

THE WALK APPLIED (v.1 of 8)

THE FALL, THE FLESH, THE HEART

A BIBLICAL MODEL OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR

FOR COUNSELING,
MENTORING, &
DISCIPLESHIP

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THE WALK APPLIED SERIES:

**The Fall, The Flesh, The Heart
#1 of 8**

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WHY THE FALL?

A fundamental question that we need to examine is: Why did God allow the Fall – at all? Why not just create us in His image and allow us to exist with Him for eternity? In other words, it seems counter-intuitive to create us to go through this natural existence. To gain a better understanding of why He elected to proceed with His creation in the way that He did entails that we first address the topic of the Bride.

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

Jesus desires his bride (His Church) to share an intimate relationship with Him (Isa 62:5, Rev 19:7-9, Rev 21:2). Scripture doesn't tell us how the idea of the bride was conceived, but it does tell us that He will indeed rejoice over us as His Bride. A most comforting thought! The bible tells us that Jesus is coming back for His bride. Jesus bride – His church - consists of all those who are saved. Now, it is not revealed to us as to why Jesus wants a bride, or what the purpose of the Bride is going forward. It's also

a mystery as to what it will truly mean to be the bride of Jesus into eternity. It seems intuitive that the intimate experience of marriage here in the natural likely gives us an inkling of what marriage as the Bride of Christ might be like, but that is anyone's guess. However, we can rest assured that it will be beyond anything we can think of to be in the presence of Jesus! We do know that there will be the marriage supper of the Lamb. We also know two fundamental requirements of the Bride of Christ: The Bride must be perfectly righteous, and the bride must be faithful. That means you must be saved to be part of the Bride.

DECLARED PERFECT

One of the basic tenets of salvation is that we are declared perfect and righteous. Another property of those who are saved is that they must be faithful (Ps 37:28; Ps 97:10; Pr 2:8). Isaiah 1:26 says: "I will restore your judges as in days of old, your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you will be called the City of Righteousness, the Faithful City." Psa 101:6 tells us "...My eyes will be on the faithful in the land,

that they may dwell with me; he whose walk is blameless will minister to me.” Matt 5:48 tells us that we must be perfect as Our Heavenly Father is perfect. The only way to do that is to be declared righteous via salvation.

Once we are saved; (i.e., declared perfectly righteous or, in short, perfect) our faithfulness will be tested. When any one of us gets married (or engaged), we have an expectation that our (future)spouse will be faithful to us. Jesus, as our “fiancé”, if you will, is no different than us in that respect. He is the Groom who will someday (soon, we pray!) return for His bride. Thus, Jesus, too, expects us to exhibit faithfulness during the “engagement”. Jesus told us: “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” The Word is also very clear that we will be tempted in many ways. There are numerous passages that discuss temptation. Even though “Sin crouches at our door, and we must master It” (Gen 4:7), Jesus says this: “But I have prayed for you, ... so that your faith will not fail”. (Luke 22:32) God’s word is clear: Jesus is our advocate

in Heaven, interceding for us. so even though we will all fail many times, the key aspects are to stay faithful in the daily walk, ever persevering in our own human imperfections. The reward for persevering in our faith is indeed great: “Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him”. (James 1:12)

FREE WILL & CHOICE

God has blessed all of us with the capacity to make choices. We all have a free will to choose who our spiritual authority will be. If you choose the “prince of this world” (John 12:31) a hellish eternity awaits you. Choose God’s sovereignty and heaven is yours as is the privilege of being Jesus’ bride.

The Bible tells us that Lucifer, a full one-third of the angels, and Adam and Eve chose to come out of Godly authority, even though they were in the direct presence of a sovereign God. There can be nothing that is better than God and His environment. Thus, we can infer that free will and the seductive power of choice presents an

overwhelming urge to know what we do not know; it manifests the alluring and virtually irresistible option to have what we do not have. (“...the woman saw that the fruit... was desirable for gaining wisdom (Gen 3:6))”. How could anyone ever think that there is something better than God and what He brings to the table? To choose other than God seems to us to be unfathomable – yet the aforementioned did just that.

Jesus’ bride must be faithful. If those who experienced God’s direct presence chose to fall, then we, too, must be allowed to choose to accept or deny God as Sovereign authority. God, in His glorious wisdom, never forces Himself upon us. Our decision is binary – one or the other. On the one hand, we can believe in God and submit to Godly authority out of love, or we can submit to Satan’s power and control. To choose to deny Godly authority and, by implication, come under satanic control, is idolatry. There is no gray area.

The suggestion that we can choose to come out of Godly authority and consequently come under satanic control can be troublesome or

controversial. For some, the notion might convey that Satan has authority where God does not (thus implying that God is somehow not sovereign). While this concept will be explored more fully later, perhaps it's better to see it as "the intermediate authority of Satan". God is certainly always in complete control, and He is sovereign. However, the Bible tells us no less than 5 times that Satan is the "Prince of this world".

THE FALL

Certainly, the Fall was foreseen by God. Consider the following two scriptures:

"For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Gen 3:5)

"And the Lord God said, 'The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.'" (Gen 3:22)

Adam and Eve did not have experiential knowledge of evil. We must "be like God, knowing good and evil." To choose God, they had to have a legitimate choice. They needed to know what it was like to exist outside of Godly authority to be able to truly choose Godly

authority. And it's the same with us. To choose God, we must have a legitimate choice. Thus, God needed to create an environment whereby we could see the stark, vivid contrasts between Him and "Not Him".

It is crucial that we understand that death, suffering, blood and sacrifice must be in the mix. We must be exposed to the gross horrors that Evil inevitably brings. We must have experiential knowledge of evil. God, in His graciousness and great love for us, withholds nothing. It must be demonstrated that God is our only hope. God's existence requires that we be faithful to Him and Him alone; there cannot and will not be another besides El Elyon, the Most High God.

So, one might pose the question: Why doesn't God just get rid of evil? Why does He allow it at all? What's the point? God's word already gives us the unwelcome news regarding where evil is "not present". Lucifer was in Heaven where he could commune readily face-to-face with God, but sadly "pride was found in him". Yet, Lucifer chose to rebel. Adam and Eve were in a glorious, pristine environment whereby they

communed with God, yet they also rebelled at the slightest (the first?) temptation. Even a full third of the angels chose to rebel, despite experiencing God in all His wonder and glory that we here in the natural realm cannot even begin to comprehend.

