

**Christianity is a Person
& His Relationship with us**

Come unto me - Matt 11:28
 I am the way - Jn 14:6
 Trust in me - Jn 14:1
 My Peace - Jn 14:27
 My Love - Jn 15:9, 10
 My Joy - Jn 15:11
 My Grace - II Cor 12:9

Who are you?

God created you

God created you in His image

God created you a person

God created you a spirit(ual) person

God recreated you in the new birth

Important Distinctions

What has happened to us does not tell us
who we are!

What has happened to us does not tell us
who God is!

What has happened to us to hinder our
freedom?

We are
damaged by the fall and sin
(vulnerable to error and distortion)

We are
easily led into bondage
(inferiority, pride lust, fear, sin)

We are
highly vulnerable to Satan
(deception, accusations, sinful pleasures)

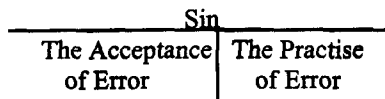
Introduction

- A. We are talking together, in this series, about the important Biblical foundation stones of our Faith. We have talking about our Father, His Word, and His People.
- B. It will help us to keep in mind how easily we make serious mistakes in life—even about what we know is important.

See Num 13,14,

- 1 *The LORD said to Moses, 2 “Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders.”*
- 3 *So at the LORD’s command Moses sent them out from the Desert of Paran. All of them were leaders of the Israelites. 4 These are their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zaccur; 5 from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori; 6 from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh; 7 from the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph; 8 from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun; 9 from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu; 10 from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi;*
- 11 *from the tribe of Manasseh (a tribe of Joseph), Gaddi son of Susi; 12 from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli; 13 from the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael; 14 from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi; 15 from the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Maki.*
- 16 *These are the names of the men Moses sent to explore the land. (Moses gave Hoshea son of Nun the name Joshua.)*
- 17 *When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, “Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. 18 See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. 19 What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or fortified? 20 How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees on it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land.” (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.)*
- 21 *So they went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin as far as Rehob, toward Lebo Hamath. 22 They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, lived. (Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23 When they reached the Valley of Eshcol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs. 24 That place was called the Valley of Eshcol because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there. 25 At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land.*

Sin: The practice of Error



Errors hidden in our emotions
(Hopelessness, negativism, unbelief, fear)

Errors hidden in our desires
(Fulfillment/solution found in money,
a person, things, sex, security, control)

Barriers

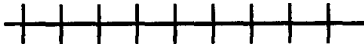
Why don't we respond?

Neglect
Unbelief
Pride & Pretense
Deception
Hidden Sin
Unforgiveness
Fear of Rejection

Many Problem Areas are Hidden

Some are known - as clear as

A1



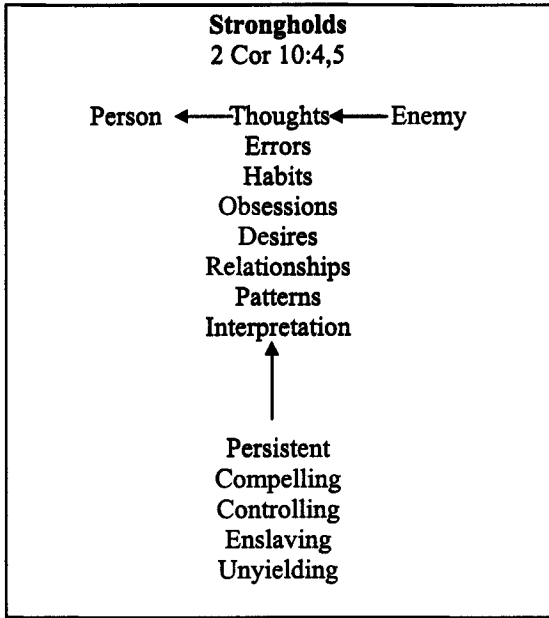
Many are "hidden" as vague and
confusing as A1 is from Z99

Internalized Error

Jer 13:23; 2 Cor 10:12

Source: The past/Enemy
Character: Internalized/Deceptive
Result: Programming for hindrance
Powerful Control
Solution: Apply external test - Bible
Treat as Stronghold
Seek counsel & healing

