**God’s Way**

**A Lifelong Journey to Everlasting Peace and Joy**

Dr. Rosalind Lewis Tompkins

*God’s Way: A Lifelong Journey to Everlasting Peace and Joy*

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# Other Books by Dr. Rosalind Tompkins

*You Are Beautiful: Unlocking Beauty from Within*

*Nimble Anointed Words Empower (N-AWE)*

*As Long as There Is Breath in Your Body, There Is Still Hope*

# God’s Way: A Lifelong Journey to Everlasting Peace and Joy

# Reviewed by Dr. Maureen McIntosh-Alberts

*God’s Way* is a transformative guide for those seeking a deeper relationship with God and a clearer understanding of His purpose for their lives. Rooted in biblical wisdom and personal experience, this book offers a heartfelt and practical approach to navigating the journey of faith.

The author draws from over forty years of personal salvation and thirty years in ministry, sharing profound insights gained through seasons of learning, surrender, and renewal. The book emphasizes that understanding God’s way is not an overnight revelation but a lifelong process of trust, obedience, and spiritual growth. Using Scripture as a foundation, it explores how fear and sin can hinder progress, yet God’s grace continually calls His people back to Him.

One of the book’s central themes is self-reflection. Readers are encouraged to assess their spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being through guiding questions such as, *Where am I?* and *How did I get here?* Through these introspective exercises, the book challenges individuals to take responsibility for their personal growth while relying on God’s guidance for transformation.

Each chapter is designed not only to inspire but also to equip. With affirmations, prayers, and actionable steps, *God’s Way* serves as both a devotional and a practical roadmap for those desiring to walk confidently in their faith. Readers will find encouragement in knowing that God’s way is not hidden—He is always guiding, speaking, and leading those who seek Him.

Whether you are just beginning your faith journey or seeking renewal in your walk with God, *God’s Way* offers a powerful message of hope, purpose, and divine direction. It is a must-read for anyone ready to step out of fear and into the abundant life God has planned for them.

# Endorsements

# God’s Way: A Lifelong Journey to Everlasting Peace and Joy

*God’s Way* is a beautifully crafted guide for anyone seeking a deeper connection with God and a life filled with true peace and joy. Through powerful scriptures, heartfelt prayers, faith-filled affirmations, and practical action steps, this book offers a clear and transformative path toward spiritual growth. Whether you are just beginning your journey or looking to strengthen your faith, this book will uplift, encourage, and inspire you to walk confidently in God’s love and purpose. A must-read for anyone longing for a life of faith, fulfillment, and divine peace!

***—Brenda “BJ” Jarmon, PhD***

Educator, Author, and Consultant

Founder & President of Sowing Seeds of Faith, Inc.

Dr. Rosalind Tompkins’ powerful new book, *God’s Way*, is a must-read for anyone navigating the uncertainties of life and seeking a path grounded in faith. As a recognized expert in Hopeology, Dr. Tompkins offers clear, practical, action-centered principles that empower readers to experience life-changing victories and embrace the abundant life Christ promised His followers. This book is an essential guide for those desiring to live with purpose, hope, and unwavering faith.

***—Linda Blackshear Smith***

Founder & President of DEE Ministries

As I read *God’s Way* by Apostle Rosalind Tompkins, I am discovering deep spiritual truths that are life changing. From the very first chapter, “Finding God’s Way,” I found myself immersed in its wisdom as each word carries divine inspiration and revelation. The presence of the Holy Spirit is evident throughout this book, as Apostle Rosalind’s words are inspired by God and filled with life-giving power.

I believe *God’s Way* will change the lives of many who read it as it contains divine truth and guidance that brings life to our souls, strengthens our relationship with God, and deepens our connection with our brothers and sisters in Christ. This is more than a book; it is a vessel of the Holy Spirit that will bring transformation to all who open their hearts to its message.

***—Pastor John Hensley Alerte***

Member of Turning Point International Alliance

# Dedication and Acknowledgments

I dedicate this book first and foremost to the Lord Jesus Christ, without whom I could not have written this book! He saved, delivered, and revealed God’s way to me, and I am eternally grateful.

Also, I dedicate this book to my daughter Janar, my grandchildren, Tayla, Mya, and Brian Jr., and to all the beautiful young men and women that are just starting out on this exciting journey with the Lord.

In addition, I dedicate this book to my dear husband, Dr. Richard Lester Kwame Lewis, who is truly my life partner and fellow sojourner on this highway of holiness. I thank God that we found each other when we did, and I look forward to blazing many trails with you all to the glory of God.

I also would like to dedicate this book to my mentors and spiritual advisors who poured into me as I traversed the path of really getting know the Lord and becoming the servant and thought leader that I am today: my former pastor, Tom Cabell, my spiritual father, Dr. Steven Govender, Missionary Louise Flynn, Bishop Dr. Mark Chironna, and Dr. Patricia Bailey whom I have travelled around the globe with. I am forever indebted to their guidance, teaching, examples, support, and love. **In addition, a heartfelt shout-out to Dr. Delatorro McNeil, whose powerful influence has added a fresh spark to my destiny—even in the short time we’ve known each other.**

Finally, this book is written in memory of my mother, the late Louise Oates Clark, in forever remembrance of her life that led me to find God when I was in despair. She never gave up on me and always prayed, supported, and loved me. I will forever remember her smile that lit up my life. I still see her smiling, and it continues to be a light of hope leading me on.