The ability to choose is a fundamental requisite to life itself. Without the ability to choose, we become mere automatons. The foundation of true love comes when it is rooted in the deep conviction of our own decisions. God is Love. Love requires that we choose to love – it cannot be dictated or commanded. And the choice to love must be irrevocable with unwavering commitment - there can be no “flip-flop” or “waffling”.

God demonstrated His endless love for us by choosing to sacrifice His Son. Jesus proved His endless love for us by choosing to endure the unfathomable agony of the cross. Jesus took on our sin so that we might experience the joy of being His bride. Because of His great love, the Father is showing us that there is only one safe place that exists or will ever exist – under His holy authority.

THE FALL: THE CONSEQUENCES

When Adam and Eve made their fatal choice to fall, we saw serious and profound consequences to their choice: Death as a spiritual being (Gen 2:17); banishment from the garden (Gen 3:22-23); they now knew the difference between good and evil (Gen 3:5); fear, shame and guilt made them afraid (Gen 3:8); blame also entered the picture (Gen 3:12-13); and they realized that they were naked. They now saw themselves negatively, as opposed to positively (Gen 2:25). They covered themselves because of shame and guilt and both feared being rejected by the other because of that judgment (Gen 3:7). So now, we also see judgment: the action of putting ourselves in spiritual authority over another. If there was no fear among us of being judged - there would be no need for covering. Adam and Eve now had a different belief system. The concept is accentuated by the idea that their behavior after the fall is profoundly different than it was prior to the fall. They now saw the world significantly differently than they did before, and consequently, they acted quite differently.

GUILT & SHAME

Consider the state of mind of Adam & Eve when they were exiled from the garden. This was the only home they had ever known; every need was fully supplied. Now, they would have to fend for themselves. The onrush of emotions must have been overwhelming. The Genesis account has a distinct feel to it in that the judgment and execution of God's judgment was indeed swift. It seems highly likely that within a matter of minutes what was once their home was now forever denied them. Besides the guilt, the regret, and the shame, there must have been a pronounced and ominous dread: who will take care of us? We can guess that security – or the lack of it – is a primary consideration in our makeup, as it was likely in theirs. These elements of guilt, shame, and security bring us to the foundational layer of the dynamic of the sinful, natural flesh. In a profound sermon delivered by Tim Keller of Redeemer Presbyterian Church of New York, he expounds upon the relationship of guilt, shame, and the fall:

“Genesis tells us we were created in the image of God ... We know we fell... We know deep inside that there is something wrong with us. Guilt describes our own conviction that we know we did the wrong thing... We KNOW we OWE Him because of what we did....

Guilt is specific – we can point to it and say yes we did it or no, we didn’t do it – Shame is different than guilt....

Shame is that feeling of regret we feel when we realize the horror of what we’ve done. Shame is like smoke – we can’t really pin it down, it’s very difficult to erase it...Despite our salvation, we still sense our own guilt and shame over what we have done. While guilt may have been resolved in some who have truly accepted that Jesus really did die and paid the price and resolved our guilt, it’s very rare that we find someone who has resolved the shame issue”.

WORSHIP

Finally, let's examine what is meant by worship. For our purposes, we define worship as the active relationship that exists between us and what we believe provides our security. Rick Warren writes in the *Purpose Driven Life* that we are "hard-wired to worship". In other words, God has implanted within us an innate need to seek our security in something outside of ourselves that we perceive as being superior to ourselves. Fundamentally, this notion is that we recognize that we are vulnerable, and that we acknowledge that we are indeed in great need of protection. Indeed, the profound idea is that we recognize our smallness, and that we need something or somebody more powerful than us to protect us.

PART 2:
THE
SINFUL FLESH

**IT
DOL
ATRY**

THE SINFUL FLESH: A NEW UNDERSTANDING

Ask Christians what “the flesh” is, you’ll get a wide variety of answers. Many would answer something like “the flesh is our propensity to sin” or “do the wrong things”. Let's explore a new and different context on the flesh.

Adam and Eve denied God. They expressed their God-given right to free will and choice. They rebelled and disobeyed. A result was they came under intermediate satanic authority that had been allowed for by our sovereign Heavenly Father. God, in His infinite wisdom, allowed us the enormous privilege of the capability to choose or deny Him. He also graciously granted consequences for our sinful choice. God’s response was to allow us an idolatrous belief system that undergird and form the foundation of our sin issues. The two idolatry systems - Rebellion Idolatry and Need Idolatry systems - are intrinsic and innate. We cannot “remove” them, they are so deeply embedded such that only Jesus can resolve our basic problems.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE SINFUL FLESH:

The foundational layer of the natural belief system.

GUILT: The innate, gnawing paranoia of the knowledge that we have offended God

SHAME: Our deep seated regret that we offended God; The deep root of why we feel that something “is wrong with us”

INSECURITY: Since we have been separated from God, who will take care of us?

IDOLATRY: False worship: Our innate need to seek that which will bring us security. Idolatry is manifested when we:

- o Worship anything other than God
- o Worship what we believe is security
- o Worship what brings us pleasure

IDOLATRY

Adam and Eve denied God. They willingly and knowingly came out of Godly Authority, and, as a result, came under intermediate Satanic authority.

God, in His infinite wisdom, allowed us the enormous privilege to choose or deny Him. He also graciously granted consequences for our sinful choice. Instead of simply destroying us, God's response was to allow us an idolatrous belief system that form the foundation of our sin issues.

The Walk Applied posits two idolatrous belief systems: Rebellion Idolatry and Need Idolatry.

Rebellion Idolatry consists of the idols of Pride, Performance, Security, Facade, Pleasure and Entitlement.

Need Idolatry consists of: Provision, Home, Acceptance/Intimacy, Identity, Knowledge and Purpose.

Rebellion Idolatry System

Pride

Facade

Security

Performance

Pleasure

Entitlement

Need Idolatry System

Provision

Home

Acceptance/Intimacy

Identity

Knowledge

Purpose.