- 26 They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. 28 But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan."
- 30 Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."
- 31 But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." 32 And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. 33 We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."
- 1 That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. 2 All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! 3 Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?" 4 And they said to each other, "We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt."
- 5 Then Moses and Aaron fell facedown in front of the whole Israelite assembly gathered there. 6 Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes 7 and said to the entire Israelite assembly, "The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. 8 If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. 9 Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them."
- 10 But the whole assembly talked about stoning them. Then the glory of the LORD appeared at the Tent of Meeting to all the Israelites. 11 The LORD said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them? 12 I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a nation greater and stronger than they."
- 13 Moses said to the LORD, "Then the Egyptians will hear about it! By your power you brought these people up from among them. 14 And they will tell the inhabitants of this land about it. They have already heard that you, O LORD, are with these people and that you, O LORD, have been seen face to face, that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. 15 If you put these people to death all at one time, the nations who have heard this report about you will say, 16 'The LORD was not able to bring these people into the



Conditioning

A built-in hidden - powerful
pattern of response

Activated by "Triggers"

Result: *BONDAGE*

Fear, lust, criticism, self-hatred,
negative superior attitude,
being "shut down,"
emotional doubt-unbelief,
mental control)

A Key to Understanding Self-Control

You are a person That's who you are		Your functions are simply how you function
	W	Minds--Thoughts
Person	I	Emotions—Feelings
	L	Body—Desires
	L	

land he promised them on oath; so he slaughtered them in the desert.'

- 17 *"Now may the Lord's strength be displayed, just as you have declared: 18 'The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.' 19 In accordance with your great love, forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the time they left Egypt until now."*
- 20 *The LORD replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked. 21 Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth, 22 not one of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times— 23 not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it. 24 But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it. 25 Since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea."*
- 26 *The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: 27 "How long will this wicked community grumble against me? I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites. 28 So tell them, 'As surely as I live, declares the LORD, I will do to you the very things I heard you say: 29 In this desert your bodies will fall—every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me. 30 Not one of you will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. 31 As for your children that you said would be taken as plunder, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you have rejected. 32 But you—your bodies will fall in this desert. 33 Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the desert. 34 For forty years—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you.' 35 I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will surely do these things to this whole wicked community, which has banded together against me. They will meet their end in this desert; here they will die."*
- 36 *So the men Moses had sent to explore the land, who returned and made the whole community grumble against him by spreading a bad report about it— 37 these men responsible for spreading the bad report about the land were struck down and died of a plague before the LORD. 38 Of the men who went to explore*

Lesson #4 – The Plan of Our Father**The One Great Plan of Our Father**

*To exalt and glorify His Son
the Lord Jesus Christ*

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. Col 1:16

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. Col 1:18

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil 2:9-11

The Greatness of the Lord Jesus

The Father's Plan
(Ps 2:6-12; Col 1:18, 19)

The Design of Creation
(Col 1:16)

The Savior's Affirmations
("I am")

The Holy Spirit's Goal
(John 16:13, 14)

The Ministry of Angels
(Heb 1:6)

the land, only Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh survived.

- 39 *When Moses reported this to all the Israelites, they mourned bitterly. 40 Early the next morning they went up toward the high hill country. "We have sinned," they said. "We will go up to the place the LORD promised."*
- 41 *But Moses said, "Why are you disobeying the LORD's command? This will not succeed! 42 Do not go up, because the LORD is not with you. You will be defeated by your enemies, 43 for the Amalekites and Canaanites will face you there. Because you have turned away from the LORD, he will not be with you and you will fall by the sword."*
- 44 *Nevertheless, in their presumption they went up toward the high hill country, though neither Moses nor the ark of the LORD's covenant moved from the camp. 45 Then the Amalekites and Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and attacked them and beat them down all the way to Hormah.*
NIV

Matt 7:24-27,

- 24 *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."*
NIV

and Luke 12:13-21.

