts will be available for purchase on the first night of class. We order all our resources through Amazon and do not charge anything beyond what Amazon charges the church. These texts are listed below in case you would like to shop around on the internet in order to find cheaper versions or purchase eBooks if that is the version you would prefer to use.

* *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016.
* Jones, Robert D. *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts*. 1 edition. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2012.
* MacArthur, John. *Is It Real? Eleven Biblical Tests of Genuine Salvation*. Panama City, CA: Grace To You, 2004.
* Meyer, Jason. “Fooled by False Leadership.” Sermon. *Bethlehem Baptist Church*. Last modified April 25, 2015. Accessed January 1, 2018. <https://bethlehem.church/sermon/fooled-by-false-leadership/>.
* Moles, Chris. *The Heart of Domestic Abuse: Gospel Solutions for Men Who Use Control and Violence in the Home*. Focus Publishing, 2015.
* Scott, Stuart. *Killing Sin Habits: Conquering Sin with Radical Faith*. Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2013.
* Scott, Dr. Stuart. *From Pride to Humility: A Biblical Perspective*. Videos located at: <https://vimeo.com/48673319>
* Tiffe, Armand P. *Transformed Into His Likeness: A Handbook for Putting Off Sin and Putting on Righteousness*. Bemidji, Minn.: Focus Publishing, 2005.
* Vincent, Milton. *A Gospel Primer for Christians: Learning to See the Glories of God’s Love*. Bemidji: Focus Publishing, 2008.
* Watson, Thomas. *Doctrine of Repentance*. Edinburgh; Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1988.

*I* ***reserve the right to assign additional readings to enhance the learning experience.***

# Required Assignments

**Reading**

 All texts are required to be read by their assigned completion date. Please note that you will NOT be reading every page from the books above for class; rather, portions of the texts will be required for class. Students who do not complete the reading by the assigned date will not be able to participate in either classroom or group discussions. Students will sign a “Completed Reading” sheet prior to the class by which the reading needs to be completed.

**Personal Insight Report**

 Each student will need to write a personal insight report for the required reading for each class. These reports will be turned in at the beginning of class. For each report you will need to find three ways that the reading made you think differently about how you have treated those around you. You can write these out in a paragraph form, or you can use bullet points. Each reading application will accomplish two things: (1) it will provide proof that you read the required material and (2) it will help others around you as you share your insights with them.

 The following is an example of a proper personal insight report:

 *Name: Ben Marshall Reading for Tonight: John 3:16*

 *Insight #1: I learned that God loved the world so much that He sent His Son. God’s love is all about giving, and not getting. My love should be more about giving than getting.*

 *Insight #2: God’s Love was so powerful that it saved people from death. My love should be powerful enough to save.*

 *Insight #3: God’s Love cost him his son. My love should cost me dearly.*

**Weekly Participation**

 This is accomplished by sharing personal thoughts and reflections when called upon or given the opportunity to add to the conversation. It is understood that there are different personalities which make this assignment easier for some and harder for others. Therefore, the following guidelines will be used for accountability purposes:

* Thoughts expressed one time per week when called on.
* Thoughts expressed one time per week voluntarily.
* Leading group discussions one time throughout the quarter.
* Opening and/or Closing the class in prayer.

**Contemplation Letter**

 The goal of this letter is to help you understand how you have affected those around you with your abusive thoughts and behaviors. Most likely, this letter will require two or three revisions. Your teacher will be talking about the specifics of this letter and how to go about gathering the information for this letter as well as how to write this letter. While you will not be reading this letter to anyone but those in your class, this letter has proven to aid in understanding the impact of abusive sin unlike any other exercise.

**Confession Letter**

 In addition to the contemplation letter, you will also be required to write a confession letter. Unlike the confession letter, the goal of this letter is to produce a document that you can read to those who have been affected by your sinful thoughts and actions. This letter will be based on the material from the contemplation letter. Just as with the contemplation letter, there is a very good chance that the confession letter will require two or three revisions before you will be ready to read it to those who felt the effects of your sin.

**Weekly Scripture Quiz**

 One of David’s prayers found in Psalm 119:11 states, “I have stored up Your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against You.” Because we are interested in sin coming to an end in your life, we want to make sure that you are storing up God’s Word in your heart. At the beginning of each week, we will have a short fill in the blank Scripture quiz. You will be made aware of the Scriptures that will be on the quiz the week before. Below is an example of a Scripture that will be found on the quiz:

 *John 3:16: For \_\_\_\_\_ so loved the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that He \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ His One and Only Son, that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ believes in Him should not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ but have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ life.*

**Plan of Change**

 Change is the primary goal for this class. Change rarely happens without an intentional plan. You should expect change in your life to happen as you put an intentional plan of change into action. This intentional plan is made up of the following: (1) your words and actions that you will stop saying and doing, (2) your mindset being renewed, and (3) a replacement of new words and actions that you will start saying and doing. While your teacher and fellow classmates will help guide you through this process, they cannot do the work for you.

**Exit Presentation**

 Before graduation, you will need to do a 15 to 30 presentation in front of the class informing those who have walked beside you of the following: (1) what brought you to take the class (confession), (2) your understanding of how you have sinned against God and those around you, (3) your plan of change, and (4) how you want the rest of the class to be praying for you.

# Classroom Policies

## Deceitfulness (Lying, Telling Half-Truths, Misrepresentation)

 This class is designed with change in mind. In order to change, truth must be at the foundation of every discussion. While it might be possible for you to go through this 14-week class and not tell the complete truth, Scripture states in Numbers 32:23 that your sin will find you out. Make the most of your time, tell the truth no matter how hard that may be, and trust that God will be gracious and merciful to you.

## Reviling, Gossip, and Slander

 Reviling can be understood as abusive language. Gossip is speaking information about someone else simply because you have information to share. Slander is speaking negatively about someone. These are all labeled sin by the Bible; therefore, they cannot be tolerated in class. You will be warned one time and then you will be asked to leave class for the night. If you are asked to leave the class more than twice, you will not be allowed to return to the class until it is offered again.

## Contentiousness

 Contentiousness can be defined as arguing. It is okay to voice your opinion if you do not understand a Scripture mentioned or a concept introduced. It is not okay to continually argue with the teacher and/or those around you because you do not want to own your sin. Please be mindful of this and follow Proverbs 13:3 which says, “whoever guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips come to ruin.”

## Group Attendance

This class is broken up into four phases. Each phase has different class requirements. You are required to be in attendance for all the classes in each of the phases and stay for the entire allotted time for each class. For instance, Phase One has weekly classes that meet for approximately one and half hours. You are required to attend every class and stay at the class for the entire one and half hours.

Required attendance dictates that You will need to make the class high priority in his weekly schedule. Before attending class, he will need to rearrange his schedule to accommodate the class. This might require that he speaks with his place of employment, temporarily resign from hobbies and special interests, and take other appropriate measures in order to allow for class attendance.

Class attendance is vital. It is hard to get all the information unless you are at class to get the information. Additionally, it is also hard to build trust so that everyone is as vulnerable and transparent as possible when people come and go. Since each class is built upon the previous classes; therefore, it is paramount that you attend each class. If there are extreme circumstances that prevent you from coming to class, please email the teacher and let him know as soon as you can. Examples of extreme circumstances include: a medical emergency that involves a hospital or urgent care, a car accident on the way to class, or another circumstance along those lines,

 If you miss class more than one time for something other than an emergency, you will be excused from the class for the remainder of class.

## Class Work

 Success in this class depends upon you doing the work that is asked of you to do. Simply gaining more information will not be enough for change. As a matter of fact, it will do the opposite of change. You will become more prideful and puffed up as you will have the information needed to answer questions but lack the necessary change.

 You will be allowed one late assignment. Any additional late assignments will not be accepted, and you will be asked to leave the class for the remainder of the session.

 If for someone reason you have a hard time with any one of the assignments, email your teacher before the day of class for further clarification. Your teacher will decide whether to allow for more time to get the assignment complete. (If you have a disability which would make doing homework difficult, please let your teacher know so he can accommodate you as best as possible.)

# Class Schedule – 4 Phases

# Phase 1 – Gospel Foundation

## Week 1 – Introduction to Class and Each Other

### Goal(s) for the evening:

* Teacher to introduce himself and class members to introduce themselves to one another.
* Go through the syllabus and notebook in order to get familiar with the scope of requirements for the class.
* Garner a commitment from students with regards to class attendance, homework, and classroom policies.

### Teaching for the evening:

* Go through all aspects of the syllabus. Have students sign a commitment regarding attendance, homework, and class policies.
* Each member of the class to introduce themselves. They should tell favorite memory in life. They should tell the reason(s) for taking the class.
* Have all members sign a class covenant regarding attendance, homework, and classroom policies.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* James 4:6

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Introduction and the first four entries in *The Gospel Primer.*
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What change do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out your understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Jot down three people who are great examples of what it means to be a Christian. Identify 5 characteristics per person that make them stand out as Christians to you.
* If you consider yourself a Christian, write out why you believe that you are a Christian. If you are not a Christian, write out why you are not a Christian.

## Week 2 – Gospel Foundation Part 1

### Goal(s) for the evening:

* Teach God’s design of the world and man’s fall into sin as the foundation for all sin and our need of salvation.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz on James 4:6 (This will be the only quiz with one verse on it. Each week from now all Scriptures covered will be on each test.)
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

**Gospel Presentation.** 1 Corinthians 2:14 clearly states that an unbeliever is incapable of understanding the things of God. This would indicate that anyone cannot begin to see his sin from God’s perspective unless he possesses the Spirit of God allowing him to have such a perspective. With that in mind, a strong clear Gospel presentation is vital at the beginning of phase 1. This Gospel presentation cannot be rushed, nor can it be assumed as some of the most profound oppressors are men who have vast amounts of Bible knowledge[[1]](#footnote-1) and years of experience in the church.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**God’s Original Plan.** Before one can understand how he is outside of God’s plan for his life, he needs to first understand what God’s original plan was for humanity, as well as for the lives of all who God has created. Concepts under this category include: living for the glory of God and loving those that God has created.[[3]](#footnote-3) As controlling others for selfish purposes is going to be a major theme in an abuser’s life, this “original design” concept needs to be unpacked so that adequate forgiveness can be sought. Verses for You to study and respond to would include: Genesis 5:1-2, 1 Chronicles 16:9-10, 1 Chronicles 16:29, Isaiah 43:7, Psalm 50:23, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Philippians 2:11, and 2 Corinthians 5:9.