GODLY TRAINING MINISTRIES

THE WAY  PPLIED:
Rebellion Idolatry: Pt. 1

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THE WAY  PPLIED:
Rebellion Idolatry: Pt. 2

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REBELLION IDOLATRY: A "DELUSION" OF CONTROL

The Fall had significant consequences not the least of which was that our sinful flesh was revealed . We will first discuss The Rebellion Idolatry System, which has 6 belief idols .

PRIDE: (Gen 3:6):

- I am the authority;
- I am above God .

PRIDE FALSE BELIEFS:

- I MUST be in authority over others
- I MUST be the Judge!
- It is perfectly permissible for me to come out of Godly Authority when and where I choose.
- I have a Free Will and the "right" to make the choices I want to make. I have the right to reject God's authority as I see fit!

Adam and Eve chose to disobey. They exhibited pride, defined here as the belief that it is permissible to come out of Godly authority. By implication, submission to intermediate satanic authority must follow, which we'll see later leads to chaos, depression and hopelessness. Pride idolatry has enormous implications for our world view and our deep-seated internal belief systems. Primarily, it means that we believe that we are above God. It means we believe that we are the authority figure in our lives. The inference for us is that we will believe that we not only have permission to come out of Godly authority; we will also believe that the seductive power of choice gives us the right to come out of Godly authority when we think it is in our best interest to do so. Even worse, Pride idolatry establishes within us the sinful belief that we **MUST** do whatever we need to do to have authority over others. I **MUST** be the "judge". To the fullest extent possible, I cannot allow anyone to be in authority over me; I cannot allow others to judge me. The foundational false belief with pride is "I am in control". The core belief here is that if I am the "judge", I can judge you, and I am superior to you.

FACADE: (Gen 3:7):

- I CANNOT let ANYONE judge me
- I can control what others think about me by how I present myself

FACADE FALSE BELIEF:

- I can control how others perceive me

The first thing Adam and Eve did after the fall was to cover up; they were avoiding judgment by one another. We attempt to “project an image” of ourselves in accordance to what we perceive will put us in authority over “them”. Facade is self-deceiving in that it really depends upon our perception of how others perceive us. In effect, this belief system allows others to control us in that we are actually submitting to others. Facade is the false belief that “prevents us” from being judged. We believe that Facade establishes us as the authority. It allows us to “judge them” since we are the “authority”.

SECURITY: (Gen 3:16 – 19)

- Human Institutions protect me

SECURITY FALSE BELIEF:

- I can control what happens to me

Security is the belief that our safety lies in human institutions. Security is seen in the protection afforded by government or financial institutions. It's not difficult to find people who believe that their security is in their jobs or their retirement accounts or that the government protects them or that some other human institution can be counted on. Yet, virtually every human institution fails on a daily basis in one way or another. Every day we hear numerous different complaints: "We need a different president!" "Kick 'em all out of Congress..." "We need to pass a law so that this will never happen again". "How dare they lay me off!!!" Natural and man-made disasters plague our existence continually. Criminal activity is a fact of life. We read about horrific child abuse every day. The list goes on and on. The sobering reality is that we live in a sin-ridden world whereby we are threatened in numerous ways every day, yet

we operate under the delusion that we are somehow insulated to one degree or another

Another way that we play out the false belief of security is manifest in the differences that we observe in how women and men express their aspirations in life. Women can be very competitive when it comes to the perceived success of their husbands and their kids. For many women, security can be seen as the protection of the husband within the institution of marriage. For many men, security is achievement within human institutions or talent or skill or advancement within organizations. Men can certainly express their urge to compete via their wealth, position, and status. Let us note that both sexes are equally guilty when it comes to competitive behavior; neither one has a monopoly. Competition can be a fine thing—there is nothing wrong with the drive to excel—but we surely need to ask the basic question: what's my motivation?

Of special concern is Gen 3:16: "To the woman he said, "...your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.", the contention here is that God is allowing a belief to be instilled in Eve that she will depend upon sinful men for her security instead of looking to the Living God for her security. Yet she will also contend with the duality of not only seeing her husband as her security, while trying to usurp his authority in marriage (typically through manipulation) because of her sinful desire to judge. She will want to "mold" him into her idea of security. The husband will also contend with power and control issues as he deals with judgment and achievement. Since the husband operates out of performance, he will very likely try to control her as he asserts himself as "the leader". He may indeed "judge" her by misunderstanding her need for security as invasive. Facade enters the picture when we consider that men may overly desire a trophy wife. Women may overly desire the triple 6's: six pack abs, a six figure salary and six feet tall.

PERFORMANCE: (Gen 3:17-19):

- I can control my position in the community.

PERFORMANCE FALSE BELIEF:

- I control the conditions to enter God's House

Adam's predicament was all too apparent after the fall. Now he would be responsible for supporting Eve and their children. He would somehow have to provide shelter and work to obtain food and clothing. He now bore the responsibility for his own survival as well as others. In other words, he would have to perform in order for them to live. It would not be enough for him to merely meet his own standards; there were now others who had to be considered as well. Was there enough? Would Eve be satisfied? Were the children warm enough? Performance is defined to be the core belief that the better I perform within the context of human institutions, not only will I be "successful", thus becoming "more secure", but the "higher I rise", the less likely it is that someone can "judge me". This belief will drive most men to exert power and control in most areas of their life. Women, of course are not

immune; they will exert competitive tendencies with other women as well as with their children. They will also idolize performance in their husbands as the key to their own security.

Performance idolatry is rooted in what Keller discusses in his aforementioned sermon. Keller emphasizes that “...since we were made in the image of God, we know deep inside that we betrayed God”. Keller further explains that “...our fleshly guilt and shame establish within us the idea that we [innately] know we owe God...” Performance Idolatry can be interpreted to mean that we will “payback” what we “owe” and show “how good” we are through our deeds and actions. Thus, “they”/God will “owe me” and my deeds will establish my righteousness & authority over others.

The foundational error with Performance Idolatry, of course, is that it’s a theology of works which, if true, would nullify the cross. Would Jesus ever do such a thing if we could earn our way to Heaven? The covenant of Salvation is based on faith, not works. Indeed, Isaiah points out that our works mean nothing. No level of performance can satisfy God’s covenant conditions.