- 13 *Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."*
- 14 *Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" 15 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."*

The Open Door to Meaningfulness

- 1 Full Surrender to Jesus Christ – Honestly and daily
- 2 The daily practice of that surrender in love and worship

The Priority of the Lord Jesus

He is the Lord—The Lord God

The church is not #1
(Jesus Christ is the head of the church)

The Bible is not #1
(Jesus Christ is the Living Word)

Christian Service is not #1
(Jesus Christ is Lord of the Harvest)

Christian Experience is not #1
(Jesus Christ is our Sanctifier)

Bible Doctrine is not #1
(Jesus Christ is the Truth)

16 *And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. 17 He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'*

18 *"Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."'*

20 *"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'*

21 *"This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."*
NIV

C. In this lesson our focus will be on the plan of our Father to exalt the Lord Jesus.

I. The Reality of our Father's Plan.

There is only one all-inclusive plan that is made known in the Bible. It is simply stated. Our Father has made an unchangeable and powerful decree: that He will exalt His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and everything created and all events, both in time and eternity, would contribute to the fulfillment of that plan.

See Col 1:15-20

15 *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*
NIV

Every person, Christian and non-Christian, is involved in that plan and we have all been "called" to participate. Success, as defined in the Bible, has to do with how well we have cooperated with our Heavenly Father in exalting the Lord Jesus. It is this plan that is the basis for all spiritual growth, progress, personal well-being, divine enablement, power for life and service, the receiving and use of gifts, the manifestation of the Fruit of the Spirit, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, involvement in the Kingdom of God, and His

approval and blessing. The judgment of nonbelievers will be based on whether their name is in "The Lamb's Book of Life," and our evaluation as believers (rewards or lack of rewards) will be based on the depth and extent of our cooperation with our Heavenly Father and His plan.

The plan of our Heavenly Father does not, first of all, "call" us to spend more time in Church, more time with the Bible, in prayer, Christian service, and a revising of our daily life. It is not a call to be more "religious." His plan means, for every believer— personally—a concentration on the Lord Jesus. It will mean a radical revising of the priorities of our daily life so we can seek Him, love Him, worship Him, respect and honor Him, exalt Him, obey Him, learn about Him, make every endeavor to be like Him, give Him His rightful place in our life, and join with others in all of these areas, and in furthering His Kingdom. And, as we do so, we will be giving the Father and the Blessed Holy Spirit rightful place in our life.

There is only one—all-inclusive and eternal plan. It is a tragic mistake of farreaching consequences, to miss it partially or completely. Every person will carry the effects of their relationship to God and His plan into eternity.

II. The Rational of our Father's Plan

- A. The reason behind our Father's plan is that the Lord Jesus is worthy to receive all the glory and praise that could ever be given to Him. And, our Father is determined that He receive that glory.
- B. Even among ourselves we recognize that certain people, attitudes, events, and things are worthy of special honor. That is the rational behind awards, celebrations, and museums.
- C. Consider the greatness of His Person. (Extremely brief sample only)
 1. He is God, infinitely great in every facet of His existence,

John 8:58;

58 *"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"*
NIV

Rev 5:9-14.

- 9 *And they sang a new song:
"You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
because you were slain,
and with your blood you purchased men for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation.*
- 10 *You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God,
and they will reign on the earth."*

- 11 *Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they sang:*
*"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and praise!"*
- 13 *Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:*
*"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise and honor and glory and power,
for ever and ever!"*
- 14 *The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.*
NIV

2. He is infinitely great in the value and worth of His character.

a. He is the meaning and source of Truth,

John 8:1; 14:6;

- 1 *But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.*
6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*
NIV

Col 2:2,3;

- 2 *My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*
NIV

1 John 1:5.

- 5 *This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.*
NIV

Comment: Consider the value and worth we place on truth. We recognize and honor truthfulness, veracity, sincerity, honesty, fidelity, authenticity, rectitude, uprightness, faithfulness, incorruptibility, and trustworthiness. The Lord Jesus is what all Truth is all about. It is right that we give Him the honor of which He is worthy. And, He desires that we be involved with Him in Truth.

b. He is the meaning and source of Love,

1 John 4:7,8

- 7 *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.*
NIV

Lesson #4 – The Plan of Our Father

Comment: Consider the value and worth we place on love. We recognize and honor affection, tenderness, humanitarianism, friendship, devotion, benevolence, and commitment. The Lord Jesus is what all Love is all about. It is right that we give Him the honor of which He is worthy. And, He desires that we be involved with Him in Love.