**Man’s Fall Into Sin.** You also needs to understand that it is not just the outward controlling acts that are the problem; rather, it is his heart out of which flows all of his controlling oppressive words and actions.[[4]](#footnote-4) Scripture to think and respond to in this category would be Genesis 3:1-7.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* 1 Corinthians 10:31

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 5-10 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Watch the video from Dr. Stuart Scott entitled “From Pride to Humility: Part 1” located at the following web address: <https://vimeo.com/48673319>

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* What were the top 5 helpful ideas that you heard in the video from Dr. Stuart Scott? What changes do you believe that you need to make considering the videos that you watched? Be ready to discuss these in the next class.
* In thinking through your reason for being in this class, what are 5 ways in which you have sinned against God? What are 5 ways in which you have sinned against your wife/girlfriend and/or your children?
* Considering your sins against God and others, what grieves you the most?

## Week 3 – Gospel Foundation Part 2

### Goals(s) for the evening:

* Teach God’s answer to man’s sin: the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz on 1 Corinthians 10:31
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

**Jesus’ Life.** It is at this point that the Gospel needs to be clearly and accurately explained to you. Jesus, the son of God, came down and lived a perfect life for many different reasons[[5]](#footnote-5), but the three that are most important for this discussion are: (1) The glory of God, (2) to be a propitiation for your sin, and (3) to live the life that God requires youto live. Jesus came down from heaven to earth in order to fulfill God the Father’s plan of redemption. The goal of that plan was ultimately the glory of God. Additionally, the death that was required by God was that of a perfect lamb. Anything less would not have been enough. Finally, mankind needed another Adam to be the representative head. The first Adam failed completely, which meant there needed to be a second Adam who lived with perfection. Christ came to accomplish all of that by living 33 perfect years on this earth. Upon saving faith, Christs’ perfect life is applied, and it’s as if the believer had never sinned.

**Jesus’ Death.** Jesus leaving heaven and coming to live on this earth was just a portion of God’s answer to sin. Jesus needed to live a perfect life so that He could be the perfect sacrifice for the sin of those whom would believe. From the moment that sin entered the world, God required blood from a sacrifice in order to pay for the sin that was committed. Under the Old Testament covenant, there were different animal sacrifices that were required for different sins.[[6]](#footnote-6) While sacrifices were required for sins committed throughout the year, Passover was the time of year that all of Israel sacrificed a lamb in remembrance of God’s salvation of the Israelite nation from the slavery of the Egyptians. Regardless of the individual sacrifices or the observance of Passover, blood was required for sin that had been committed. Jesus death was to be the final sacrifice required. His sacrifice was the final atonement for sin as it satisfied the wrath of God and purchased those whom God had chosen from the beginning of time.

**Jesus’ Resurrection.** Jesus life and death, while vital to the God’s Gospel answer, the Gospel is not completed without the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Primarily, Jesus resurrection from the dead proved that He was who He said He was, namely Jesus Christ the Son of God. Secondarily, but no less important, Jesus resurrection from the dead was the proverbial nail in the coffin for Satan and the death that he brought about through sin. God promised Adam and Eve that the consequence for disobedience would be death and separation from Him for eternity. Sin destroys what God has created. Death is the ultimate act of destruction in that the very life that God places in His creation is snuffed out. Jesus resurrection from the dead conquered the very effects of sin and restored life and relationship that sin had previously destroyed.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* John 14:6

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 11-16 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Watch the video from Dr. Stuart Scott entitled “From Pride to Humility: Part 2” located at the following web address: <https://vimeo.com/48930420>

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* What were the top 5 helpful ideas that you heard in the video from Dr. Stuart Scott? What changes do you believe that you need to make considering the videos that you watched? Be ready to discuss these in the next class.
* In thinking through your reason for being in this class, what are 5 ***additional*** ways in which you have sinned against God? What are 5 ***additional*** ways in which you have sinned against your wife/girlfriend and/or your children?
* Considering your sins against God and others, what grieves you the most?

## Week 4 – The Gospel and You

### Goal(s) for the evening:

* Present the entire Gospel and a call for a response to the Gospel.
* Use the Ninth Inning VS Batting practice to illustrate works-based salvation from the work of Christ based salvation

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding John 14:6
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

**Responding to the Gospel.** Knowledge of the Gospel is vital for the salvation of anyone who would believe, including you, yet this knowledge is not enough for salvation.[[7]](#footnote-7) In order for salvation to take place, you must place your faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Placing one’s faith in the Gospel requires confession and repentance. The confession that needs to take needs to contain the following: (1) admitting that you are guilty of being a sinner from the core and separated from God, (2) God is the Sovereign King of all creation, (3) Jesus Christ as God came down to earth to be the perfect sacrifice and rose from the dead to conquer sin, and (4) through Him lies the only way to have a relationship with God. While there is no one prayer that needs to be prayed, your prayer should contain elements of all of items previously listed. The repentance that takes place is a turning from self-reliance and control to accomplish selfish goals toward a reliance upon God allowing Him to control all things that will bring Him honor and glory. While You could potentially pretend to repent initially, true repentance will show itself to be genuine or fake based on the subsequent actions that you will take in the future. Responding biblically to the Gospel; however, does involve an intentional moving away from self-reliance toward a Godward reliance. This 180-degree shift is known as repentance and will be fleshed out in your willingness to do whatever God requires of him regardless of what your wife does.

With full knowledge of the Gospel and a clear explanation of what biblical repentance is, you must be commanded[[8]](#footnote-8) to place your faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For you to place your faith in Jesus Christ, you must confess with your mouth and believe in your heart.[[9]](#footnote-9) Unless you are willing to place your faith in Jesus Christ, there is no hope of lasting change in which you can become more Christ-like, enabling you to love your wife and children as Scripture commands.[[10]](#footnote-10) At this point, you should pray a prayer of confession and repentance. If you have responded positively toward the Gospel, you are now positioned for the Holy Spirit to work enabling true, lasting, Christ-like change to take place.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* 1 Corinthians 2:14
* Romans 10:9-10

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 17-22 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Read the booklet entitled “Is It Real? Eleven Biblical Tests of Genuine Salvation”.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changed do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard.
* In light of all that we have studied over the past four weeks, the videos that you have watched, the books that you have read, and the teaching you have received, do you believe that you have repented of your sins, have placed your faith in Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, and have a relationship with Him?
* If your answer was “no”, what is keeping you from becoming a Christian? If you have not placed your faith or trusted in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, make sure you stop right here and talk with Him. You simply need to confess your sins to Him, confess that you need to be saved, and ask Him to save you from your sins. Don’t move on to any other assignment in this class until you have done this.
* If your answer was “yes”, why do you think that you have been sinning against those around you in oppressive and abusive ways?

# Phase 2 – Gospel Repentance

## Week 5 – Comprehending Sin - Listening to God: Circumstances

Contemplation

Confession

Change

###

### Goals for the evening:

* Learn to listen to God through studying His Word.
* Understand the biblical process of Change.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Romans 10:9-10, 1 Corinthians 2:14
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

Before moving any further in the change process, it is important for you to see a visual illustration of the elements that are needed for you to change in the manner that both God and your wife would like you to change. The interaction and importance of contemplation, confession, and change can be seen in the illustration below.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Contemplation lies at the root of all biblical change. If one has not thought long and hard about his sin, there is a high likelihood that he will return to his sin. Out of a thoughtful contemplation grows the tree trunk of a correct confession. Confession of anything simply will not do. The confession needs to be a correct confession. It is upon this tree trunk that the fruit of change will be able to be fed and supported. Finally, as a correct confession grows up and out of a thoughtful contemplation, the fruit of change begins to appear. Without all three of these elements, biblical repentance simply will not happen.

While initial confession and repentance must take place in the life of you, repentance for the sin of oppression must begin with an accurate understanding of the sin of oppression. The goal of this second step to open your eyes to see how your sin has been an offense against God as well as offensive and hurtful to those who are closest to you. A good biblical example of this is found in 2 Samuel 12 when the prophet Nathan rebukes King David for the sin that he committed with Bathsheba. Nathan approached King David with a story that was designed to open David’s spiritual eyes, i.e. his conscience, to the injustice of his sin as well as the damage that was brought about by the sin. Once David’s spiritual eyes were saw the truth, his heart responded in complete repentance.[[12]](#footnote-12)

In keeping with this approach, you need to spend time reflecting on God’s Word as well as those relationships in which oppression has taken place. Reflecting on God’s Word allows the living and active Word of God[[13]](#footnote-13) to penetrate your heart. Additionally, you need to spend time reflecting on how your sin has affected and hurt those around you. Reflecting on the effected horizontal relationships brings the truth of the oppression out of the realm of make-believe into reality.[[14]](#footnote-14) It should be noted that a lifetime of repentance is to be expected for the believer. The goal for this second step is not comprehending every area that needs repentance, but to see major areas, specifically dealing with repentance, that need to be addressed.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Proverbs 4:23
* Luke 6:43-45

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 23-27 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Read 2 Samuel 11 and answer the following questions:
* According to 2 Samuel 11:1 where should David have been? Remember he was a king.
	+ What was David doing when he saw Bathsheba bathing?
	+ Whose fault was it that David was tempted?
	+ Whose fault was it that David commanded that Bathsheba come to his palace?
	+ Whose fault was it that David has sex with Bathsheba?
	+ List all the different sins that David committed in 2 Samuel 11.
	+ Based on what you have read and answers you have given, what would you say to David if you were the one called upon to confront him?

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Pull out the lists of sins against God and others that you created a few weeks ago. What were the circumstances surrounding those sins? Who were you with? Where were you at? What was going on?
* Are there are similarities that you can pick out regarding the circumstances? For instance, one common circumstance in which anger can show up is during traffic. Someone who gets angry in traffic (circumstance) and happens to be alone (circumstance) and has drunk a lot of energy drinks in the previous hour (circumstance), might swear up a storm as he is stuck in traffic. Write down a similar circumstance that you can identify as you look back through the lists of sins against God and others.
* Complete the Inventory that will be emailed to you after the class is over.