In God's wisdom, He established one standard by which all can enter God's house. The false belief for performance is that I can control the conditions by which I enter God's house. This is tantamount to saying that you should let me in because I think you should. The idea that no level of performance can satisfy the entrance requirement is a powerful notion. Indeed, why did God purpose, plan and execute the process in such a way? Finally, if performance was the case, what would be good enough? What would be the standard? Suppose you and I went to the movies. and your ticket cost \$15, and mine cost \$10 . Very likely, you would want a justification as to why I got in for less money, and almost certainly you would expect that justification to make sense to you, not the theater owner. Further, even though the theater owner leased the movie from the studio and paid for the equipment and the building and paid the employees' salaries and has every right to charge whatever price he wants, you would still very likely howl in protest that the price difference was unfair!

PLEASURE: (Rom 1:18–32)

- A temporary escape from the sinful chaotic and my own shame
- The creation of false intimacy & acceptance whereby I do not have to reveal the "real me" so that others cannot judge me.

PLEASURE FALSE BELIEF:

God won't make me "happy" so I have to make myself "happy".

Romans 1 teaches how pleasure involves a scenario whereby the refusal to worship God – e.g. idolatry - results in perversion and chaos. To relieve anxiety and chaos, and attempt to reach a state of peace – even though it will always be temporary, we will seek pleasure. We will substitute intimate pleasure (sex) to meet our need for intimacy. When pleasure is substituted for intimacy, we can emotionally "hide"; we don't have to reveal ourselves. We can avoid being "judged" in this way; this is in line with façade. Romans shows there will be virtually no limit to our depravity. The core false belief of pleasure is that "If God won't make me happy, than I have the right to make myself happy."

The false belief of pleasure reflects a profound lack of trust and faith in God and how He wants to work in our lives.

Pleasure, of course, is often associated with sin. Without question, sin does encompass illicit activities that do indeed bring a very temporary pleasure and peace. Sometimes, we seemingly “get away with it”. Many times, however, sin brings consequences that can be significant and profound. That impulsive action that was seemingly so minor can turn into a lifetime of misery. In Romans, Paul tells us that we will seek illicit pleasures as a direct result of our unbelief and failure to worship God.. Paul tells us that many of those who live the unsaved life will turn to depravity and the unspeakable. In other words, there will be no recognition of moral principles, any option is open. Paul’s extensive list serves to emphasize the gross immorality of unrestricted pleasure that we see today.

ENTITLEMENT: (Gen 3:6):

-I should have what you have because I am "above you". What right do you have to have something I don't?

FALSE ENTITLEMENT BELIEF:

- Life is Fair

Since I am "above" you, I should have what you have. Actually, I should have more than you because I am better than you since I can judge you.

When Eve gave into the temptation to indulge in the fruit, this rationale is what pushed her over the edge. Since God could have the fruit, Eve should be able to as well. Entitlement is what allowed Eve to "reason" that she could, in fact, agree to come out of Godly authority despite her clear knowledge that "she would die". Eve looked at the fruit, likely thought: "Well, it looks ok and it looks like it will benefit me. What's the harm?" Eve rationalized because of this belief "If God has it, why can't I?"

It can also be construed that she believed she did not need God to meet her needs or wants, in light of the fact that she believed that the fruit would give her something that God would not. The core false belief of entitlement is that "Life should be

fair". In essence, it is saying that I should at least have the same as everyone else.

This creates confusion and chaos because entitlement says that I must have more than you have and what I have must be better than what you have. Obviously, there is a logical inconsistency here. It's physically impossible in our natural realm for everyone to have the same as everyone else. Only God can create a system whereby all are truly equal.

We will now turn our attention to the Need Idolatry System.

GODLY TRAINING
MINISTRIES
THE WORD APPLIED:
Need Idolatry: Pt. 1

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NEED IDOLATRY: FALSE WORSHIP

We all have needs and wants. Regardless of how we aspire to occupy our place on this planet – be it an outlandish, lavish lifestyle or the most basic ascetic existence – we still have the basics that must be met. How will these basic life requirements be met for each and every one of us? The contention here is that we idolize 6 basic and foundational human needs

Need Idolatry in the context of a sinful, driven flesh can be summarized in one question: Do we seek God to satisfy them, or do we seek our own way? Need idolatry occurs when we make our legitimate human needs our idols. Genesis implies six fundamental human needs: Purpose, Provision, Home, Intimacy and Acceptance, Knowledge and Identity. Need idolatry occurs when we make our legitimate human needs our idols. Genesis implies six fundamental human needs: Purpose, Provision, Home, Intimacy and Acceptance, Knowledge and Identity.

PURPOSE (GEN 1:27-28):

- Be fruitful & multiply; subdue and rule the earth; tend the garden

FALSE PURPOSE & MISSION BELIEF

I'm free to believe whatever I like. There is no God, so I'm not accountable to anyone. Thus, my purpose and mission are whatever I want it to be, if I even want to have one. If my purpose is more "noble" than yours, or if I achieve more than you do, I can judge you.

Adam and Eve were to rule over the other living creatures, subdue the earth, and work the garden (Gen 1:27-28). Purpose idolatry occurs when we see our reason for being anything other than our purpose in Christ. We see this idolatry in the modern day all the time.. The root of the purpose idol is "I'm free to believe whatever I like. Since there is no God, so I'm not accountable to anyone. Thus, my purpose and mission are whatever I want it to be, if I even want to have one. Thus, if my purpose is "better" than yours as I see it, or if I "achieve" more than you do, I can judge you."

PROVISION (GEN 1:1-30):

- Light, Food, Rest, Water, Air, Pleasure, Shelter, Clothing

FALSE PROVISION BELIEF:

- “I have more than you, so I am superior to you, thus, I can judge you. What I have is better, so I’m better. since I have more than enough, I don’t need God. the more I accumulate, the more secure I am.”

Adam and Eve needed food, water, air and light (Gen 1:1–30). We can reasonably assume that rest and relaxation were a part of Adam and Eve’s needs (Gen 2:2). Provision idolatry occurs when we see anyone but God as our true source for our human needs. Jesus highlighted this type of idolatry in the Sermon on the Mount. The core belief of this idol is “I have more than you, so I’m superior to you, thus, I can judge you. What I have is better, so I’m better. Since I have more than enough, I don’t need God. The more I accumulate, the more secure I am”

HOME (GEN 2:8-15):

- Boundaries, Safety

FALSE HOME BELIEF:

- “Human institutions protect me. If I am strong enough, I can protect myself. Thus, I don’t need God. I can protect myself, I’m superior to you; thus, I can judge you.