- c. He is the meaning and source of Holiness,

1 Peter 1:15,16.

*15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."
NIV*

Comment: Consider the value and worth we place on holiness. We recognize and honor righteousness, consecration, purity, uprightness, honesty, justice, goodness, morality, purity, integrity, and the keeping of one's word. The Lord Jesus is what holiness is all about. It is right that we give Him the honor of which He is worthy. And, He desires that we be involved with Him in Holiness.

- D. Consider the greatness of His ability and work. (Extremely brief sample only)

1. He is the Creator of all things.

Is 40:18-31;

- 18 To whom, then, will you compare God?
What image will you compare him to?
19 As for an idol, a craftsman casts it,
and a goldsmith overlays it with gold
and fashions silver chains for it.
20 A man too poor to present such an offering
selects wood that will not rot.
He looks for a skilled craftsman
to set up an idol that will not topple.
21 Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood since the earth was founded?
22 He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth,
and its people are like grasshoppers.
He stretches out the heavens like a canopy,
and spreads them out like a tent to live in.
23 He brings princes to naught
and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.
24 No sooner are they planted,
no sooner are they sown,
no sooner do they take root in the ground,
than he blows on them and they wither,
and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.
25 "To whom will you compare me?
Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One.*

- 26 *Lift your eyes and look to the heavens:
Who created all these?
He who brings out the starry host one by one,
and calls them each by name.
Because of his great power and mighty strength,
not one of them is missing.*
- 27 *Why do you say, O Jacob,
and complain, O Israel,
"My way is hidden from the LORD;
my cause is disregarded by my God"?*
- 28 *Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.*
- 29 *He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.*
- 30 *Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;*
- 31 *but those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.*
NIV

John 1:1-5;

- 1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning.*
- 3 *Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*
NIV

Col 1:16

- 16 *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.*
NIV

Comment: consider His wisdom and ability that is reflected in creating all things. It is overwhelming and incomprehensible. Meditate on the vastness of the universe, the complexity of the solar system, the atom, the seasons of the year, the ecology, the design and intricate nature of living creatures as well as our own spirit, mind, will, emotions, body and social relationships. Should He not be honored for His work?

2. He is the Providential Controller of all things,

Col 1:17;

- 17 *He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*
NIV

Lesson #4 – The Plan of Our Father

Heb 1:3.

- 3 *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*
NIV

Comment: consider what it means for the Lord Jesus to maintain all of creation. If it were not for Him, we would, for example, fly off into space, disintegrate, and disappear. He maintains the universe according to His plan. He is the One sustaining such "laws" as uniformity of nature, cause and effect, human rationality, atomic structure, etc., etc. Should He not be honored for His work?

3. He is the Ruler of all nations, and the Author of history,

Ps 22:28;

- 28 *for dominion belongs to the LORD
and he rules over the nations.*
NIV

Is 9:7; 40:15.

- 7 *Of the increase of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.*
- 15 *Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket;
they are regarded as dust on the scales;
he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust.*
NIV

Comment: consider what it means for the Lord Jesus to direct the affairs of all mankind. He is doing so according to the plan of His Father so that glory and honor will come to His name. One nation will rise and another will fall— according to the will of our Savior. Should He not be honored for His work?

4. He is the Redeemer of mankind,

Is 49:26; 54:5.