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**Foreword**

It is both an honor and a privilege to write the foreword for this powerful and timely book by Dr. Rosalind Lewis Tompkins. *God’s Way* is more than just a book—it is a practical handbook filled with profound life lessons that touch every area of our existence. Whether you are facing struggles relationally, financially, emotionally, mentally, physically, or spiritually, the insights found within these pages will provide guidance, encouragement, and hope.

This book is a practical tool for everyday living, offering golden nuggets of wisdom that will enrich your life and draw you into a deeper walk with the Lord. As you prayerfully read *God’s Way*, you will experience supernatural healing and restoration—an impartation of grace that transforms from the inside out. Dr. Tompkins does not simply share theory; she shares real-life experiences, hard-earned wisdom, and powerful revelations that she has gained through her own trials and tribulations. She writes from the heart, revealing how God set her free so that she, in turn, could help set others free.

Each chapter provides practical insights and actionable steps that, when embraced and applied, will revolutionize your thinking and ignite spiritual growth. The exercises at the end of each chapter are designed to deepen your understanding, offering an opportunity for personal reflection and transformation. Take the time to meditate on the principles shared, write down your responses, and allow God to guide you on this life-changing journey.

Through the pages of this book, you will discover that God’s way is the ultimate solution to every problem we face. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). This book is a testament to that truth, showing how walking in God’s way leads to victory, healing, and fulfillment.

I highly recommend prayerfully reading, studying, and applying this resource. As the Bible says, “Faith without works is dead” (James 2:26). The principles in this book are meant to be lived out, bringing transformation in both your life and the lives of those around you.

Thank you, Dr. Rosalind Lewis Tompkins, for your powerful testimony and for sharing this practical, spirit-filled workbook with the Body of Christ.

**—*Dr. Steven Govender***

Founder & President of Restoration and Revival Ministries International

**Introduction**

**Walking in His Way: My Story**

There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.

Proverbs 14:12 (NIV)

I believe it is no accident that you picked up this book at this moment in your life. *God’s Way* is a divine appointment—a guide to help you navigate the seasons of life as you search for truth, purpose, and deeper intimacy with God. My journey with the Lord began over forty years ago, and I’ve served in ministry for more than three decades. Yet, even after all these years, I’ll humbly admit—I didn’t always understand God’s way.

It took decades of surrendering, stumbling, learning, and rising again to begin to grasp the beauty and power of walking in step with Him. There were no shortcuts, no simple formulas—just a faithful God, guiding me through every trial and triumph.

I’ve experienced drug addiction, the loss of loved ones, and even seasons where I lost integrity in my walk with the Lord. But through it all, **I never lost hope**—and that was one of God’s ways of always bringing me back to Him. His Word, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, became my North Star. Along the way, He blessed me with mentors and spiritual insights that anchored me when I felt lost. And through it all, He never failed me. I want to encourage you today: **God will not fail you either.**

Over the next twenty-eight chapters, you’ll uncover life-changing truths and divine strategies for walking in *God’s Way*. Each chapter features teaching rooted in Scripture, practical applications from my own life experiences, heartfelt prayers, faith-building affirmations, and action steps to help you live out what you learn. You’ll also find daily tips to help you recognize and follow God’s direction in everyday moments. Whether you are new to the faith or have been walking with God for years, there is something here for you.

God created you to be unique. Your journey may look different from mine, but the foundation of God’s way is always the same because God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. I pray that this book will be a tool to help you on your journey to find everlasting peace and joy as you walk in God’s way.

# Chapter 1

# Finding God’s Way

Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight.

Exodus 33:13 (NKJV)

## It All Started with a Question

When Adam hid in the Garden of Eden, God asked, “Where are you?” Now, God didn’t need Adam’s GPS location—He already knew where Adam was. God asked the question because Adam had moved away from where he was supposed to be. Sin had entered Adam’s heart, and instead of walking confidently in his purpose, he was hiding in fear. Worse still, Adam didn’t take responsibility. He blamed Eve, who, in turn, blamed the serpent (Genesis 3). Sound familiar?

Fear and sin go hand in hand—they pull us out of alignment with God’s plan for our lives. Instead of standing boldly, we shrink back. Fear whispers lies, such as:

“You can’t do this.”

“You’re not good enough.”

“It’s safer to hide.”

But here’s the truth: *God did not give us fear.* As 2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV) says, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” Fear is an intruder—it didn’t come from God. His way for us is to live in peace, strength, and confidence (John 14:27). When we choose God’s way, fear loses its grip on our lives.

## Start by Asking Where Am I?

Imagine you’re holding a map, and the first thing you see is a dot that says, “You Are Here.*”* That’s where we all must start. To find God’s way, you need to first identify:

**Where you are**—spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

**How you got here**—honestly reflecting on the choices or struggles that led you here.

This isn’t easy. Like Adam and Eve, it’s tempting to point fingers. “It’s because of them,” or “Life just happened.” But blaming others keeps you stuck. God’s way begins when you take responsibility and say, “This is where I am, and I’m ready to move forward.”

God wants us to live a life of *wholeness*—spirit, soul, and body. As 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (KJV) says, “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless.” To find where you are, ask yourself:

**Spiritually**: Where am I in my relationship with God? Am I close to Him, or have I drifted?

**Emotionally**: What feelings are holding me back—fear, bitterness, anger, or doubt?

**Physically**: Am I taking care of my health and body, or neglecting myself?

When you answer these questions honestly, you begin to see where you need God’s help.