## Week 6 – Comprehending Sin – Listening to God: Behavior

### Goals for the evening:

* Heart Idolatry using Heart Idol Diagram[[15]](#footnote-15) – Behavior

Influences: Behaviors:

emotions

idols

### I will sin in order to get \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. I will sin if I don’t get \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. I need/want \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. I must have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. I have the right to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Luke 6:43-45 and Proverbs 4:23
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

For you to understand how you have offended God; you will need to spend a considerable amount of time in God’s Word. There are two different categories that you need to spend time in, those categories that are descriptive and those categories that are prescriptive. You should spend time looking at the following descriptions of oppression and identify all the ways in which oppression occurs:[[16]](#footnote-16)

* Genesis 4 – Cain kills Abel.
* Genesis 12:10-20 – Abraham endangers Sarai.
* Genesis 20:1-18 – Abraham endangers Sarai again.
* Genesis 25:29-34 – Jacob manipulates Esau.
* Genesis 26:6-33 – Isaac puts Rebecca in danger
* Genesis 29 – Laban tricks Jacob.
* Genesis 34 – Dinah is humiliated.
* Genesis 37 – Joseph and his brothers
* Genesis 39 – Joseph is falsely accused.

***While this is a small list from the first book of the Bible, these examples describe situations in which those in power say and do things to those in a lesser position for selfish reasons***. This is what you should be paying attention to and recognizing in your own life.

Additionally, you should spend time looking at the following prescriptive Scriptures associated with oppression and identify those sins that you are guilty of committing as well as those actions you are guilty of omitting:

* Ephesians 4:25 – Lying
* Ephesians 4:26-27 – Anger
* 1 Corinthians 6:10 – Reviling
* Ephesians 5:25-33 – Loving one’s wife
* 1 Peter 3:7 – Understanding one’s wife
* Ephesians 6:1-4 – Not exasperating one’s children
* Matthew 22:37-39 – Not loving God and others
* Romans 12:9-21 – How to treat others
* 2 Timothy 3:2-5 – People to avoid

While this is a small list, this will serve as the starting point for you to evaluate yourself. It might be necessary for you to spend some time asking those who know you best to give them an evaluation based on the Scriptures listed. While this activity might better fall under the category of “listening to others”, this activity also falls under this category because asking others helps you to better understand what God is saying.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Mark 7:23
* 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 28-31 in *The Gospel Primer.*
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Read Mark 7:14-23 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Then list out all the sins that are listed in each of those passages and write your own definition for each of those sins. If you are not sure what a word means, do your best to find out what the word means. We will define those words in detail in the next class.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Out of the sins that you have written down from Mark and 1 Corinthians, which sins are you guilty of committing against God and others. (If there are some sins in these new lists that are not on your lists from weeks 2 and 3, make sure to add these new items to those lists.)
* What made you do those sins that you have listed down?
* This week, you will be paying attention to your behavior. Keep a piece of paper or your phone and keep track of those times when you find yourself getting irritated with your spouse or your kids. If you are not living with your spouse or your kids, then take note when you find yourself getting irritated or mad with co-workers or anyone for that matter. When you do find yourself getting irritated and mad, jot down the date and time. When you have a chance (lunch break, after work/school, or in the evening before bed), answer the following questions regarding when you got irritated and/or mad:
	+ What happened? (Circumstances: who was there, what was going on, etc.)
	+ What were you thinking and feeling? (thoughts and emotions)
	+ What did you do? (Behavior)
	+ What did you want more than anything else? (expectations/desires)
	+ What was the outcome?

Bring these notes with you to class this upcoming week and be ready to share. You should have at least 4 incidents in which you got irritated and/or mad.

## Week 7 – Comprehending Sin – Listening to God: Emotions

### Goals for the evening:

* Heart Idolatry using Heart Idol Diagram – Emotions
* Lights on the Dashboard Diagram



Lights go off when there is a problem with the engine.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Mark 7:23 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-10
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:[[17]](#footnote-17)

When we do biblical counseling, we deal with the heart: the thoughts (cognitions), affections/emotions and volition (will) of our counselees. While it can be tempting for us to perhaps focus chiefly on the will (what can they do to follow Jesus more faithfully) or the cognition (what can they think to follow Jesus more faithfully), the overflow of faithfulness will be displayed in bearing God’s image with appropriate emotions. When Christians believe God’s Word and are changed by it unto faithfulness, emotions will be wisely and biblically explored and expressed.

**Sometimes in counseling, we misconstrue God’s goal for emotions. We promote pleasant emotions rather than godly emotions, controlled emotions rather than faithful emotions.**

Jesus manifested perfect emotions. Like him, Christians should neither disregard nor over-esteem emotions. When we counsel one another, we have a unique opportunity to lead others in imitating Christ with our emotions by feeling them under the authority of God’s Word. Jesus’ perfection did not negate his emotions; it enhanced them. He experienced and expressed perfect emotions that flowed out of a perfect knowledge of his Father. To follow him in feeling faithfully we need to remember three things.

1. When we encounter strong emotions in ourselves and others, we can be tempted to stifle or ignore them out of fear of what they might mean. In doing so, we can fall into the lie that cognition is good, and emotions are bad; cognition, we feel, we can control. This is a false dichotomy and will hurt us in the counseling room. Ignoring our emotions will not make us godlier, it will make us less human and therefore less like Christ. Far from being a hindrance to our faith, emotions help us image God (Gen 1:26-27), having them is a human privilege. Our emotions are a gift because they help us be the relational knowers and lovers of God and others; in other words, they are an expression of Christlikeness.

If emotions are a gift then like all gifts, we must look to God to understand how to steward them.

1. Not all emotions honor God. Not all emotions are good. We should strive to feel congruently with God’s emotions. God displays a wide range of perfect emotions throughout Scripture. We read about Jesus having compassion, rejoicing and grieving with those he loved (John 11:35). Jesus pleads with God when he doesn’t want to do something but chooses trust over rebellion (Matt 26:42). We also read about God the Father exhibiting anger, love, hate and joy (Ps 7:11; 134:14; Gen 6:6; 1 John 4:8; Zeph. 3:17). Therefore, every human made in his image should expect to have these emotions. But as imitators of Christ, our goal should be to then wield them to display God’s glory.
2. The Bible is truly brilliant. It provides stability in God’s perfect steadfastness. God is steadfast in every situation, showing his emotions to be steadfast in every situation. We then can be emotionally stable as we imitate him. Christians should help one another exhibit emotions, never hide them. There is no fear in exposing wrong emotions because exposing them is what helps us uncover wrong thinking. When we help counselees express their emotions, we use God’s faithful Word to determine if they are right or wrong (Rom 12:2). When we bring our thoughts in alignment with God’s Word, our emotions rightly flow out of the Christian’s biblical reality.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Ephesians 4:26-27
* Psalm 37:8
* Proverbs 15:1

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 1-5 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Listen to the audio message: Why Do I Feel How I Feel? Understanding Your Emotions by Alasdair Groves. You can buy the MP3 at: <https://www.ccef.org/shop/product/feel-feel-understanding-emotions>

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* After listening to the message on emotions, write out the top 3 ideas that you were able to glean from the message. Why did those ideas stand out to you? What changes would you like to make in your life based on what you heard in the message?
* ***This will look like a duplicate from last week, but it is not.*** This week, you will be paying attention to your emotions. Keep a piece of paper or your phone and keep track of those times when you find yourself getting irritated with your spouse or your kids. If you are not living with your spouse or your kids, then take note when you find yourself getting irritated or mad with co-workers or anyone for that matter. When you do find yourself getting irritated and mad, jot down the date and time. When you have a chance (lunch break, after work/school, or in the evening before bed), answer the following questions regarding when you got irritated and/or mad:
	+ What happened? (Circumstances: who was there, what was going on, etc.)
	+ What were you thinking and feeling? (thoughts and emotions)
	+ What did you do? (Behavior)
	+ What did you want more than anything else? (expectations/desires)
	+ What was the outcome?

Bring these notes with you to class this upcoming week and be ready to share. You should have at least 4 incidents in which you got irritated and/or mad.

* Continue to add to your “ways I’ve sinned against God” list given all that you have learned this week about your emotions.

## Week 8 – Comprehending Sin – Listening To God: Motivations

### Goals for the evening:

* Present the final aspect of the heart idol diagram – motivations
* Practice identifying heart ruling motivations using a case study

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Ephesians 4:26-27, Psalm 37:8, and Proverbs 15:1
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

“Even though we don’t always think about them, motives are important. Therefore, we like Robin Hood and loathe the Sheriff of Nottingham. Robin Hood may have been an outlaw, but we consider his motives noble.

If a husband is meeting his wife’s best friend to get gift ideas for his wife, he is praised. But if his motive is to test the waters for a possible affair, he is a scoundrel.

Parents are not simply interested in mechanical or angry obedience from their children. They are concerned about a child’s attitude, which is another name for motive. Parents care what children do—and why.

Or consider the realm of addictions. Whether it is food, sex, drugs, or alcohol, an addiction seems automatic. The addicted person has been taken captive. To ask why seems as silly as asking, “Why did you catch a cold?” But even here, motives are important. Beneath addictive behaviors lie wants and desires. Addicts may be enslaved, but, at some level, they volunteer to be. They are motivated to continue their addiction because it gives them comfort, pleasure, power, temporary freedom from pain, revenge, autonomy, and so on. Ignoring these possible motives leaves people at the mercy of their addictive cravings. Even if they are abstinent or self-controlled, their own efforts will not be enough to change their fundamental motivations.

In other words, motives are not only important, in many situations they must be revealed and changed. If our motives don’t change, we won’t change.”[[18]](#footnote-18)

The key word is the *heart*. In Scripture, the heart is the source of all human motivation. It is the wellspring of life (Prov. 4:23), the root that determines whether the fruit of the tree will be good or bad (Jer. 17:5–8; Luke 6:43–45). It is our true self. Appearing nearly 1000 times in the Bible, *heart* can have a broad range of meaning, but at its core are our motivations. Simply put, the heart’s root motivation is, “I WANT.” “I want comfort, power, pleasure, control … for myself, against God.” By nature, the heart is selfish. It wants what it wants when it wants it. It doesn’t want God setting limits or providing direction. When changed by God Himself, the heart’s selfish and anti-God motives are not erased, but they are gradually replaced by a desire to love God and live for Him alone.