Home is a fundamental human need; it is a form of security. Genesis describes the location and boundaries of the garden; if Adam was to “go and subdue”, he certainly needed to know where to return. Adam and Eve surely saw the Garden as home. He certainly understood establishing a separate location (home) for a newly married couple (Gen 2:10-14; 24). Home idolatry is implicit in the emotional link that we have between shelter, land and how we perceive our security as rooted in our homes and families. This idolatry is especially evident after natural tragedies. Home represents an innate and intrinsic need to have a space that we recognize as "ours". We feel safe in an area that we recognize has our unique boundaries vis-à-vis others. A violation of “our space” can be very traumatic.

ACCEPTANCE (GEN 2:18-25):

- Intimacy, Family, Community

FALSE ACCEPTANCE BELIEF:

“I cannot let anyone see the real me, otherwise, they can judge me. I can achieve intimacy via sex, or by projecting the right facade. I can control my family and how the community sees me via power, coercion, manipulation, and facade. Since I can achieve acceptance in these ways, I don’t need God.

Adam needed companionship, acceptance, and intimacy. Adam also foresaw the need for family and community. Acceptance idolatry can be observed readily today. The core belief here is: I can achieve intimacy via sex, or by projecting the right facade. I cannot let anyone see the real me, otherwise, they can judge me. I can control how my family and community see me via coercion, manipulation, and facade. Since I can achieve intimacy and acceptance these ways, I don’t need God. In his book: *False Intimacy*, Schaumberg shows that illicit sexual relations frequently come down to being the illusion of intimacy.

KNOWLEDGE (GEN 2:18-25):

- Language, Communication, Information, Technology

FALSE KNOWLEDGE BELIEF:

“Knowledge is king. We can figure out what we need to know. We are evolving To a “higher” level , thus, we don’t need God. If I know more than you, or if I can create the facade that I know more, then I am superior to you; thus, I can judge you.

Adam knew how to communicate. What language did he speak? Where did he acquire a language? How did he know what to name the animals? How did he know what a biological father and mother were? Where did he get his conception of a wife? These cultural concepts indicate Adam had absorbed far more than a rudimentary knowledge of his surroundings. He likely understood technology; he was responsible for the care of the garden. Indeed, there seems no contesting the notion that “rational man” sees science, knowledge, and technology as “the answer” to our problems. To be sure, knowledge and our natural God-given curiosity regarding our temporal environment has become an idol.

IDENTITY (GEN 10-25):

Name, Authority Structure, Values, Culture

FALSE IDENTITY BELIEF:

“My identity is found in how I relate to others and human institutions. My foundational understanding of how I fit in this world – my world-view - and how I relate to others is found in three idols: performance, facade and security. I believe that what is important and true is found in the natural.

Adam needed an identity; he needed to know who he was in relation to others. He needed a name that would set him apart. He needed to understand where he was in an authority and submission structure with others. Identity idolatry is nothing new. Seeing our identity as anything other than new creations in Christ is idolatrous. Yet, in the modern day especially, we commonly see the quest to “know who we are”.

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MINISTRIES**
THE WAY APPLIED:
The Belief System
of the Flesh

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**GODLY TRAINING
MINISTRIES**
THE WAY APPLIED:
Judgement &
Self-Seeking

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SUMMARY OF THE IDOLATRY BELIEF SYSTEMS

The 2 Idolatry belief systems we have examined - Rebellion Idolatry and Need Idolatry - were given to us such that they are interwoven into the deepest fabric of our being. Sinful belief systems compromise what we know as the flesh, and they govern our fleshly behavior. It's important that we understand the twelve idols as presented here represent a worst case scenario. For example, not everyone feels they are completely entitled as presented here. Certainly, there are many who recognize that there is more than just knowledge. However, it is also axiomatic that all of humanity is plagued by a relentless and overwhelming sinful flesh, and that we all deal with all twelve traits of the idolatrous flesh to one extent or another.

JUDGMENT & SELF-SEEKING

THE SYMPTOMS OF IDOLATRY:

Romans and James tells us how idolatry has devastating and profound consequences. Romans 2:1–2:8 gives the main symptoms of idolatry: judgment and self-seeking. Romans 2:2 tells us that we all pass judgment; we are not to judge. Judgment means that we attempt to take spiritual authority over one another. Romans 2:8 describes “self-seeking” (the Greek word: *eritheia*), which describes how we do things out of selfish interest such that we foment chaos. (Rom 2:6-9) tells us that self-seekers reject truth and follow evil. Four things await self-seekers: wrath, anger, trouble & distress. Romans 1:20–25 gives us a crucial link between idolatry, beliefs and actions, which we summarize here:

"God's eternal power and divine nature are obvious; men have no excuse. We don't recognize him as supreme despite the obvious evidence (read: we are out of His authority!) Thus, our thinking (belief) has become futile; our foolish hearts have become dark (belief) and we worship idols (belief). Therefore, we:

bought into the lie (belief); we worship idols (belief); we revel in sinful desires (belief); and we are turned over to depraved minds (belief). The result: we do perverse things (actions). (Rom 1:29-32): "...they have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, god-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. Therefore, we have no excuse..." (Rom 2:1-3).

The passage goes on to describe that we also see the destructive actions of judgment – something we all do, yet, we are not empowered to do so. Judgment – the taking of spiritual authority over others – is only allowed by God and those who He chooses“

James expresses the same sentiment:

"...But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts...For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives..."

Is it any surprise to find out that self-seeking and selfish ambition are described by the same greek word: eritheia? Indeed, what are the results of eritheia? Disorder & every evil practice! We have more examples of eritheia:

"... I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder." (2 Cor 12:20)

"The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions." (Gal 5:19-20).

James also addresses the topic of judgment:

“...Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?” (James 4:11-12)

The emphasis is clear and the point is well-taken: we are not to judge! Taking on spiritual authority that is not yours leads only to eritheia: chaos!

EXPECTATIONS

Expectations are a form of judgment. We all have expectations depending on the situation, and many of these are legitimate and proper. Spouses have a legitimate expectation that they will be faithful to one another. If we use our credit card to make a purchase, we have an expectation that it will be handled without identity theft resulting. Parents typically expect that children will obey.