## Finding Your Way Forward

The next step is simple yet powerful: *Ask God for help.* Pray for His guidance to lead you out of fear, sin, or confusion and into your purpose. This might involve repentance—acknowledging where you’ve gone off track—but that’s part of the journey.

Isaiah 30:21 (NLT) promises us this: “Your own ears will hear Him. Right behind you a voice will say, ‘This is the way you should go,’ whether to the right or to the left.”

God doesn’t hide His way from you. His voice will guide you step by step.

## A Prayer to Find Your Way

Father God, I come to You today asking for Your help. Show me where I am and how I got here. Forgive me for allowing sin or fear to keep me stuck. I bind fear in Jesus’s name and choose to trust You. Help me to know and follow Your way and walk boldly in the purpose You have for my life. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I surrender my will to Jesus and follow God’s way for my life.
* I am whole—spirit, soul, and body.
* I will seek until I find God’s way for every area of my life.

## Action Steps

1. **Take time to reflect on your life.** Write down where you are spiritually, emotionally, and physically.
2. **Ask God to show you how you got here.** Be honest and open.
3. **If fear is holding you back, increase your faith** by reading and meditating on God’s Word.
4. **Share your reflections with a trusted person of faith** who can pray for you and encourage you.

**Remember**: Finding God’s way is a journey, not a race. Each step brings you closer to the life He has planned for you—*a life of peace, purpose, and abundance.* You’re not alone. God is with you, guiding you every step of the way.

**Chapter 2**

# God’s Abiding Way

# A Glimpse into My Walk with God

“My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?”

Psalm 42:2 (NKJV)

When I had my daughter, Janar, and got serious about living for Christ, we started attending church regularly. My pastor encouraged everyone to wake up early each day and spend time reading the Word and praying. As a single parent with an infant, it wasn’t easy at first. I thought about the extra sleep I could get as she was sleeping, but I decided to try and do it.

As I awoke in the wee hours of the morning to meet with the Lord, I discovered that the more time I spent in prayer and the Bible, the more strength and joy I gained. Those moments with God became the foundation of my faith. Even now, decades later, they remain the sweetest part of my life as I continue to spend intimate time with Him. And yes, there were times when sin, fear, or shame pulled me away. But every time I chose to come back, I found God waiting for me with open arms.

## Why Did God Create Us?

Have you ever wondered, “Why did God create us in the first place?” I know I have. After all, humans tend to mess things up. And yet, the answer is beautifully simple: *God loves us*. His love is so vast and so deep that He wanted people to share it with—people who would choose to love Him back.

We’re not so different, are we? Don’t we all long to be loved by people who genuinely want to be with us—not out of obligation, but because they choose us? God feels the same way. He doesn’t want us to come to Him just for what He can do or give; He wants a real, personal relationship.

## Seeking His Presence, Not Just His Hands

The Bible says in Psalm 27:8 (NIV), “My heart says of you, ‘Seek His face!’ Your face, LORD, I will seek.”

In Scripture, *“God’s face”* represents His presence. Too often, we only seek *His hands*—asking Him for blessings or solutions. But God desires something deeper. He longs for us to seek His face, to spend time with Him for who He is, not just what He does for us.

God’s love is so great that He made a way for us to be close to Him forever. He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins (John 3:16). And when Jesus returned to heaven, He gave us the Holy Spirit—His very presence living within us (Colossians 1:27). How amazing is that? We don’t just get to be near God; *He is within us.*

## God Desires Fellowship with Us

First Corinthians 1:9 (NLT) says, “God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The word *fellowship* in Greek is *koinonia*, and it means:

* fellowship
* community
* joint participation
* intimacy

Think about this: God looks forward to spending time with you—yes, *you*! Just like He looked for Adam when Adam missed their meeting in the Garden of Eden, God searches for us when we’re “out of place.” His desire for us doesn’t change in our good days or our bad ones.

Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV) reminds us,“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” God promises that when we seek Him, He will meet us there.

## Sin and Running from God

Let’s be honest, when we sin—when we “miss the mark”—our first instinct is often to hide, just like Adam. We feel shame, guilt, or fear. But here’s the truth:

*God already knows what happened.*

*He still loves you completely.*

*He’s the only one who can help you.*

When we mess up, we don’t need to run from God; we need to run *to Him*. First John 1:9 (KJV) says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Repentance isn’t about punishment; it’s about freedom. Acts 3:19 (NKJV) tells us that when we repent, “times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” That refreshing comes when we return to God’s presence—like stepping into the cool shade on a scorching day. King David understood this. After his failure with Bathsheba, he cried out in Psalm 51:11 (NKJV), “Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.” David knew the value of God’s presence and couldn’t bear to lose it. That’s how much we should desire it too.

## Abiding in God’s Presence

In John 15:4 (KJV), Jesus says: “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.” To *abide* means to remain, dwell, or stay close. It’s like spending time with a trusted friend. The more we abide in God—through prayer, worship, and reading His Word—the more we grow spiritually. From this place of fellowship, we begin to experience the *abundant life* Jesus promised.

## A Prayer to Abide in God’s Presence

Lord God, forgive me for any sin that has separated me from You. Create in me a clean heart and draw me close to You. I desire to abide in Your presence every day. Help me to seek You with all my heart and run to You no matter what. Thank You for Your mercy and unfailing love. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I will seek the Lord with all my heart.
* I will spend intimate time with the Lord daily.
* I delight in the Lord.