At first, this description might not seem to fit your own experience. Life does not feel like it is always about God. Some people haven’t even heard of the true God, so how can their behavior have anything to do with Him? However, you don’t have to be self-consciously thinking about God to be for or against Him.

When a teen violates a parent’s directions, it isn’t always an act of rebellion against the parent. It is just that the teen wants to do what he or she wants to do! The disobedience is “nothing personal,” yet it *is* personal. It is a desire for freedom from the parent’s authority.

Or take Internet pornography. For many people, it feels like a little-less-than-innocent indulgence. It might not be honorable, but it doesn’t feel like it’s *against* anyone. No one is getting hurt, and it’s just a small pleasure. But the reality goes deeper than that. People *are* hurt by it, and it *is* against the spouse. It breaks the vows once made to her and is a temporary shifting of marital allegiance. The pornography lover is saying that his desires cannot be met through his spouse, so he can indulge in mental betrayal to find the satisfaction he craves. Going even deeper into the heart, such behavior is against God. These actions say that God is either blind or far away. After all, who would do such a thing if he believed he was in the presence of the King? The pornography lover is implicitly saying that God is just a person, limited in what He does and where He can be. Furthermore, when God says, “Be holy as I am holy,” the pornography lover responds by saying “No” or “Later.” He responds to the King’s command to pursue sexual purity as if it were a mere suggestion.

These examples illustrate the fact that all of life is personal. Whether we consciously think about it or not, we know *the* God (Rom. 1:21), the Searcher of hearts (Jer. 17:10). We don’t just have a fuzzy idea that there is a god or a “higher power.” The Bible says that in our hearts, we have a personal knowledge of the God who truly is. The problem is that we don’t always like his intrusive or disruptive ways, and we try to ignore or avoid him. We “suppress the truth” that we know (Rom. 1:18–21).

But we are not always blind to these motives. When we are going through especially hard times, our God-motives often come to the surface. We may find ourselves saying, “God, what did I ever do to deserve this? How could you do this to me?” The tough times expose our basic allegiances. Do we live for God or for ourselves?

Even with atheists, the God-ward heart will be revealed. Atheists might live with a profound fear of death, revealing that, at some level, they know they will someday face the living God. Or they might consult palm readers for direction, tacitly acknowledging a divine plan and their fear that it might not go well for them. These behaviors echo their God-oriented motivations. Their faith commitment is in their hearts: “I *will* to live independent of God rather than acknowledge Him as Lord.”

Granted, we are not always aware of these motives, but that doesn’t mean they don’t exist. *All* of our motives are hard to see. Consider the case of the ancient Israelites in Numbers 14. They had just seen unparalleled miracles performed by the God who had chosen them as His very own people. After leading them out of slavery in Egypt and destroying Pharaoh’s army, God provided them with a new and fertile land. The problem was that the people living in the land thought it was theirs, and they weren’t going to give it up without a fight.

The spies who scouted the land came back with a mixed report: the land was ideal, but the people in it were powerful. At this news, the people complained and grumbled. “That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, ‘If only we had died in the desert’” (Num. 14:1–2).

In this case, the complaint seems legitimate. Moses and Aaron led the Israelites to a land filled with mighty warriors, but the people were more familiar with making bricks than with waging war. Who wouldn’t grumble? Their motivation was simple: they wanted to live! They reasoned that life, even in slavery, was better than death. Most of us would agree with that.

But their motivations went deeper. “And the Lord said to Moses, ‘How long will this people despise me? How long shall this wicked congregation grumble against Me?’” (Num. 14:11, 27).

There it is, the heart’s ever-present question: “Whom will you follow, worship, and trust?” The people complained against God. God Himself was their leader, their Father, the One who had promised them the land and would lead them in battle. He had already defeated the Egyptians without one Israelite raising a sword. He had already taken care of their daily needs. In that context, the *why* of Israel’s complaining had everything to do with God. As Moses had pointed out in an earlier episode, “Your grumbling is not against us but against the Lord” (Ex. 16:8).

We can paraphrase the motives behind their grumbling this way: “God, we don’t think you are powerful. We don’t think you are good. You haven’t given us everything we want when we want it.” Their motives were against God.

The event can be charted like this.

Our circumstances

(The difficulties of the desert)

↓

Our words and deeds

(Complaining and grumbling)

↓

Our surface motives-personal desires such as significance, security, or love

(“We want to live in Egypt rather than die in the desert.”)

↓

Our deeper motives-are we for self or for others?

(“How dare Moses not give us what we want?”)

↓

Our deepest motives—are we for self or for God?

(“We are angry with God.”)

Some have suggested that modern thought has tried to cut the cord between God and ourselves. But, try as it might, nothing can disentangle us from our creator. And that is a very good thing.”[[19]](#footnote-19)

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Matthew 12:35

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 6-11 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Find someone in your life to whom you can teach the heart idol diagram to and practice teaching the entire diagram to them. Make note of those areas that you still struggle to explain. Write down who you taught the diagram.
* Identify at least 3 ruling heart motivations in your own life using the heart idol diagram. Make sure to use the 5 helpful sentences on the diagram as you search your heart: (1) I will sin if I don’t get, (2) I will sin in order to get, (3) I need/want, (4) I must have, and (5) I have the right to.

## Week 9 – Confessing Sin – To God

### Goals for the evening:

* Instruct on what confession sounds like
* Teach the Confession Letter exercise

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Matthew 12:35
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

While it is true that God in omniscient, He still requires that sinners confess their sins to Him.[[20]](#footnote-20) Your confession to God must be (1) sincere, (2) specific, (3) complete and full, (4) owning of the, and (5) resolute.[[21]](#footnote-21) If adequate contemplation has taken place, there is a high likelihood that this kind of confession takes place.

The confession needs to sincere. You will not need to be told how to pray nor how to confess his sins to God. On the contrary, there should be a pronounced sorrow and tearful confession offered up to God by you. A nonchalant unemotional confession announces that you are not truly sorry for the sins that you have committed against God, much less repentant. Regarding the sincerity of the confession, Thomas Watson said, “The hypocrite confesses sin, but loves it, like a thief who confesses to stolen goods, yet loves stealing. How many confess pride and covetousness with their lips but roll them as honey under their tongue.”[[22]](#footnote-22)

The confession needs to be specific. You also need to be very specific with the sins that you have committed. If you’re unrepentant, you will confess generic sins that almost anyone could be guilty of committing. This kind of confession will make You appear to be super spiritual as opposed to humbly repentant.[[23]](#footnote-23) Your genuine confession of sin, on the other hand, will mention your specific sins. Where you have reviled, you will confess the sin of verbally attacking your wife. Where you have manipulated and played mental games with your spouse, you will confess sins of deceit, hatred, and being selfish. Where you have silently punished your wife, you will confess not loving her as Christ has loved you. The specific confession is yet another indicator that repentance has taken place.[[24]](#footnote-24)

The confession also needs to be full and complete. King David, in his confession, took his sin all the way back to his conception (Psalms 51:4). He didn’t merely state that he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, which was the action of the sin. Instead, David went to the heart of his sin, which was founded at his conception. The truly repentant man will confess heart level sins and not merely the physical manifestations of those sins. Heart level sins would include pride, control, lust, hatred, and so forth. Words and actions are an important part of confession but confessing those desires and motivations that come from the heart indicate a true repentance has taken place.

**The confession needs to indicate that you have owned your sin**. Many unrepentant men will blame their wives for the sin that they have committed. Blaming one’s wife for personal sin finds its origin in Adam all the way back in Genesis three when he said, “It was the women You gave me.” Adam blamed Eve and God for the sin that he committed. You are no different from the first Adam in that you will be tempted to blame your wife for your sin of oppression. “If my wife were more submissive”, “If she would be more understanding”, “I think that she is stressed out and not able to respond well”, or some rendition of these phrases are a common tactic used by those men who have yet to own their sin. The repentant man takes full ownership for the sin that he has committed and makes **no** attempt to throw blame at her for the sin that he has committed.

**The confession needs to be resolute**. You will need to confess that you will do whatever you need to do in keeping with his determination not to commit the sins for which you are culpable. Behind this part of your confession is a **deep hatred** for the sins that you have committed. There should be no qualifications or “If/Then” statements in your confession. Your confession should communicate to God that you are willing to take the necessary steps required to successfully kill oppressive sins that have come to describe who you are as a husband.

While it is not biblically required to write this confession out, wisdom would say that it is necessary whenever possible. A written letter will allow the repentant man to have a document with which to reference as well as remember his promises. The Israelites in the Old Testament made a habit of erecting piles of stones to remember different events of significance.[[25]](#footnote-25) This letter can act as a similar memorial reminding you of all that you have been convicted of, all that you have confessed, and how gracious God has been in forgiving you.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* 1 John 1:9

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 12-16 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Based on all that you have learned about your sin against God (your behaviors, your feelings, and your motivations), write a confession letter to expressing your understanding, your conviction, and your request for forgiveness considering your sin against God. Make sure to work on this for at 30 minutes per day this week. Your letter should be correct and complete. You will be sharing this letter with others this next week.

## Week 10 – Comprehending Sin – Listening to Others

### Goals for the evening:

* Learning to listen to how others experienced sin committed against them.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding 1 John 1:9
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

While the Word of God is enough to convict you of the sins that you have been committing, listening to those who have had extensive experience in dealing with oppressors can be helpful as well. Chapter 4 in Chris Moles’ book “The Heart of Domestic Violence” does an outstanding job of unpacking the sin of oppression.[[26]](#footnote-26) In response to this chapter, you need to spend time reading and interacting with the concepts found in chapter four. You can spend time interacting with the material by: (1) reading the chapter in its entirety, (2) writing down those areas of the chapter which point out your own sin, (3) identifying those manifestations of pride[[27]](#footnote-27) that are true in your own life, and (4) answering the 5 questions found on page 59. In some instances, in which you still cannot see oppression in your own life, after reading chapter four, a case study could be used to help you first see the sin in others. After being able to see the sin in others, you can then examine your own life to see how you are guilty of the sins that fall under oppression.