Teachers have an expectation that students will do their homework. Drivers expect that the vehicles behind them will also stop at the red light.

Realistically, however, none of these expectations is justified. Truly, if one thinks about it, all we can ever ultimately expect from all the sinful people around us is sinful behavior. Indeed, the Bible teaches us that we are sinners to the core, and that there is almost no limit to what we are capable of. While we may believe that most will honor our expectations of others, we have no real basis for those expectations.

In the same vein, we live in an overwhelmingly sinful, fallen world whereby tragedy happens all the time. Natural disasters, disease, epidemics, crime, war, accidents, economic maladies – just to mention a few – are often significant and profound events in people's lives. Many times, they bring about life-altering trauma, and people's lives are never the same. Our hopes and dreams – our expectations – our judgments – of what we think are lives are supposed to be can be dashed in an instant. In some instances,

we may face a lifelong condition that will demand suffering and quite possibly drain our emotional reserves and test us to limits we never thought we had. Grief, anger, resentment, despair, sadness, bitterness – all of these and more can describe our emotions when our lives are interrupted drastically and tragically. To be sure, these emotions are normal and to be expected. After all, bad stuff is not supposed to happen to us! Tragedies happen to someone else!

Nowhere does God guarantee that our lives will be free of tragedy and suffering. Indeed, the Word tells us that we will experience suffering in our lives! Instead, the Bible teaches us that he will walk with us while we endure our cup of suffering. Thus, we can see how our expectations – our judgments – of our sinful world can exacerbate how we internalize trauma and tragedy in a profound and deep way.

JUDGMENT & SELF-SEEKING: HOW ARE THEY MANIFESTED?

Judgment and self-seeking are symptomatic of the flesh; therefore, anything that smacks of power and/or promotion of self (especially at the expense of others) typically finds roots in judgment or self-seeking. After all, both are merely extensions of Satan's main thrust: power and control over others. The following list is a good representation of how Judgment and self-seeking are manifested. As you peruse the list, you may wish to contemplate how and why each one is indicative of judgment and self-seeking. You can likely come up with more.

- Control
- Manipulation
- Intimidation
- Instilling fear
- Unreasonable suspicion
- Jealousy
- Temper
- Frequent complaining
- Avoidance
- Jealousy
- Excessive/uncontrolled anger
- Frequent outbursts
- Criticism
- Resentment
- Bitterness
- Closed/secret areas of life
- Withholding affection/intimacy
- Lying
- Legalism
- Lack of relationship with Christ

THE ORPHANED SPIRIT

The Orphaned Spirit occurs when you believe that you were abandoned, betrayed, rejected or deeply hurt by your spiritual authority (usually your biological parents) or by God Himself. Many times, those who have an orphaned spirit will describe their experience as a profound deprivation of acceptance & intimacy. In the vast majority of cases, there is a pronounced and tragic sense of violation. It goes without saying many feel horribly victimized - helpless and powerless playthings who were objects of some gross malevolent evil. There is no denying that the vast majority of these sad cases do have good reason for their hurt, anger and bitterness. They did not ask to be born; yet they were subjected to an environment that was outrageous sinful and unspeakable things may have been foisted on them.

Those who deal with an Orphaned Spirit tend to hold on to their overwhelming anger and hurt for years and even decades. Tragically, many go to their grave after holding on to the enormous bitterness that made life a living hell. People who choose to live this way typically experience massive depression; many finally commit suicide

to escape the overwhelming anguish. many.

There is no escaping that we live in a sinful, depraved world whereby there is virtually no limit to the evil and depravity. The Bible tells us as much. We are all sinners. Jeremiah has stunning news for us: "'The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked.'" Unfortunately, our families, our relatives, and our friends and acquaintances - all of our "people circles" - are not excluded. Jeremiah's statement tells us that all of us are dark-hearted sinners who are capable of anything we can think of despite our fervent pleas and fantasies that insist that we are surrounded by good and decent people. And many times we are involved with people who truly loving and treat us well.

But let us recall our discussion of expectations. As we discussed earlier, the only thing we can realistically expect out of anyone is sinful behavior. We can hope and pray that things turn out nicely, but the stark truth is very often the opposite. The people closest to us - the ones

When we are young, often we believe parents and adults are "perfect". Since we perceive that

who we expect will treat us lovingly and honorably - simply do not, and deeply hurt and violate the ones they are supposed to love.

they are perfect, if they hurt us, the problem must somehow be us. We must have done something to have this done to us. Therefore, we can tend believe that something must be wrong with us! We see this lots of times when parents are divorced. The kids are perfectly innocent, but many children feel they are the problem. This kind of unneeded guilt and shame can persist for years and even decades. Yet, that does not mesh with another fundamental belief that we should not be mistreated. We have a natural belief: they shouldn't do that! They are supposed to be our security! We want protection and love from those who are supposed to protect us. The innate fight or flight response invariably kicks in. Many times, we simply can't escape; we are trapped.

Unmitigated, all of these influences breed ever growing anger, resentment and bitterness over the years and decades. The heart, over time, turns to emotional stone, and the notion of

forgiveness becomes virtually impossible.

Yet, we are not only called to forgive, we are called to forgive the unforgivable. God tells us that we must forgive, or He will not forgive us. Despite how difficult it may be, true forgiveness is something we must bring ourselves to do. If we do not forgive, we will likely never achieve a state of true peace.

Many who deal with an Orphaned Spirit will find that they are contributing to their suffering, as hard as that might be to accept. Many recoil at that statement and understandably so. After all, “How dare they do that?!?” Romans Chapter 2:8-9 tells us that because of our unmet expectations - a form of judgment - we “are self-seeking and [we] reject the truth and follow evil... [The result is] wrath and anger... trouble and distress for every human being who does evil.

The Orphaned Spirit is a complex topic and a few paragraphs here and there do not give the proper respect to it's importance. However, we can comment here on a couple of topics where the notion of the Orphaned Spirit is applicable.

PTSD (“Post Traumatic Stress Disorder”)

PTSD has been typically associated with the military and those who have been in combat. The horrific violence and the sights, sounds and smells of action are unimaginable by those who have never experienced the horrors of war. The terrible memories are without question unforgettable and nightmarish. The litany of symptoms and behaviors for veterans who suffer from PTSD is lengthy and heart-breaking.