## Action Steps

1. Set aside time each day to be with God—pray, read the Bible, and worship.
2. Write down how you feel during these moments, what you sense God saying, and any insights He gives you.
3. If something (like sin or fear) is holding you back, confess it to God. He is ready to forgive and restore you.
4. Be consistent. Over time, you’ll notice your strength, peace, and purpose growing clearer.

**Remember**: *God longs to spend time with you*—not because He has to, but because He loves you deeply. In His presence, you’ll find peace, joy, and clarity like never before.

# Chapter 3

# God’s Higher Way

# My Journey to a Higher Place in God

Samuel answered Saul and said, “I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart.”

1 Samuel 9:19 (NKJV)

There was a time in my spiritual journey when I felt like there was more—a deeper depth and a higher height to God. Attending church and participating in services felt like merely scratching the surface. I longed for something greater, something beyond routine religion. As I began to spend more intentional time with God, I became serious about living according to His Word. A deep hunger and thirst for more of Him consumed me.

It wasn’t until I fully committed to seeking Him through prayer in the Spirit, fasting, and passionately pressing into His presence that I received greater revelation about living God’s way and my purpose. The more I surrendered and sought Him, the more He elevated me spiritually throughout all the transitions and seasons of my life.

I now understand what it means to be seated with Christ in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6), walking in a deeper dimension of His presence, power, and purpose. Pursuing God’s higher way has transformed my life, drawing me into a closeness with Him that I never imagined possible.

## Whose Way Are You Living?

You’ve probably heard someone say, “It’s my way or the highway.” It’s a phrase often used to force others to do things on their terms. But that kind of mindset is far from God’s way. In fact, when we say, “I’m doing it my way,” we’re often deceived. According to the Bible, there are really only *four ways to live:*

1. **God’s Way**—The Kingdom of God: Living by faith, led by the Holy Spirit, and guided by God’s Word.
2. **The Humanistic Way**—Focused on self (1 Corinthians 3:1–3).
3. **The World’s Way**—Based on pride, lust, and greed (1 John 2:16).
4. **The Devil’s Way**—Full of lies, manipulation, and destruction (James 3:15).

Only *God’s way* leads to truth, peace, and eternal life. The other three ways are part of the Kingdom of Darkness, rooted in deception. Even if someone claims to reject God or follow “their own path,” they’re unknowingly walking in darkness. That is why growing in Christ means choosing God’s higher way—every single day.

## What Does It Mean to “Go Higher”?

Former First Lady Michelle Obama famously said, “When they go low, we go high.”[[1]](#endnote-1) She explained that when people are cruel or act unfairly, we don’t stoop to their level. Instead, we choose a better response—a higher way.

This principle aligns with God’s Word as we are called to a higher way of living by treating others as we desire to be treated. Matthew 7:12 (NLT) tells us, “Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.”

God’s way takes us *above* negativity, challenges, and even our own emotions. It’s about living by *faith* instead of feelings, choosing to be led by the Spirit of God rather than reacting to circumstances. As God’s Word says in Romans 12:2 (NLT), “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

## God’s Way Is Higher

Isaiah 55:9 (NJKV) reminds us, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” How does God lead us to this “higher way”?

1. **Through His Word.**

Isaiah 55:10–11 (NIV) says, “As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish … so is My word that goes out from My mouth: It will not return to Me empty but will accomplish what I desire.”

When we allow God’s Word to guide us, it changes our thoughts, our decisions, and ultimately our lives. His Word never fails—it leads to higher living.

1. **Set your mind on things above.** Colossians 3:1–2 gives us practical guidance:
	* **Seek what is above**—Focus on God’s Kingdom, not earthly distractions.
	* **Set your mind on things above**—Fix your thoughts on God’s truth and promises.

When we set our minds on God’s way, we begin to live differently. Instead of being pulled down by life’s struggles, we are lifted up by His peace, joy, and purpose.

King Saul’s story is an example of finding a higher purpose. In 1 Samuel 9, Saul was searching for lost donkeys, but he ended up discovering his *destiny*—becoming the first king of Israel. What he thought was an ordinary task turned into a divine appointment. That’s what happens when we seek God’s higher way. It starts with being obedient to God’s Word, and as we do that, He reveals our purpose in ways we could never imagine.

## A Prayer for God’s Higher Way

Father God, I ask You to help me live according to Your way and not my own. Open my eyes to the truth of Your Word and fill me with Your Spirit daily. Deliver me from all evil and deception and lead me higher in You. Thank You, Father. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I live according to God’s way.
* I am seated with Christ in heavenly places.
* God is taking me higher every day.

## Action Steps

1. Spend time reading scriptures about your position in Christ. (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1–3)
2. Pray and ask God to renew your mind so you can embrace His higher way.
3. The Fruit of the Spirit is an excellent indication of living God’s way (Galatians 5:22–23). Take the *Fruit of the Spirit Self-Assessment Scale* (found in the appendix) each day. This tool helps you measure your growth in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
4. Reflect on areas where you’ve been living “your way” or the world’s way and commit those to God. Trust Him to guide you higher.

**Remember**: God’s way is not just better—it’s *higher.* When you follow Him, you rise above challenges, discover your purpose, and experience a life filled with peace and joy. Let Him take you higher today!

# Chapter 4

# Jesus Is the Way

# How God Moved in My Life

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.