Jim Newheiser’s book “Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage”[[28]](#footnote-28), Darby Strickland article “Identifying Abuse in Marriage”, as well as the sermon by Jason Meyer entitled “Fooled by False Leadership” for a greater biblical understanding of oppression and how it hurts others. You should read through chapter 35 of Jim Newheiser’s book as well as Darby Strickland’s[[29]](#footnote-29) article identifying those areas in which you are culpable of oppression. Jason Meyer’s sermon references information by John Henderson regarding the different types of oppression and severities found within each category. You should read through the different types of abuse and identify which activities you are most prone to commit. You should also give the list of categories and activities to those whom he oppresses in order to get more accurate feedback from them.

Just as you need to spend time listening to God through the Bible and other biblical experts, you also need to spend time listening to those around you that you have hurt the most. This will allow you to understand the reality of your sin. Understanding the reality of your sin will allow you to **confess accurately and change appropriately**. In order to understand those around you, you should first consider writing down how you imagine that you have hurt those around you. You should take no less than one hour to write down how you imagine you have hurt your wife, your children (if applicable), and anyone else whom his oppression affected.

Upon completion of his letter, you should sit down with those who you have affected and read your letter to them.[[30]](#footnote-30) After expressing how you believe that your sins have affected those around you, invite them to share their thoughts on your perspective. **Asking others for their thoughts is an act of humility and expresses that he truly does want to know the truth and change**. You should then revisit your contemplation assignment with the new information and attempt to revamp your contemplation letter. This second attempt should produce a more accurate understanding of your oppression and how it affected those around you.[[31]](#footnote-31) After adequately understanding how your sin has affected others around you, you are now ready to ask for forgiveness.[[32]](#footnote-32)

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* James 5:16
* Matthew 5:23-24

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 17-21 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Option 1: If you are legally and relationally able to do so, spend some time talking with those whom you have oppressed and abused asking them to share with you their experience of your sin against them. Your job is to learn from them; therefore, you are not to be defensive, correcting, or question what they say in any way. As you hear from them, your understanding of the devastation of your sin should become clearer. As part of your interview, you should make it known that you are working towards writing a confession letter that you will eventually read, and the information given in the interview will help you confess as much of your sin as possible. After your interview, type/write up your notes in a way that you can easily present your findings to others in the group this upcoming week.
* Option 2: If you are not legally and/or relationally able to meet with those whom you oppressed and/or abused, spend time reading through at least 5 different online testimonies of those who have been oppressed and/or abused. You need to write down the web address of each testimony. As often as possible, choose situations that best reflect your own situation. After you research, type/write up your notes in a way that you can easily present your findings to others in the group this upcoming week.

## Week 11 – Confessing Sin – To Others

### Goals for the evening:

* Craft a confession letter that can be read to the offenders’ victims.
* Present a sample of a correct complete confession letter.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding James 5:16 and Matthew 5:23-24
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

The same five elements should be used in your confessing to your wife as was used in your confession to God. The difference in the confession is that it needs to be directed toward your wife and the sins that you committed against her. While the sins against your wife are not as numerous as the sins against God, it is still paramount that the sins that you committed against your wife be confessed to her with a corresponding asking of forgiveness. As wisdom dictates a physical letter be written to God, so a physical letter should be written to the wife. This physical letter will allow you to express all that you have been convicted of without the pressure of needing to remember all your sins as you confess to your wife. A letter also allows for you to accurately express what is in your heart before it comes out of your mouth. An example of a confession letter that exhibits the heart of repentance has been included in this paper under appendix A.

A helpful nugget regarding confession of sin: where you have sinned specifically you should confess specifically. Stay away from confessing generically or making backhanded confessions such as, “If I hurt you in anyway, please forgive me.” You have sinned in specific ways against your wife and need to confess specifically to your wife.

This concludes phase two of your class. With the contemplation and confession portions complete, you are now ready to plan out what needs to change in your life and in your marriage. It should be noted that there is a good chance that more contemplation and confession will need to take place as you continue in the transformation process. When you are convicted of sin, you should revisit those two areas and take the appropriate biblical actions immediately.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Philippians 2:3-5
* Mark 11:25

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 22-26 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Based on the information from your interview and/or research, craft a correct complete confession letter that you will read to those whom you have offended if possible. You should work on this letter for 30 minutes a day. You will read your letter to those in the class next week.

# Phase 3 – Gospel Plan of Change

## Week 12 – Plan of Change – Put Off

### Goals for the evening:

* Teach the overall process of biblical change based on Ephesians 4:22-24.
* Focus on putting of the old man.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Philippians 2:3-5 and Mark 11:25
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

Now that the roots of contemplation and the trunk of confession have been established, you are ready to plan for change. The phrase “planning for change” is used because a close careful plan of action is needed so that inadvertent mistakes are not made as you seek to become a different person. As the old proverb goes, “Failing to plan is planning to fail”.

While there are numerous books that speak of the change process, one of the most practical books available is Armond Tiffe’s book entitled “Transformed Into His Likeness” (TIHL). The practical nature of this book is what allows it to be very effective for husbands who are genuinely seeking to change. You need to become familiar with the material in this book as well as the worksheets that are available in it.

The plan for change needs to include the following three elements: (1) putting off or stopping of the sins of oppression, (2) having a new and different mind, and (3) putting on acts that reflect a new and different mind.[[33]](#footnote-33) Without all three aspects, You will not have sufficiently responded to the sin for which you are guilty and will, at some point, return to your sin as a dog returns to his vomit.[[34]](#footnote-34) A lack of change will also prove hopeless for your spouse.[[35]](#footnote-35) Repentant husbands must take each of these three areas seriously and commit to do the hard work that is required under each category. While hard, it is not impossible.[[36]](#footnote-36) While God will not do the work that He requires of you, He will graciously and overwhelmingly supply the energy and motivation for you to complete the work.

Step One - Putting Off

The process of change begins with putting off or stopping certain beliefs and behaviors.[[37]](#footnote-37) This part of the process should prove to be the easiest part for you as it will contain all of those items that you confessed to both God and your wife in the previous section. At this point, you need to go through the TIHL and identify all those areas that you struggle. You can identify those with a checkmark. The TIHL does not contain page numbers for you to reference; rather, then entire spiral bound book contains a list of “put offs” and corresponding “put ons”. You should carefully read through the entire book and prayerfully consider each item listed.

Prayerfully considering each item includes asking God to bring greater clarity and conviction to each item for which you are guilty as you faithfully read the verses given by the TIHL regarding each item. Allowing God to work through His Word ensures that the conviction or lack of conviction is not based on a mystical feeling; rather, conviction is based on the objective unchanging Word of God.[[38]](#footnote-38) **Using God’s Word to bring conviction will be very important as feelings of conviction will diminish and become less motivating as the change process continues.**

In addition to God’s Word, it would be very valuable for you to ask your spouse (if possible) and close friends to also place a checkmark next to those areas that they believe you are prone to commit. Asking for this input ensures greater clarity into those areas that need change as well as promotes greater humility.

Additionally, you should read and interact with chapters five and six in The Heart of Domestic Violence. Both chapters do an excellent job of expanding the understanding of beliefs and actions that are associated with oppression. After reading chapter five, You should answer the following five questions[[39]](#footnote-39):

(1) What beliefs have driven your oppressive behavior toward your wife,

(2) What does Matthew 20:20-28 have to do with your job as a husband and father,

(3) How have you defined male headship in the past and what did male headship look like in your marriage,

(4) How have you failed to imitate God as a husband and father, and

(5) give 10 examples over the past month in which you denied yourself in order to serve your wife and your children.

After reading chapter six, you should answer the following questions[[40]](#footnote-40):

(1) How important is it for you to have power,

(2) How important do you think it is for your spouse or your children to have power,

(3) On a scale of 1-10, rate how important it is that men have ultimate power and economic independence, i.e. they can do what they want and others should follow,

(4) how have you used the power given to you by God to commit violent acts in your home, and (

5) what are some biblical options to power and control that you could implement in your home?

One final assignment that can be helpful to identify both the outward actions as well as the ruling heart desires it to keep a journal of oppressive temptations. You will need to commit to answering the following five questions when in moments of oppression.[[41]](#footnote-41) These moments can be self-identified moments, or they can be moments which are identified by his wife. In either case, he needs to answer to following five questions:

(1) What happened,

(2) What were you thinking and feeling,

(3) What did you do,

(4) What did you desire more than anything else, and

(5) what the outcome was.

Each of these questions is designed to have You consider the outward actions as well as the inward motivations that are active. The goal is that he become more aware of his sin, what it looks like, and how it affects those around him.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Ephesians 4:22-24
* Colossians 3:5-9

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 27-31 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Transformed Into His Likeness (TIHL). There are no page numbers. Read until you get to the section entitled “How to Work Through the ‘Personal Transformation Worksheet’”
* Make a list of all the motivations, thoughts, words, and actions that you need to put off in your life.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Looking at the list of items to put off found on underneath the section you read for this week and put a check mark next to those areas that you need to put off.
* Based on those items that you placed a checkmark next to, talk to three people who know you the best this week and ask them what top 3 items they would recommend you work on.
* Before coming to class, pick one of the items that was recommended to you and be prepared to tell the class what item you are going to work on putting off and why you decided to work on that issue. Make sure to have at least 5 Scriptures ready that speak to what you would like to put off.

## Week 13 – Plan of Change – Put On

### Goals for the evening:

* Teach the process of putting on the new man

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Ephesians 4:22-24
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

Most Christians, oppressive spouses included, believe that change has indeed taken place when they stop doing the sin for which they are guilty. Having a new perspective on oppressive attitudes and actions gives the added perception that you have changed. After all, not only have you stopped sinning, but you can answer questions correctly regarding your past sin. On the contrary, you have only made it two-thirds of the way toward change. It is at this point, that you can be deceived into thinking that you have changed and unintentionally or intentionally abort the embryo of change that has been growing.[[42]](#footnote-42) Ephesians 4:28 clearly states that a thief is a changed person when he stops stealing and starts working in order to give to those in need. For every putting off sin there needs to be a corresponding putting on of obedience. The man who has repented of his selfishness will have a habit of selflessness. The man who has repented of deception and lying will make it a common practice to tell the complete truth, even at the risk of telling more than is necessary. The man who has repented of sexual immorality, will make it his aim to love God and his wife with his whole body. While the putting on of biblical obedience is a necessary requirement for repentance, it’s not enough to be generally obedient (read your Bible, go to church, memorize Scripture, etc). You need to be very specific with those obedient attitudes and actions that you are going to put on.