PTSD is certainly not limited to veterans of combat. The list of those who might display symptoms of PTSD is lengthy: Victims of abuse. Crime victims. Accident victims. Incest victims. Those who have experienced tragedy of almost any kind can certainly expect to exhibit symptoms of PTSD to one degree or another. The heartbreak is brutal and palpable in many cases.

A common trait that’s often observed with PTSD is the absence of feeling SAFE and feeling extremely vulnerable. The violation, the fear, the betrayal, the devastation, the enormous emotional pain and anxiety, etc., all contribute to overwhelming feelings of helplessness,

loneliness and fear. The result can be very traumatic instances of anger, self-harm and very violent behaviors, just to name a few... The contention from here what we are really observing here is yet another a manifestation of an Orphaned Spirit.

SECURITY: THE INNATE NEED

The Walk Applied Model postulates that our drive for safety and security is one of our greatest and foundational innate and intrinsic needs. In Genesis 3, it would appear that Adam and Eve's ejection from the Garden of Eden was swift. One can only imagine what must have been running thru their minds. The emotion must have been overwhelming; there must have been enormous shame, guilt and regret. In addition, there must have been great dread, as well as other very negative emotions and reactions. The point is that when we believe that we have little or no sense of safety, the response can be very visceral and primal.

PART 3: THE HEART

GODLY TRAINING
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THE WAY APPLIED:
The Heart
Belief System

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THE HEART BELIEF SYSTEM

ASSURANCE CONSTRUCT

HUMILITY

SONSHIP

ACCEPTANCE

STEWARDSHIP

ADOPTION

PEACE

GUARANTEE CONSTRUCT

PROVISION

SECURITY

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

ADOPTION

WISDOM

CALLING

THE HEART: THE GODLY BELIEF SYSTEM

We now turn our attention to the much more pleasant topic of The Heart. The Heart is the new belief system that the Spirit implants in us as a result of our spirit man being raised to life in the wondrous action of salvation. Paul tells us in the New Testament that only those who's Spirit has been raised and brought to Spiritual life can comprehend the Spiritual.

The Heart belief system is not integrated quickly. We still live with a sinful, driven and relentless flesh that, by God's perfect design, compels us to seek Jesus and commune with Jesus every single second of every waking day. The Heart belief system, over our lifetime, slowly but surely replaces the sinful Flesh as we walk with Jesus in an intimate and personal relationship with Him. Unfortunately, we will only fully shed the sinful flesh when we pass from this natural existence into the Spiritual realm where those who are saved will enjoy full fellowship with Jesus and heavenly Father.

GODLY TRAINING MINISTRIES

THE WORD APPLIED: The Assurance Construct



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The Heart is comprised of two constructs:

- The Assurance Construct replaces Rebellion Idolatry
- The Guarantee Construct replaces Need Idolatry.

We will cover the Assurance Construct first

REBELLION IDOLATRY	THE ASSURANCE CONSTRUCT
PRIDE	HUMILITY
PERFORMANCE	SONSHIP
FACADE	ACCEPTANCE
SECURITY	STEWARDSHIP
ENTITLEMENT	ADOPTION
PLEASURE	PEACE

THE ASSURANCE CONSTRUCT

HUMILITY replaces PRIDE

Humility teaches us that God is absolutely sovereign in all things. Over time, we learn to become humble servants. Indeed, humility ultimately brings us a palpable undercurrent of serenity and joy no matter what the circumstances. Humility is understood to be an intentional act of loving submission because we acknowledge that His will is sovereign in all things.

SONSHIP replaces PERFORMANCE

We have been adopted into the family of God with all the rights and privileges that being in the family of God brings with it. Redemption means we have been literally “purchased back” from Satan’s authority. Our “title deed” has passed from Satan back to God. We will never be rejected because of what we do or don’t do. In His Word, God clearly proclaims the He will never leave us nor will He forsake us. Jesus’ death and resurrection paid the awful price that needed to be paid for sin. We are adopted sons and citizens of the Kingdom

ACCEPTANCE replaces FACADE

There is no longer any need to show a facade. We are fully accepted as we are, despite our deplorable sinful condition. That's why it is important to understand that we are His adopted children fully and totally. We are citizens of God's country. We have sealed with the deposit of the Holy Spirit. Our sins have been fully paid for, past present and future. All has been taken care of!

STEWARDSHIP replaces SECURITY

The concept of stewardship is one that many Christians are typically familiar with. The notion of stewardship really means that we own nothing, and that we are fully dependent on God to faithfully provide for each and every need that we have when we need it. God is always faithful, and His word tells us that he will never leave us and he will never fail us. We could easily substitute the word custodian for stewardship. God wants us to use whatever he provides us with in a Godly fashion. We are managers of all the good things He wants to give us.

ADOPTION replaces ENTITLEMENT

Adoption does away with any notion of entitlement, because when we are adopted, we have full legal rights as an heir to the Kingdom. You and I would have everything God wants us to have to the fullest. As adopted sons, we operate under the doctrine of sonship. That means that we are treated the same as legally adopted sons. In Biblical times, to be an adopted son meant that you were treated exactly the same as any other biological heir. It also meant that your past- no matter what you did – was for all intent and purposes erased. Your status was completely changed as of the day you were adopted. And that's how God looks at us starting with the moment we are saved. Our sins – past present and future – have all been covered by the blood of Jesus, no exception! We are fully loved and fully accepted - no matter what our condition or what we have done. There is no sin or offense that is so bad that it cannot be forgiven. The only exception is if we do not believe. That would mean we are truly not saved!

PEACE replaces PLEASURE

To be saved means you should be walking in peace. Obviously, this does not always happen. Christians have the same problems as anyone else. To be a Christian does not mean you won't have the same worries as those who are not saved. It is indeed sad that many who profess to be followers of Jesus simply do not act like it, and lead lifestyles that are not exemplary of their new status in Christ. Tragically, there are also many who profess to be saved, but truly, they are not. More to the point, Romans 2 describes a lifestyle of hedonism and out and out immorality. These awful depictions of a relentless pursuit of pleasure should never happen with a true Christian. There should be exhibited a peaceful and moral life, that reflects a life that is anything but chaotic. All that said, for the true Christian, there should be an underlying sense of serenity and peace, even in the toughest of situations and the worst of tragedy. When all is said and done, a true Christian has the sense that it's all going to turn out ok, despite the circumstances. The true Christian understands that he is eternal, and that

ultimately, he will spend eternity with Christ. There should be an undercurrent of serenity and joy.