Acts 4:12 (NIV)

At twelve years old, I smoked my first marijuana joint. I thought I knew the best way to live, and I believed adults and the Bible were outdated. For twelve long years, I walked a path of my own choosing, but it only led to trials, troubles, shame, and pain. It wasn’t until Jesus shined His light into my life that I realized I was lost.

He showed me the truth: *He is the way*. Jesus became my salvation, my deliverance, and my life. I have been free for over thirty-five years! It is not always easy, but following Jesus has brought me peace, purpose, and freedom I could never have found on my own.

## The Way Back to God

After Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, humanity lost its way. Life became a struggle, and sin brought death into the world (Romans 5:12). We were cut off from God’s perfect presence, wandering in darkness.

But God, in His love, made a way back for us—through *Jesus Christ.* Jesus came to restore what was lost, reconnect us with the Father, and offer us eternal life. Though life can still be hard, the good news is this: *Jesus is the way* to salvation, deliverance, and breakthrough.

## Why Is Jesus the Way?

Jesus’s death, burial, and resurrection paved a clear path for us to return to God. Before Jesus, we were stuck in sin and hopelessness. But when He came, He declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6 NIV).

Jesus isn’t *one* way among many; **He is THE Way**. Through Him, we have access to the Kingdom of God, where we find *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit* (Romans 14:17).

## What Does “The Way” Mean?

The word *way* in the New Testament carries a powerful meaning:

* A road or path
* A journey or course of action
* A way of thinking, feeling, and deciding

Early Christians were even called followers of *“The Way”* because they lived according to Jesus’s teachings. Today, we still face countless choices and directions in life. Which career? Which relationship? Which habits? The world offers endless options, but only one leads to true peace, purpose, and life: *God’s way through Jesus.*

## Surrendering to Jesus: The Good Shepherd

Let’s be honest, it’s not always easy to surrender control. We like to decide what’s best for ourselves. But Jesus promises us this: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30 NIV).

When we hand over control and follow Jesus, we discover He truly is the *Good Shepherd* (John 10:11). He leads us, protects us, and provides for us. We no longer have to strive or stumble—He shows us the way forward.

## Transformation Through Jesus

Following Jesus isn’t just about direction; it’s about *transformation.* The Bible says, “But we all, with unveiled faces, looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18 NAS).

When we focus on Jesus—through prayer, studying His Word, and imitating His character—the Holy Spirit changes us. It’s like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly. The old self disappears, and a new creation emerges (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The more we learn from Jesus, the more we reflect Him in our thoughts, actions, and decisions. This transformation is a daily process, but each step brings us closer to who God created us to be.

It all begins when we first accept Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior. The Word of God says in Romans 10:9 (BSB) that if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. This begins the journey with Jesus as *The Way*.

## A Prayer to Follow Jesus

Father God, I thank You for sending Jesus to be the way, the truth, and the life. Help me to follow Him more closely each day. Transform me into the likeness of Christ and help me let go of the world’s ways. I surrender my will to You. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* Jesus is my way to wholeness.
* I am becoming more like Christ each day.
* I am a disciplined follower of Christ Jesus.

## Action Steps

1. Spend time reading the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—to learn about Jesus’s life, teachings, and character.
2. Reflect on how you can become more like Jesus. Write down specific areas where you need His help (e.g., patience, forgiveness, compassion).
3. Pray and ask God to show you practical steps to follow His way each day.
4. Trust Jesus as your Good Shepherd—bringing every decision, problem, and need to Him in prayer.

**Remember**: Jesus is not just the way to eternal life—He is the way to a fulfilled, abundant life here and now. When you follow Him, you will find clarity, peace, and purpose. Choose *His way* today.

# Chapter 5

# God’s Way of Grace and Mercy

# Lessons from My Walk

Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4:16 (NIV)

When I first became a Christian, I always felt like I wasn’t doing enough and that I needed to spend every minute of my time:

praying more,

reading my Bible more,

going to church more, and

helping others more.

The sad part is that I felt like it was not enough, no matter what I did, and that *I was not enough.* This was how I often felt growing up, like *I was never enough.* I also felt guilty and unworthy because of the lifestyle I was delivered from. I even heard sermons reinforcing this mindset, making me think I had to earn God’s love.

I remember responding to altar calls for salvation repeatedly because I didn’t understand grace. Over time, I realized that, *in Christ, I was enough,* and His grace was sufficient for me. I wasn’t perfect, and I never would be. But here’s the beauty of grace: *God loves and accepts me anyway.*

The moment I stopped striving and started resting in God’s grace, everything changed. I became gentler, kinder, and less judgmental toward myself and others. I also learned to let God’s grace flow through me. The power of His grace saved me and continues to make me more like Christ every day.

## God’s True Nature

Many people see God as an angry judge, waiting for us to mess up so He can punish us. This is often because of some of the acts of God we see in the Old Testament. But when we really get to know God’s way, we see that it is not the case. The truth is *God is love* (1 John 4:16). He is full of grace and mercy. He doesn’t want to condemn us; He wants to love us back to wholeness.

The enemy brings destruction, but *God’s way* is grace—His unearned favor—and mercy, His compassion in action. As the Bible says,“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full” (John 10:10 NIV).

## Grace and Mercy in Action

From the very beginning, we see God’s grace and mercy at work. When Adam and Eve sinned, God didn’t destroy them. Instead, He:

1. covered their nakedness, and
2. protected them from eating from the Tree of Life and living eternally in a fallen state.

Even when He judged the world in Noah’s time, His mercy preserved Noah and his family because “Noah found favor and grace in the eyes of the LORD” (Genesis 6:8 AMP).