Armond Tiffe’s book once again will prove to be of great help to you as you seek to put on godly attitudes and behaviors. Where you have placed a checkmark next to those areas that you would like to put off, the biblical corresponding put on has been given. **The given word or phrase is in its generic form, so you will need to spend some time personalizing it.** Armond Tiffe has provided somewhat of a tutor to help you think along the correct biblical guidelines. For instance, the man who has made a habit of blaming others needs to start taking ownership for his own sin. He owns his sin as he confesses it to God and others (where necessary and appropriate) and does not blame anyone else or distract from his confession by bring up someone else’s sin or mistakes.[[43]](#footnote-43)

You should also read chapter eleven in The Heart of Domestic Violence.[[44]](#footnote-44) Moles does an outstanding job of helping you see news attitudes and actions that you need to put on. These new actions can only be accomplished on a continual basis as a result of the Holy Spirt and a new perspective towards your wife and children. You should take note of those suggestions that are mentioned to incorporate them into your plan of change. At this point, you only need to identify what you need to put on. The actual plan of putting on and putting off is the next step.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Philippians 2:12-13

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 1-5 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Chapter 11 in The Heart of Domestic Abuse
* Transformed Into His Likeness start at “How to Work Through the ‘Personal Transformation Worksheet’”.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Like last week, look at the list of items to put on found in last week reading, put a check mark next to those areas that you need to put on.
* Before coming to class, pick one of the items that was recommended to you and be prepared to tell the class what item you are going to work on putting off and why you decided to work on that issue. Make sure to have at least 5 Scriptures ready that speak to what you would like to put off.
* If you have not started giving back financially to God, begin this week. A good goal is to give 10% back to God from your paycheck.

## Week 14 – Plan of Change – Renewed Mind

### Goals for the evening:

* Teach the process of renewing one’s mind.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Philippians 2:12-13
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

The next stage in the process of change is to have a new and different mind. Encompassed in a new and different mind are new ways of understanding, reasoning, thinking, and deciding.[[45]](#footnote-45) This new mind, developed as you mediate on Scripture and read books aimed at a greater understanding of your sin, will allow you to perceive everything in this life with a new set of eyes.

Scripture is the most vital resource given to you as it is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword. It is about to get cut to the heart of the matter.[[46]](#footnote-46) The Word of God should be the primary source that you spend the most amount of your time consuming. Armond Tiffe’s book can be helpful in directing your mind to certain portions of Scripture so that you can meditate on specific Scripture. For instance, if you have had the habit of verbally reviling your wife, you should spend time meditating on Psalm 19:14, Proverbs 12:18, Proverbs 15:28, Proverbs 21:23, Proverbs 29:20, Ephesians 4:29, Ephesians 5:4, Colossians 4:6, and James 1:26.[[47]](#footnote-47) Each of these verses speaks to the issue of communicating. Your goal is to so saturate your mind with the Word of God that you can’t help but respond differently to your wife with the words that you use. Meditating on God’s Word is the means by which God will transform you into a new creation that loves God and others unlike any other time in your life.

You should also spend time re-reading Chapters five and six of Chris Moles’ book.[[48]](#footnote-48) Moles exposes many common beliefs you most likely have held. Not only do you needs to understand the vast amount of damage that you have done to your wife, you need to understand the motivations and beliefs that you harbored in your heart allowing you to treat your wife as treacherously as you did.[[49]](#footnote-49) As you review chapters five and six, you should answer the following questions: (1) What new insights and understandings do you have about the beliefs that you have had in your heart that drove you to behave sinfully toward your wife, (2) What new beliefs and motives do you need to cultivate in your heart so that you will respond differently toward your wife in the future, (3) How will you use the power that God has given you as a husband and father in the days, weeks, months, and years ahead, (4) Practically speaking, what does it look like for a husband and father to be a servant-leader, (5) What does it mean for you to be the “male cheerleader” for ***your*** wife, and (6) What you want to confront yourself with a month ago knowing what you know now? These questions allow you a chance to use your new spiritual eyes to perceive your roles as husband and wife differently.

Continuing with Moles’ book, you should also read chapter nine entitled, “The mind of Christ: An Alternative to a Violent Heart”. As you read chapter 9, you should also read pages 55 through 59 in which Moles mentions Dr. Stuart Scotts 24 manifestations of humility. After reading the material, you should complete the following exercises: (1) self-reflect on manifestations of pride to consider which areas you need to work on, and (2) give the manifestations of pride to those who would give true feedback and ask for them to suggest those manifestations that you need to work on. You should also answer the following questions: (1) what has pride sounded and looked like in your life, specifically as it relates to oppression, (2) what barriers still exist in your own life that feed pride, (3) what manifestation of humility are you going to be working on based on your own insights as well as the insights of others, and (4) how would have those that love you respond if they see your prideful ways returning?

At this point, you should very much be in the driver’s seat regarding the development for your plan of change. You should have some concrete thoughts regarding your personal transformation. You should have worked through the following items to incorporate them into his plan of change: (1) what to put off, (2) new ways of thinking, and (3) items that he wants to put on. All these items are still in the hypothetical realm of knowledge. You know what you need to do but have not yet begun to do anything. The goal of this step is for you to gather your thoughts together and write out a plan of change that you can follow and change.

This plan of change should be specific and not vague or general. In TIHL, Armond Tiffe states:

*“If you are general or vague, you will not make much progress. You must have a clear understanding of exactly what should be put off. If you are truly serious about changing, you must be willing to say, as the psalmist says, “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me and lead me in the way of everlasting.”[[50]](#footnote-50)*

This plan needs to be as specific as possible as there will be no room for excuses. TIHL gives an example of a specific plan of change for the man who struggles with anxiety and worry. This example should be enough of a beginning for you to write your own plans of change for each area of your life which you have identified. While you will not be in counseling for the entire length of time required for all the change to take place, you should complete counseling with plans of change for each area so that you can start changing in new areas as changes in other areas become apparent.

A very real concern at this point is that of “box checking”. Box checking happens when a lazy uninformed husband simply does what he is told to do. While he probably will have had some negative consequences motivating temporary change, the box checker will prove that he has not changed by his lack of knowing what he needs to do to change. A student who has not learned math concepts will fail the test regardless of how many times he has been told what to do. Without a renewed mind, you will have no idea what you should be doing differently and will thus rely on those around you to tell you what to do. If you are making statement that are akin to “just tell me what to do”, then you should be directed to go back to steps one through three of phase two.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Romans 12:2
* 1 Peter 1:13

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 6-11 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Transformed Into His Likeness: Personal Transformation Worksheets

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Write out your plan of change. Your plan of change should include all of those actions that you plan to do that will help you “put off” your former self, those actions that you plan to do that will help you “put on” the new self, and all of the Scriptures that speak to the changes that you want to make. You should be prepared to present your plan of change to the class so that they men can give you their feedback.

# Phase 4 – Gospel Permanence

## Week 15

### Goals for the evening:

* Learning how to be self-examining.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Romans 12:2 and 1 Peter 1:13
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

While this is only one point of reference to see if real change has taken place, it is an important point of reference. Where change has taken place, you will be different, and you will see that difference in yourself. You should keep a daily journal in which you are evaluating your progress. Your evaluation should check for obedience in both attitude and action.[[51]](#footnote-51) This evaluation should be written out so that it can be submitted to your counselor who can check it against the evaluations of others.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* 2 Corinthians 13:5

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 12-16 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?

## Week 16

### Goals for the evening:

* Learning to humbly invite others into the change process.

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding 2 Corinthians 13:5
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

God has provided other people to help in the change process. You need to make sure that you are utilizing all the gifts of God, including the body of Christ. Change will never happen in isolation as God has not designed mankind to live apart from one another. The humility required for you to change begins by allowing light to shine from the outside in making visible what has been covered for so long. The four groups of people that you need to enlist in helping him to evaluate change are: (1) your spouse, (2) your life group or small group, (3) a counselor, and (4) the church. Each of these people offer a different perspective for you to consider. As each offers personal evaluation, you, so long as you remain humble, will be able to clarify your spiritual eyes to see what you are doing correctly and what still needs to change.

The TIHL offers very practical suggestions for those who would help evaluate your progress in keeping with your plan of change. As stated earlier in this outline, the role of these evaluators is to evaluate you regarding the plan of change that you have developed. These evaluators are not to tell you what to do nor are they to do the work that you need to be doing.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Acts 19:18
* 1 Corinthians 6:11

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 17-21 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* This week you will enlist the help of Christians outside of the domestic abuse group. You will need to arrange a time with three people who are not part of the domestic abuse group to whom you can tell your story. Your story will include your sin against God, your sin against those you love, God’s grace in allowing you to understand your sin, confess your sin, and finally your plan of change. These discussions should take approximately 30 minutes. Be prepared in class to share your experience with members of class.
* You will also need to contact a pastor and/or a lay-elder this week and set up a time to meet with him next week in preparation for next week’s assignment. Please write down which pastor or lay-elder you plan on meeting as well as the date and time you will be meeting.

## Week 17

### Goals for the evening:

* Looking outward in wisdom

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Acts 19:18 and 1 Corinthians 6:11
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

There are two types of wisdom: (1) firsthand wisdom and (2) third party wisdom. Firsthand wisdom is that which is gained from doing something one’s self. It is often the most painful type of wisdom gained and requires the most amount of risk. Rebellious children are often said to “learn the hard way”. This is to say that rebellious children who refuse to listen to their parents often make foolish decisions due to lack of wisdom and reap the consequences of foolish decisions. Third party wisdom, on the other hand, is that wisdom that is acquired due to the information of other people. This kind of wisdom is the least painful type of wisdom as it requires zero experience, but a lot of humility. Third party wisdom is education that comes from outside of someone. This could be through parents, spouses, teachers, pastors, and Scripture. Repentant husbands have both firsthand and third-party wisdom at their disposal. Both types of wisdom can help identify when you are lying, being lazy, pretending, and struggling.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Hebrews 13:17

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 22-26 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* This week you will need to meet with the pastor or lay-elder that you contacted last week. Your job is to share your story in a similar fashion as last week. Your story will include your sin against God, your sin against those you love, God’s grace in allowing you to understand your sin, confess your sin, and finally your plan of change. These discussions should take approximately 30 minutes. Be prepared in class to share your experience with members of class.