- 26 *I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh;
they will be drunk on their own blood, as with wine.
Then all mankind will know
that I, the LORD, am your Savior,
your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."*

- 5 *For your Maker is your husband—
the LORD Almighty is his name—
the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer;
he is called the God of all the earth.*
NIV

Comment: consider what it meant for the Lord Jesus to be born into our time, space, and humanity through the Virgin Mary. Consider how He limited Himself to our human functions and resources—while remaining God in every way. Consider what it meant to live in a sinful world, to be betrayed, rejected, accused, lied to, abandoned, denied, treated as a criminal and a blasphemer, and to be crucified for crimes He did not do. Consider what it meant for the Lord Jesus to bear in His own body, the sins of all mankind, and to suffer the penalty for those sins—hell itself—all compressed upon Him in the six hours on the cross. Should He not be honored for His work?

5. He is the Savior of all who believe,

Is 43:3,11;

- 3 *For I am the LORD, your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;
I give Egypt for your ransom,
Cush and Seba in your stead.*
11 *I, even I, am the LORD,
and apart from me there is no savior.*
NIV

John 17:3;

- 3 *Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*
NIV

Titus 3:4-6;

- 4 *But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,*
NIV

1 John 4:14.

- 14 *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.*
NIV

Comment: consider what it means for the Lord Jesus to have the authority to give salvation to all those given to Him by His Father. He alone has the ability, which He has delegated to the Holy Spirit, to transfer the value and power of His Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, and the Day of Pentecost to all believers. He alone can work "in and with our spirit" in the repentance, cleansing, and transformation of the new birth. Should He not be honored for His work?

Summary: When we consider Who the Lord Jesus really is, and the work He has performed—are we not ashamed when we begrudge Him a little time and attention? Particularly when we know giving Him His rightful place in our life will bring untold benefit, love, joy, peace, power, well-being, fruitfulness, and fulfillment to us personally.

III. The Revelation of our Father's Plan

A. The prophetic announcement,

Ps 2:6-12; 110;

- 6 *"I have installed my King
on Zion, my holy hill."*
7 *I will proclaim the decree of the LORD:
He said to me, "You are my Son;
today I have become your Father.*
8 *Ask of me,
and I will make the nations your inheritance,
the ends of the earth your possession.*
9 *You will rule them with an iron scepter;
you will dash them to pieces like pottery."*
10 *Therefore, you kings, be wise;
be warned, you rulers of the earth.*
11 *Serve the LORD with fear
and rejoice with trembling.*
12 *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry
and you be destroyed in your way,
for his wrath can flare up in a moment.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.*
NIV

Daniel 7:13,14.

- 13 *"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. 14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.*
NIV

B. The New Testament explanation,

Matt 11:27; 21:33-44;

- 27 *"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.*
33 *"Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. 34 When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. 35 "The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. 36 Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. 37 Last of all, he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said.*

- 38 *"But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance.' 39 So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.*
- 40 *"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"*
- 41 *"He will bring those wretches to a wretched end," they replied, "and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time."*
- 42 *Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:
"The stone the builders rejected
has become the capstone;
the Lord has done this,
and it is marvelous in our eyes"?*
- 43 *"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. 44 He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed."*
NIV

John 5:19-30;

- 19 *Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. 20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. 21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. 22 Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.*
- 24 *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. 25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.*
- 28 *"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. 30 By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.*
NIV

Rom 8:28,29;

- 28 *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*
NIV

1 Cor 15:20-28;

- 20 *But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. 24 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. 28 When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.*
NIV

Lesson #4 – The Plan of Our Father

Phil 2:5-11;

- 5 *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:*
 6 *Who, being in very nature God,*
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
 7 *but made himself nothing,*
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
 8 *And being found in appearance as a man,*
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!
 9 *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place*
and gave him the name that is above every name,
 10 *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,*
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
 11 *and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,*
to the glory of God the Father.
 NIV

Col 1:15-19;

- 15 *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by him all things were created:*
things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all
things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18
And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that
in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,
 NIV

Rev 5:9-14.

- 9 *And they sang a new song:*
“You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
because you were slain,
and with your blood you purchased men for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation.
 10 *You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God,*
and they will reign on the earth.”
 11 *Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand*
times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they
sang:
“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and praise!”
 13 *Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in*
them, singing:
“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise and honor and glory and power,
for ever and ever!”
 14 *The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and worshiped.*
 NIV

IV. The All-inclusive Nature of our Father's Plan.

A. It was (and is) the purposeful design of all creation,

Col. 1:16

*16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.
NIV*

B. It was the understanding and affirmation of the Lord Jesus,

John 5:22,23; 6:29,33,35;

*22 Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.
29 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."
33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."
35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.
NIV*

John 8:12, 23,24,58; 14:6; 17:2.