God’s grace isn’t a new idea. It’s His way of showing *lovingkindness* to a broken world.

## What Is Grace and Mercy?

**Grace**: God’s unmerited favor. It’s His gift, not something we earn.

**Mercy**: God’s compassion in action, giving us what we don’t deserve.

We first encounter grace and mercy through *salvation:*

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.” (Ephesians 2:8 ESV)

“He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy.” (Titus 3:5 NIV)

## Living in Grace, Not Dead Works

Here’s where many Christians get it wrong: we receive grace for salvation but try to live the Christian life through our own efforts. This leads to *dead works*—actions not led by the Holy Spirit.

Dead works can look good on the outside, but they lack the power of God. We may:

* serve others because we think we “should” or to prove our worth, or
* try to be perfect and avoid sin in our own strength.

But God never intended for us to strive like this. Instead, He calls us to *enter His rest* (Hebrews 4). Grace allows us to stop striving and let God work through us.

## Grace Empowers Us

Grace isn’t just unmerited favor; it’s also *power.* God’s grace gives us the strength to live for Him. As Paul said, “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me” (1 Corinthians 15:10 NIV).

When we stop trying to do it on our own and rely on God’s grace, we find freedom, peace, and power to live the life He’s called us to live.

## A Prayer for Grace and Mercy

Lord God, thank You for Your amazing grace and mercy. Help me to live by Your grace and not my own strength. Teach me to rely on You and allow Your Spirit to work in and through me. Show me how to extend grace to others as You have shown grace to me. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I am what I am by God’s grace and mercy.
* I allow God’s grace to flow in my life.
* I live and overcome by the power of God’s grace.

## Action Steps

1. **Reflect on your walk with God.** Are you living in grace or striving in your own strength?
2. **Write down areas where you feel weak, pressured, or guilty.** Bring them to God in prayer and ask for His grace to empower you.
3. **Meditate on key Scriptures about grace,** such as Ephesians 2:8, 2 Corinthians 12:9, and Hebrews 4:16.
4. **Trust the Holy Spirit to guide you.** Ask God to show you where and how He wants to work through you instead of relying on dead works.

**Remember**: Grace is God’s gift to you—not something you earn. *It empowers you to live free, love others, and rest in Him.* Let His grace flow through you today!

# Chapter 6

# God’s Force of Faith

# My Faith Story

And without faith it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

Hebrews 11:6 (NIV)

As a single parent raising my daughter, Janar, there were times when I didn’t know how we would make it. I didn’t have money, resources, or answers. There were moments when the only thing in our freezer was ice.

But I knew one thing: I could not go back to my old life of drugs and alcohol. I chose to hold on to my faith in God, and time after time, He came through for us. He provided in ways I could never have imagined, and He continues to provide to this day.

Faith in God was—and still is—my foundation.

## When Everything Shakes, Faith Remains

Loss is something we all face—whether it’s the loss of a loved one, a relationship, a job, or even stability in life. When everything around us feels shaken, it’s easy to feel lost and overwhelmed. But the Bible reassures us, “The words ‘once more’ plainly show that the created things will be shaken and removed, so that the things that cannot be shaken will remain (Hebrews 12:27 GNT).

What cannot be shaken? *The eternal forces of God: faith, hope, and love.* These form the foundation of our relationship with God and will endure forever (1 Corinthians 13:13).

## What Is Faith?

The Bible tells us, “Have faith in God” (Mark 11:22 NIV). Faith isn’t just positive thinking or blind belief—it’s a divine gift. The Greek word for faith, *pistis*, means *God’s divine persuasion.* It is:

* a gift from God, birthed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and
* trust and confidence in God’s ability, not our own.

Faith is not something we can produce on our own. Instead, it comes through *hearing and believing God’s Word:* “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17 NKJV).

## Belief vs. Faith

Belief and faith are connected, but they are not the same.

**Belief** (*Pisteuó*): Our human ability to trust God. It’s where faith begins.

**Faith** (*Pistis*): God’s supernatural gift that grows in our hearts as we yield to Him.

Jesus said*,* “Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you” (Matthew 17:20 NIV).

Faith isn’t about the size of your confidence; it’s about the greatness of God’s power. Even the smallest seed of faith can produce impossible results because *faith is God’s ability working in us.*

## Why Faith Matters

Faith is so important that Jesus prayed specifically for Peter’s faith not to fail. He said, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:31–32 ESV).

The enemy’s goal is to steal our faith because it is the foundation of our victory. That’s why we are told to:

* Fight the good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12), and
* Pray for each other’s faith to remain strong, just as Jesus did.

When the storms of life are raging, faith is a sure foundation that you can depend on to stand firm and secure.

## Faith Brings Miracles

Throughout Scripture, faith is often the key to receiving a miracle. When Jesus healed the sick, He often said,“Your faith has healed you. Go in peace” (Luke 8:48 NIV).

Faith is powerful. It unlocks the supernatural power of God to heal, deliver, and provide. As 1 John 5:4 (NIV) declares, “For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.”

Faith isn’t blind; it is rooted in God’s promises. Even when we don’t see immediate results, faith enables us to trust God’s Word and timing.

## Walking by Faith, Not Sight

The Bible says: “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7 NKJV). Faith doesn’t rely on what we can see, hear, or feel. Instead, faith focuses on *God’s eternal truth.* When life looks hopeless, faith reminds us of this promise: “So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18 NIV). Through faith and patience, we inherit God’s promises (Hebrews 6:12).