## Week 18

### Goals for the evening:

* Looking outward with confidence

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Hebrews 13:17
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

You will most likely have developed the sinful habit of being a master manipulator. The more religious you have been, the better grasp of the Scripture you probably have which allows you to appear to be repentant when you are not. Regarding the religious pretender, Thomas Watson states, “The hypocrite is a saint in jest. He makes a magnificent show, like an ape clothed in ermine or purpose. The hypocrite is like a house with a beautiful façade, but every room within is dark…He is seemingly good so that he may be really bad.”[[52]](#footnote-52) Former Pharisees are adequately equipped to sniff out the attitudes and actions of those who are pretending to be religious. The abomination of their former sin causes them to spiritually wretch when they get wind of hypocrisy. As thoughts of their former life pour into their memory, the exhortation to stop “playing games” should shoot forth. Whether this exhortation is sharp or gentle, strong or weak, those who are pretending, need to be confronted.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Galatians 6:1-3
* Matthew 18:15

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Entries 27-31 in *The Gospel Primer*.
* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Read chapter 6 in the Doctrine of Repentance by Thomas Watson

#### Writing Assignment:

* Make note of which entry from *The Gospel Primer* was most meaningful to you and why it was most meaningful.
* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Based on your own experience, lies you used to believe, and actions you used to do, create a description of someone who is abusive. Here are questions to help get you thinking: What would he say to his spouse when people are not around? What would he say when people are around? What would he do with finances? What would he do regarding sex? What would he tell others about his wife and marriage? What would he do if he thought his wife was disrespectful or disobedient? What would vacations look like? Your goal in this description is to help abusive people identify words and actions that are abusive. Be prepared to share your description with the group next week.
* You need to contact the Life Group Pastor and start to look for a Life Group to which you can belong. After talking to the life group pastor, narrow the list of life groups down to 5 groups that you would like to visit. Plan out when you are going to visit each life group and bring that plan with you to class. (If you are already part of a life group, make plans to share your story with your group.)

## Week 19

### Goals for the evening:

* Looking outward with sympathy

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Galatians 6:1-3 and Matthew 18:15
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

Just as the formerly unrepentant husband is adequately equipped for confrontation, he is also adequately equipped to sooth a soul that is struggling to change. The pitfalls and struggles of killing an indwelling sin habit are known all too well to the formerly unrepentant husband. He will know what words, thoughts, Scriptures, and prayers are most needed and most helpful. Just as Zacchaeus would have been able to help a thief to release his grip on stolen money by reminding him of the sweet taste of obedience, so the formerly unrepentant spouse will be able to help other sinful abusive men to stop the controlling, manipulating, deceptive, hurtful actions by reminding those men of that which God has called them to and the sweetness that comes with obedience. While anyone who is indwelt with the Holy Spirit could accomplish that, changed husbands can know what to say and how to say it in such a way as to best encourage You who is struggling.

### Homework for the week:

#### Scripture Memory:

* Psalm 141:5
* Proverbs 27:6

#### Book/Video/Teaching:

* Go to one of our four church services this coming Sunday.
* Pick a Bible Reading plan and be ready to share your plan with the group.

#### Writing Assignment:

* Write out three key statements from the sermon that you listened to this past Sunday. Why did those statements stand out to you? What changes do you want to make in your life based on the sermon that you heard?
* Make a list of at least two men who you believe need to take this class. Without gossip (giving specific details), why do you believe that they need to be in this class? What will this class potentially do for these people?
* Make plans to invite these men to the group. Will you take them to coffee? Will you talk with them at church? Will you mention something at softball practice? After you decide on the place/circumstance you will confront them, start to pray and ask God to provide the right time and the right place. Be prepared to share your plans with the group.
* Write out a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness in the change process.

## Week 20

### Goals for the evening:

* Graduation

### Pre-Teaching Activities:

* Scripture Quiz adding Psalm 141:5 and Proverbs 27:6
* Turn in written homework from the previous week for TA to check

### Teaching for the evening:

It is at this point that, after all four phases have been complete, that the now changed husband can state, I am no longer who I once used to be as biblical Christ-like change has taken place. Hope abounds in the biblical process of change. Anything less runs the extreme risk of repeatedly living in sin. Worse than repeating sin; not repeating that sin but finding pleasure in a new sort of sin. The flesh would love to keep would-be believers deceived into thinking that the ceasing of one sin somehow indicates that they are all better. May God be glorified as oppressive spouses put off the old, become renewed in their thinking, and put on the new. As God is glorified, may His church be strengthened to be a light in a dark community which shines an appealing light for those who are searching.

### Homework for the week:

#### Final Assignments:

* Get involved in a ministry at the church. Here are some options: The First Impressions Team (FIT), Ushers, Hope Groups, Counseling, Sunday School, Audio/Video production, facilities.
* If you are not a member of the church, call the church to find out when the next membership meeting is and plan to be at the meeting.
* If applicable, look at the church calendar to see when the next Complete Husband class is offered. Plan to take that class as soon as you can.

Introduction

This book is offered as a handy guide to help Christians experience the gospel more fully by preaching it to themselves each day. It is also offered as a correction to a costly mistake made by Christians who view the gospel as something that has fully served out its purpose the moment they believed in Jesus for salvation. Not knowing what to do with the gospel once they are saved, they lay it aside soon after conversion so they can move on to “bigger and better” things (even Scriptural things). Of course, they don’t think this is what they are doing at the time, yet after many years of floundering in defeat they can look back and see that this is exactly what they have done.

God did not give us His gospel just so we could embrace it and be converted. Actually, He offers it to us every day as a gift that keeps on giving to us everything we need for life and godliness. The wise believer learns this truth early and becomes proficient in extracting available benefits from the gospel each day. We extract these benefits by being absorbed in the gospel, speaking it to ourselves when necessary, and by daring to reckon it true in all we do.

God’s gifts are all of grace, and there is nothing we can do to earn them. However, the wise believer will make sure he is positioning himself in the spot where God’s gracious gifts are located. And the Scripture teaches that all such gifts are located inside the gospel. Hence, the Bible tells Christians to be continuously established and steadfast in the gospel and to refuse to be moved from there (Colossians 1:23).

As for myself, after years of frustration, fits and starts, and exhausted collapses in my Christian walk, I have come back to a focus on the gospel and have found its sufficiency for daily living to be truly overwhelming. After years of church attendance, university and seminary training, and countless hours of Bible study in preparation for preaching many hundreds of sermons, I have found nothing more powerful and life-transforming than the gospel truths affirmed on the following pages. Rehearsing these truths each day has become a pleasurable discipline by which I enjoy God’s love and maintain fresh contact with His provision and power for daily living.

Over the course of time, preaching the gospel to myself every day has made more of a difference in my life than any other discipline I have ever practiced. I find myself sinning less, but just as importantly, I find myself recovering my footing more quickly after sinning, due to the immediate comfort found in the gospel. I have also found that when I am absorbed in the gospel, everything else I am supposed to be toward God and others seems to flow out of me more naturally and passionately. Doing right is not always easy, but it is never more easy than when one is breathing deeply the atmosphere of the gospel. I am confident that you will find the same to be true in your life as well.

This book is written partly as a result of the influence of Jerry Bridges’ excellent book entitled The Discipline of Grace (NavPress, 1994), for it was through this book that I first heard the challenge to preach the gospel to myself every day. Since that time, my method of rehearsing the gospel has evolved from a short list of gospel truths on a 3 x 5 card into the formats presented on the following pages. It is my hope that the formats below will be basic enough for the average reader, yet sufficiently thorough to cover the main categories of gospel thought.

The first part of this book contains Reasons to Rehearse the Gospel Daily. The thirty-one reasons given are designed to remind you, the reader, of some valuable blessings which the gospel can render in the life of the believer who rehearses the gospel in faith each day. The second and third parts of the book contain A Gospel Narrative in both a prose and poetic format respectively. Both formats are written in a way that facilitates memorization and smooth recital of the gospel. At the bottom of every page are relevant Scriptures that affirm the truths expressed.

Everything in sections I - III is written in the first person singular (I, my, me), for all that is said in these sections is your testimony if you are a believer in Jesus. Therefore, read these words, or better, speak them aloud as a way of testifying daily to your own heart the truth of what God has done for you and made available for you in the gospel. You’d be amazed at the difference such a practice can make in your life.

The last part of this book, entitled, Surprised by the Gospel, recounts a portion of my personal gospel testimony and also explains how this book came to be. My hope is that my story will encourage you in the gospel and also motivate you to write the story of your own experience of the gospel. You will find great value in rehearsing the details of your own personal gospel story, and others can receive huge blessing from it as well.

Please view this book as a primer of sorts, as a tool designed merely to get you launched in preaching the gospel to yourself and rehearsing its benefits. The precise wording in sections I - III need not be recited slavishly. In fact, over time you will likely develop your own wording and emphases as your proficiency in the gospel grows. Consequently, you may eventually reach a point where you no longer have need of this tool. If such a day comes, then the purpose of this book will have been fully served.

Also, as you are preaching the gospel to yourself, please savor the tender involvement of the Holy Spirit with you in the process. (Apart from Him, this discipline would be of no effect!) The gospel is true, but it is the Holy Spirit who makes it vivid to the soul. The gospel first came “by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven” (1 Peter 1:12); and as you preach the gospel to yourself in dependence upon Him, the gospel will come to you afresh by that same Holy Spirit. The Spirit will seize the opportunity to pour out God’s love in your heart (Romans 5:5); and He will, through the gospel, disclose the heart of the Father towards you (John 16:14-15). Your heavenly Father knew that you would never comprehend on your own the depths of His love, so He sent His Spirit into your life so that the Spirit might search out the very depths of the love of God and then reveal such things to you (1 Corinthians 2:9-10,12). Certainly, the Spirit is ministering to you in this way at all times, but preaching the gospel to yourself provides an opportunity for the Spirit to do so in a concentrated fashion. Such a reality elevates this discipline beyond the mere recitation of facts into something that is profoundly personal between you and the Holy Spirit. Enjoy this!