*12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.
NIV*

C. It was (and is) the goal of the Holy Spirit's ministry,

John 16:13,14.

*13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.
NIV*

D. It was (and is) the assignment of the Angels of God,

Col 1:16-18;

*16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.
NIV*

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Heb 1:6.

- 6 *And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,
“Let all God’s angels worship him.”*
NIV

E. It was (and is) the goal of all aspects of redemption,

Is 43:25; 48:9-11; 53:10,11;

- 25 *“I, even I, am he who blots out
your transgressions, for my own sake,
and remembers your sins no more.*
9 *For my own name’s sake I delay my wrath;
for the sake of my praise I hold it back from you,
so as not to cut you off.*
10 *See, I have refined you, though not as silver;
I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.*
11 *For my own sake, for my own sake, I do this.
How can I let myself be defamed?
I will not yield my glory to another.*
10 *Yet it was the LORD’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
and though the LORD makes his
life a guilt offering,
he will see his offspring and prolong his days,
and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.*
11 *After the suffering of his soul,
he will see the light of life and be satisfied;
by his knowledge my righteous
servant will justify many,
and he will bear their iniquities.*
NIV

Acts 15:14.

- 14 *Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself.*
NIV

F. It was (and is) the basis of all future judgment of believers and unbelievers,

Matt 21:33-44;

- 33 *“Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. 34 When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.*
35 *“The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. 36 Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. 37 Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said.*
38 *“But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’ 39 So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.*
40 *“Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”*

- 41 *"He will bring those wretches to a wretched end," they replied, "and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time."*
- 42 *Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:
"The stone the builders rejected
has become the capstone;
the Lord has done this,
and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"*
- 43 *"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. 44 He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed."*
NIV

John 8:23,24;

- 23 *But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins."*
NIV

Acts 17:31;

- 31 *For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."*
NIV

1 Cor 3:11-15;

- 11 *For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. 15 If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.*
NIV

Phil 2:11;

- 11 *and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.*
NIV

Rev 21:27.

- 27 *Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*
NIV

V. The Personal Application of our Father's Plan—what should be our Daily Priority?

- A. We can choose to please God by surrendering our life to Him,

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Rom 12:1,2.

- 1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*
 NIV

Comment: these verses describe the very first step to giving to the Lord Jesus the place He deserves in our life. There is absolutely no hope of a successful participation in our Father's all-inclusive plan without this surrender. Paul reminds us that only in such surrender can we enter into God's will (our Father's plan).

B. We can choose to please God in how we think and live,

Col 1:9,10.

- 9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. 10 And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,*
 NIV

Comment: note that the Apostle is developing the way we should live in the light of the will of God (the Father's plan) and how to live worthy of the Lord Jesus. And, He is developing this theme as a prayer so it will structure our life in preparation for the disclosure of the greatness of the Lord Jesus (and the Father's plan) in

Vs 13-23

- 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. 21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— 23 if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.*
 NIV

C. Pleasing God was Paul's personal goal,

2 Cor 5:9.

- 9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.*
 NIV

D. Pleasing God was what Paul taught His converts,

1 Thess 4:1.

1 Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.
NIV

E. Pleasing God was Paul's personal testimony of how He lived,

1 Thess 2:4.

4 On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.
NIV

F. Pleasing God is cooperating with God's inner working in our life,

Heb 13:20,21.

20 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, 21 equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.
NIV

G. Pleasing God is the basis for a successful prayer life,

1 John 3:22.

22 and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.
NIV

Conclusion: It will help to make an affirmation each day, perhaps as we awaken in the morning, and say, "Heavenly Father, for this day I surrender myself to You so I may cooperate with You in Your plan to exalt the Lord Jesus. I make the decision to please you in all I do today. I ask for Your wisdom, enablement and protection."

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