## A Prayer to Strengthen Your Faith

Father God, forgive me for the times when I have doubted You. Strengthen my faith and help me to trust in You completely. Remind me of Your faithfulness and fill me with confidence in Your Word. I believe that You will provide, protect, and guide me through every trial. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I overcome by the force of faith.
* I have faith in God’s promises.
* My faith is growing stronger every day.

## Action Steps

1. **Spend time in God’s Word to grow your faith** (Romans 10:17). Go to church and listen to sermons that build your faith in God.
2. **Write down specific things you are believing God for.** Be bold in your prayers and trust Him with the impossible.
3. **Reflect on past victories where God has come through for you.** Let those testimonies encourage your faith.
4. **Pray for yourself and for others**, asking God to strengthen your faith during challenging times.

**Remember**: Faith is the force that connects you to God’s power. It is not about what you can do but about trusting what *He can do.* With faith, mountains move, miracles happen, and victory is assured. Hold on to your faith—it will never fail you!

# Chapter 7

# God’s Force of Hope

# Becoming a Hopeologist®

For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?

Romans 8:24 (NIV)

I call myself a **Hopeologist**—I have even trademarked the name, and I license others to use it because I believe in the power of hope to change lives.

After over thirty-five years of freedom, I still know what it feels like to be hopeless, lost, and unsure of how to move forward. Through God’s grace, I found hope, and it compelled me to keep trying and never give up! Eventually, I was able to share that hope with others.

I became an advocate of hope through my work with **Mothers In Crisis**, the nonprofit I started four years into my recovery from drugs and alcohol. Since then, I’ve created the **Practice of Hopeology**© to help others keep hope alive, no matter what challenges they face.

Being a Hopeologist means promoting, advocating, and being immersed in hope—studying, researching, living, and sharing hope—filled with the possibilities and promises of God, even when life feels uncertain.

Hopeologist services are the products, workshops, retreats, seminars, and outreaches all designed to promote and advocate for hope.

## Hope: A Light in the Darkness

Hope is essential—especially in the times we’re living in. It’s like a light shining in the darkness, a steady glow that reminds us that God is still working.

First Corinthians 13:13 (NLT) tells us: “Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.”

Hope is the bridge between faith and love. It sits in the “hallway” of waiting—expecting God’s promises to come to pass. Waiting is hard, but hope tells us *how* to wait: with confidence, trust, and assurance that God is faithful.

## Hope Renews Our Strength

Isaiah 40:31 (NIV) says, “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 faint.”

Some Bible translations use the word “wait” instead of “hope.” But I love the word *hope* because it adds a deeper meaning. “To hope” is not passive—it’s an active, confident expectation that God will come through.

Hope is our anchor when life’s storms hit. According to Hebrews 6:19 (NIV), “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure … .” An anchor keeps a ship from drifting in rough waters. Similarly, hope keeps us grounded in God’s promises when we face challenges.

## Jesus: The Door of Hope

Jesus is our ultimate hope. His death, burial, and resurrection created a path for us to be reconciled with God. In John 10:9 (KJV), Jesus said, “I am the door: by me if any man enters in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”

This door represents hope. Even when we’re in a “valley of trouble,” God provides a way out through Jesus. Hosea 2:15 (NIV) paints this beautiful picture: “I will make the Valley of Achor [trouble] a door of hope.”

The story of Hosea and Gomer demonstrates God’s grace. Even when we are unfaithful or find ourselves in troubling circumstances, God opens a **door of hope**. Jesus is that door, the One who always provides a way back to Him.

## When Hope Feels Delayed

Proverbs 13:12 (NLT) says, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a dream fulfilled is a tree of life.”

Waiting can be difficult. When our prayers seem unanswered or our dreams feel out of reach, it’s easy to lose hope. Many people wonder, *What if I never get what I’m hoping for?*

Here’s the key: *When we align our desires with God’s will, hope will never disappoint us.* Psalm 37:4 (NKJV) says, “Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.”

As we live God’s way, our desires begin to reflect His purpose for our lives. And even if things don’t happen the way we expect, hope assures us that God is still at work. Romans 5:5 (NIV) reminds us,“And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.”

## A Prayer to Keep Hope Alive

Father God, thank You for the gift of hope. Help me to keep hope alive in my life, even in difficult times. Breathe new life into the areas where I’ve given up hope. Remind me that as long as I have You, I have hope. Thank You, Lord, for never giving up on me. I love You. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I am full of hope.
* Hope is my anchor.
* As long as there is breath in my body, there is still hope.

## Action Steps

1. **Take inventory.** Write down everything you are hoping for. Be honest about how long you’ve been waiting.
2. **Align your desires.** Reflect on whether your hopes line up with God’s will for your life.
3. **Look for God’s movement.** Even if things seem delayed, write down small ways you’ve seen God working in each area. Remember, He moves in mysterious ways.
4. **Anchor yourself in God’s Word.** Meditate on Scriptures about hope, such as Hebrews 6:19, Isaiah 40:31, and Romans 5:5.

**Remember**: **Hope is not wishful thinking.** It is a confident expectation that God will do what He has promised. Hope keeps us moving forward, even when life feels uncertain. Let Jesus, the door of hope, guide you through every valley and into the promises of God.

# Chapter 8

# God’s Loving Way

# A Mother’s Love

We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in His love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.