Finally, it should be noted that the purpose of this book is admittedly narrow, given the larger context of Christian practice. Actually, there are numerous “habits of grace” that are essential to the full experience of God’s grace in the life of the believer. Some of them are as follows: Bible meditation (Acts 20:32; Colossians 3:16), faith (Hebrews 4:2), prayer (Hebrews 4:16), fellowship with the saints (Ephesians 4:29), humility (James 4:6), generosity (2 Corinthians 9:8-14), obedience (Titus 2:11-12), forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32), worship (Ephesians 1:6), and evangelism (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). My purpose here is merely to spotlight the first of these practices and to provide a specific method by which you can meditate on the gospel in a meaningful way. While preaching the gospel to yourself will powerfully enrich your life in every area, the other habits listed above should also be practiced in order for your experience of the gospel to be truly complete.

Nonetheless, this book is based on the premise that all Christians should become expert in their knowledge and use of the gospel, not simply so they can share it faithfully with non-Christians, but also so they can speak it to themselves every day and experience its benefits. In fact, if Christians would do more preaching of the gospel to themselves, non-Christians might have less trouble comprehending its message, for they would see its truth and power exuding from believers in indisputable ways. This book is offered as a service to this end. Milton Vincent

1. The New Testament Model

The New Testament teaches that Christians ought to hear the gospel as much as non-Christians do. In fact, in the first chapter of Romans the Apostle Paul tells the believers in the church that he was anxious “to preach the gospel to you who are at Rome.”1 Of course, he was anxious to preach the gospel to the non-Christians at Rome, yet he specifically states that he was eager to preach it to the believers as well. To the Corinthian Christians who had already believed and been saved by the gospel, Paul says, “I make known to you the gospel, which you have believed....”2 He then restates the historical facts of the gospel before showing them how those gospel facts apply to their beliefs about the afterlife. This is actually Paul’s approach to various other issues throughout the book of 1 Corinthians. In most of Paul’s letters to churches, sizeable portions of them are given over to rehearsing gospel truths. For example, Ephesians 1-3 is all gospel, Colossians 1-2 is gospel, and Romans 1-11 is gospel. The remainder of such books shows specifically how to bring those gospel truths to bear on life. Re-preaching the gospel and then showing how it applied to life was Paul’s choice method for ministering to believers, thereby providing a divinely inspired pattern for me to follow when ministering to myself and to other believers.

 2. My Daily Need

The gospel is so foolish3 (according to my natural wisdom), so scandalous4 (according to my conscience), and so incredible (according to my timid heart5), that it is a daily battle to believe the full scope of it as I should. There is simply no other way to compete with the forebodings of my conscience, the condemnings of my heart, and the lies of the world and the Devil6 than to overwhelm such things with daily rehearsings of the gospel.

3. The Power of God

Outside of heaven, the power of God in its highest density is found inside the gospel. This must be so, for the Bible twice describes the gospel as “the power of God.”7 Nothing else in all of Scripture is ever described in this way, except for the Person of Jesus Christ.8 Such a description indicates that the gospel is not only powerful, but that it is the ultimate entity in which God’s power resides and does its greatest work. Indeed, God’s power is seen in erupting volcanos, in the unimaginably hot boil of our massive sun, and in the lightning speed of a recently discovered star seen streaking through the heavens at 1.5 million miles per hour. Yet in Scripture such wonders are never labeled “the power of God.” How powerful, then, must the gospel be that it would merit such a title! And how great is the salvation it could accomplish in my life, if I would only embrace it by faith9 and give it a central place in my thoughts each day!

4. My Daily Protection

As long as I am inside the gospel, I experience all the protection I need from the powers of evil that rage against me. It is for this reason that the Bible tells me to “take up”10 and “put on”11 the whole armor of God; and the pieces of armor it tells me to put on are all merely synonyms for the gospel. Translated literally from the Greek, they are: “. . . the salvation . . . the justification . . . truth . . . the gospel of peace . . . the faith . . . [and the] . . . word of God.”12 What are all these expressions but various ways of describing the gospel? Therefore, if I wish to stand victorious in Jesus, I must do as the songwriter suggests and “put on the gospel armor, each piece put on with prayer.”13 That God would tell me to “take up” and “put on” this gospel armor alerts me to the fact that I do not automatically come into each day protected by the gospel. In fact, these commands imply that I am vulnerable to defeat and injury unless I seize upon the gospel and arm myself with it from head to toe. And what better way is there to do this than to preach the gospel to myself and to make it the obsession of my heart throughout each day?[[53]](#footnote-53)

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1. James 2:19. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2 Timothy 3:6, Matthew 5:17, and Romans 16:17-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Matthew 22:37-39, 1 Corinthians 10:31, and 2 Corinthians 5:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Proverbs 4:23, Jeremiah 17:9, Mark 7:14-21, and Luke 6:43-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. John Piper identifies at least 50 reasons Christ came to die in his book entitled, “50 Reasons Christ Came to Die”. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Leviticus 4, 5:1-13, 6:24-30, 8:14-17, and 16:3-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. James 2:19. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. While the word “commanded” might be a strong word, this word gives the correct biblical emphasis on the only proper biblical response toward understanding one’s sinfulness and God’s only answer to one’s sinfulness. To ask someone if they would like to repent or decide to repent continues to keep the sinner in the proverbial driver’s seat. Complete surrender by confessing one’s need for salvation and subsequent repentance is the only response. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Romans 10:9-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ephesians 5:25-33, Matthew 22:37-39, and 1 Peter 3:7. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. This illustration is an adaption from Stuart Scott that was presented in a *Method’s of Biblical Change* class at The Master’s College in 2002. Credit should also be attributed to Thomas Watson and his work “The Doctrine of Repentance” as influential in this diagram. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Psalm 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Hebrews 4:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Until the unrepentant husband hears how devastating his oppressive attitudes and actions were towards those around him, he can only pretend about how bad his oppression was or was not. In all instances, unrepentant husband is going to dismiss the impact of his oppression and in many instances, make his oppression much lighter than it was. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. This diagram is an adaptation of a diagram presented by Dr. Stuart Scott in Methods of Counseling class at the Master’s University 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The goal of these passages is to allow the unrepentant husband to see the myriad oppressive actions found in Scripture. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. All material in this section is taken from Rebekah Hannah ACBC teaching on the emotions. This material is found at <https://biblicalcounseling.com/2017/07/emotions-biblical-counseling/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Edward T. Welch, “Motives: Why Do I Do the Things I Do?,” ed. David A. Powlison, *The Journal of Biblical Counseling, Number 1, Fall 2003* 22 (2003): 48–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Edward T. Welch, [“Motives: Why Do I Do the Things I Do?,”](https://ref.ly/logosres/jbc22-1?ref=biblio.at%3dMotives:%2520Why%2520Do%2520I%2520Do%2520the%2520Things%2520I%2520Do%3f%7Cau%3dWelch%2c%2520Edward%2520T.%7Ced%3dPowlison%2c%2520David%2520A.&off=5093&ctx=All+About+the+Heart%0a~The+key+word+is+the+) ed. David A. Powlison, *The Journal of Biblical Counseling, Number 1, Fall 2003* 22 (2003): 49–51. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. 1 John 1:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. These five categories are an adaption from the eight qualifications for a biblical confession to which Thomas Watson speaks. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Watson, *Doctrine of Repentance*, chapter 3, ingredient 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. An example of this a super spiritual unrepentant confession, see Luke 18:11 in which the Pharisee prays an unrepentant prayer. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. In some instances, in which the sinful husband is a new believer, it might be necessary for those believers who are more mature and more familiar to point the sinful husband toward specific areas of the Bible that speak to the specific sins of the sinful husband. Those who are more mature should allow the Word of God to convict. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Joshua 4:1-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Chris Moles does not use the term “oppression” when talking about this sin. He, instead, uses the term abuse. Both terms are interchangeable for the purposes of this paper. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Moles, *The Heart of Domestic Abuse*, p.50-54. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Newheiser, *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage*, ch.35. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Strickland, “Identifying Oppression in Marriage.”, p.10-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. There are numerous reasons why this might not be a viable action. If there is a no-contact order or order of protection, then the sinful husband may not be able to express his thoughts to those whom he has oppressed. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. The sinful husband should continue listening until those whom he has sinned against are confident that he has adequately understood the effects of his oppression. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Adequately understanding one’s sin is not only importance for the repentance process, but it is also important for those who are biblically required to forgive. Luke 17:3 clearly states that one is to forgive once repentance has taken place. Therefore, it is paramount that the one who has been sinned against knows that the one who sinned understands their sin and more importantly is committed to not sin in that area to the best of their ability. For more on this see Dr. Robert Jones book entitled “Pursuing Peace”. Robert D. Jones, *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts*, 1 edition. (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2012), p.131-135. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:1-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Proverbs 26:11 and 2 Peter 2:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Proverbs 13:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Philippians 4:13. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ephesians 4:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Hebrews 4:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The five questions are adaptions from the five questions that Chris Mole’s asks in chapter 5 of *The Heart of Domestic Violence*. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. These questions are adaptions of questions asked by Chris Moles in chapter six in *The Heart of Domestic Violence*. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. These five questions are taken from Paul Tripp’s “Getting to the Heart of Parenting” video series. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. James 1:22-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. A common tactic for biblically savvy men is to confess a general sin that most are guilty of and follow that confession up with a specific sin of their wife. The goal of this is to highlight her sin in hopes of hiding his. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Moles, *The Heart of Domestic Abuse*, p.115-124. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 323–324. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Hebrews 4:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Tiffe, *Transformed Into His Likeness*. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Moles, *The Heart of Domestic Abuse*, p.61-75. As with anyone coming out from life dominating sin, new concepts and ideas will need to be revisited time and again. It is with this mind that the sinful husband will need to be asked to re-read chapters five and six. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Malachi 2:14. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Tiffe, *Transformed Into His Likeness*. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. See Appendix B for personal evaluation questions. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Watson, *Doctrine of Repentance*, chapter 6 part 5, kindle. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Vincent, Milton. A Gospel Primer for Christians . Focus Publishing. Kindle Edition [↑](#footnote-ref-53)