We certainly don't want to discount those who are most surely saved, but have not yet learned how to be in peace. Christians are at various stages in their walk with Christ, and God clearly knows the state of each and every person. So, it's easy to misinterpret the motives and actions of a Christian and where they are in their walk. Through struggles and trials, as the Christian walks out the walk, he comes to understand that God is ever faithful, and He is true to His word.

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THE WORD APPLIED:
The Guarantee Construct



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THE GUARANTEE CONSTRUCT

replaces

NEED IDOLATRY

NEED IDOLATRY	THE GUARANTEE CONSTRUCT
PROVISION	PROVISION GUARANTEE
HOME	SECURITY
IDENTITY	SPIRITUAL IDENTITY
ACCEPTANCE	ADOPTION
KNOWLEDGE	WISDOM
PURPOSE	CALLING

THE GUARANTEE CONSTRUCT

THE GUARANTEE OF PROVISION REPLACES PROVISION

God is faithful to provide for every need we have - and some, if not all, of our wants. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus emphasizes that God is very aware of every need, and is anxious to meet our every need. This is where your faith comes in.

In the overall context of the Bible and how it applies to our lives, we must never forget what it means to have a relationship with God. A significant part of serving our creator God is that He has a purpose plan and will for our lives, and submitting to God's plan for our life is a substantial part of our relationship with Him. When we pursue our calling, we can expect that God will meet our every need.

This is not to say that our lives will be peaches and cream. Suffering to one degree or another is part of the equation - Jesus tells us that. For some, that calling - that path - will be dangerous and could involve great risk. Read Foxe's Book of Martyrs (or any other book about martyrs, for that matter) - it is full of stories of men and women who suffered and died for God's Kingdom. Like Jesus, and as

Paul tells us in Romans:

Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

In other words, Jesus suffered just like us (actually far greater than any of us can ever expect to!).

Another passage that applies here is:

"I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread." (Ps 37:25)

We must not mistake provision for prosperity. God will ensure that you are equipped and provided for according to your calling. For some, it may include great wealth. Others may be called to very austere circumstances. In any case, you will be provided for according to your call. There may be times when it appears that God has forgotten you! Never forget that God is always faithful! He will make sure you are provided for.

SECURITY REPLACES HOME

The natural need/idol of home is merely the physical manifestation of what we know as security. There is a fundamental drive in all of us for shelter. Certainly, this includes far more than just structural protection from the elements. It seems intuitive that the drive for what we know or desire as “HOME” is a very complex, invested deep emotional amalgam of protection, family, intimacy, comfort and love. When we enter our “HOME”, there is usually an emotion that is unlike anything else that reflects something that’s almost primal. No doubt, the notion of “HOME” reflects a certain something that seems far more than the sum of the parts. Conversely, when that notion of ‘HOME’ is violated by natural disaster or at the hands of others - accidentally or violently – there’s usually profound feelings of violation, betrayal and insecurity as well as fear, anxiety and any number of other emotions. A house is a structure, but a “HOME” is something far more.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY REPLACES IDENTITY

The Bible lays out a vision of what it means to be a new creation in Christ – a vision that is so exciting and overwhelming that nothing in the natural can even begin to compare with it. We were bought and paid for via the death and suffering of the Son of God. In other words, we have been deemed priceless; our value is inestimable. We are fully accepted and loved, and nothing can change that. We have been adopted and made citizens of His spiritual kingdom. We each have been declared and judged perfect via the promise covenant. We each have been given a grand purpose and a mighty calling that is fulfilling beyond anything we might accomplish in the natural for earthly purposes. And we will spend eternity in the company of the Living God. Nothing on earth can compare to that or even approach it.

ADOPTION REPLACES INTIMACY AND ACCEPTANCE

We all want to be accepted by those around us, and it represents a very powerful urge in our faith. Indeed, there is nothing inherently wrong with seeking intimacy and acceptance. God encourages these qualities in our life, and He brings people

into our life that can satisfy this legitimate need. But we can never forget that Christ is "the way, the truth and the life."

Indeed, it is in a true spiritual relationship that we experience full acceptance, intimacy, and love. It is in the safe harbor of Christ that we can find the full peace of someone who supports us and never reject us. Hebrews tells us:

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" (Heb 13:5-6)

WISDOM REPLACES KNOWLEDGE

In our rational society, knowledge is king. We want to believe that we can somehow we can figure out everything we need to know. Since we are "evolving" to ever higher levels, we don't need God. This false belief underlines the truth that "knowledge puffs up" and that without love, knowledge is worthless. Even Spock of Star Trek fame found that his rationalism and his knowledge without love made all his vast logical capabilities virtually worthless. Make no mistake knowledge is

indeed valuable in the right contest. Galatians reports that God wants us to increase in knowledge.

In Biblical times, Wisdom was esteemed above all. It meant something along the lines of "to master the art of living." Proverbs clearly tells us that wisdom is vastly superior to mere knowledge:

Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her; those who hold her fast will be blessed. (Pro 3:13-18)

CALLING REPLACES PURPOSE

In God, we have a purpose, plan and will that brings us a fulfillment that far exceeds any natural purpose. While it is true that there are many noble and worthwhile purposes here in the natural, it seems intuitive that God has an eternal purpose that applies to each and every one of us. Jeremiah has a very ponderous message for us in Jer 6:16

"This is what the LORD says: "Stand at the

crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls".

As we'll discuss

later, we are eternal creatures living an eternal existence and we will have to face an almighty God who sent us here to seek and obey His will. It is my contention, then, that what is of primary import to God is that foundational to our relationship with Him is that we walk the path He has set aside for us. Indeed, the conclusion reached here is that the second question that God will ask of us is: "Did you follow the path I set aside for you? Good question, that!

This ends Volume 1 of the Walk Applied Series. Please join us for Volume 2 (of 8): "Authority and Submission", due to be published in November, 2017. Check at:

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