1 John 4:16 (NLT)

I first experienced unconditional love when I gave birth to my daughter, Janar. Holding her in my arms, I began to understand the love God has for us, His children. That moment transformed my love walk. I also finally understood the unconditional love of my mother, who never gave up on me during the darkest of times.

As I learned to accept God’s unconditional love, I learned to love others the same way. God showed me that it wasn’t about what they did or did not do; it was about letting His love flow through me. Once I learned how to get out of the way so God could have His way, it became easier. I still have moments when it is hard, but God’s love always shines through in the end.

## The Greatest of These Is Love

As we’ve seen, the Bible highlights three eternal forces: **faith, hope, and love**. But 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIV) tells us, “The greatest of these is love.”

Why? Because love is the very nature of God. Love is who He is. It’s the foundation of our relationship with Him and the key to living God’s way.

## Love: The Great Commandment

Under the Mosaic Law, there were 613 commandments to follow. Yet when Jesus came, He simplified the law to two commandments: “‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:37–40 NLT).

At the heart of God’s way is **love for God, love for others, and love for ourselves**. Yet, let’s be honest—it’s not always easy to love. That’s because we often misunderstand what true love looks like.

## How God Loves Us

God showed us what love truly is when He sent Jesus to die for our sins: “God showed how much He loved us by sending His one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him” (1 John 4:9 NLT).

Jesus Himself said, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13 NIV).

God’s love is **sacrificial**, generous, and unconditional. He doesn’t love us based on who we are or what we’ve done—He loves us because of who **He** is. God is love.

## Loving Through God’s Spirit

It’s impossible to love like God does in our own strength. Our natural love is often conditional—it comes with “hooks,” like:

*“I’ll love you if you treat me well.”*

*“I’ll love you if you meet my expectations.”*

But God’s love—**Agape love**—is different. It’s divine, selfless, and unconditional. Romans 5:5 (NIV) tells us, “God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”

When we surrender to God’s Spirit, we become vessels of His love because love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). It flows through us, touching others in ways that go beyond our human capacity.

## Unconditional Love

God’s love doesn’t change based on our performance. Even when we fail, He still loves us: “Nothing in all creation can separate us from God’s love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord!” (Romans 8:39 CEV)

That’s the kind of love God wants us to show others. It’s not about “falling in love” or “falling out of love.” Love is a **choice** we make daily—a commitment to act with patience, kindness, and selflessness.

The world’s version of love is shallow. It’s based on feelings, appearances, or what someone can do for us. But true love is deeper than that. It’s about choosing to love, even when it’s hard.

## The Power of Love

The late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, “Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”[[2]](#endnote-2)

There is no greater force on earth than **love**. First Corinthians 13 beautifully describes God’s kind of love:

*Love is patient.*

*Love is kind.*

*It does not envy or boast.*

*It keeps no record of wrongs.*

*It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

*Love never fails.*

This kind of love is only possible when we die to ourselves—our selfishness, pride, and sinful nature—and allow God’s Spirit to work through us. “You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love” (Galatians 5:13 NIV).

## A Prayer to Walk in God’s Love

Father God, I ask You to examine my heart and show me where I need to strengthen my love walk. Teach me to love You, others, and myself as You love me. Help me to die to my selfish nature and allow Your love to flow through me. Thank You for loving me unconditionally and for sending Jesus into my life. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I love as God loves.
* God’s love flows through me.
* I choose to love unconditionally every day.

## Action Steps

1. **Examine your love walk.** Reflect on how you treat God, others, and yourself. Are there areas where you need to grow in love?
2. **Check your motives.** Ask God to reveal whether your actions are truly motivated by love.
3. **Let go of selfishness.** Identify areas where you need to die to your sinful nature so you can love as God loves.
4. **Read 1 Corinthians 13.** Meditate on the characteristics of love and ask the Holy Spirit to help you walk them out daily.

**Remember**: Love is not just a feeling—it’s a choice and a force that changes lives. **God’s love is patient, kind, and unconditional.** When we allow His love to flow through us, we become instruments of His grace in a world that so desperately needs it. Choose to walk in **God’s loving way** today!

# Chapter 9

# God’s Way of Forgiveness

# Testament of God’s Power of Forgiveness

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Colossians 3:13 (NIV)

Over the years, I have prayed for many people who struggled with unforgiveness. Some have experienced horrific abuse or betrayal. I understand their pain—I, too, faced childhood abuse that scarred me deeply.

At first, I “forgave” with my words, but bitterness still lingered in my heart. It was not until I matured in my relationship with the Lord that I learned to forgive **from my heart**. Forgiving from my heart required me to release the pain and hurt as I cried out to God. He then poured in the healing and wholeness that I needed.

Forgiveness, I discovered, is like a spiritual cleanse—it releases toxins from your soul. Now, I apply forgiveness regularly, knowing that it keeps me free.

## The Gift of Forgiveness

When Jesus died on the cross, He paid the price for the sins of the entire world. Under the Old Covenant, the law required the shedding of blood—animal sacrifices—to receive forgiveness. But Jesus’s death changed everything. Romans 3:25 (NIV) says, “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of His blood—to be received by faith.”

Through Jesus, we are forgiven and cleansed. This is God’s incredible gift to us, and without it, we would be doomed to eternal separation from Him.

## Receiving God’s Forgiveness

To confess means to agree with God that we have sinned. When we come to Him with humility and honesty, He is always ready to forgive and restore us. First John 1:9 (NKJV) says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

This forgiveness is a blessing—but it also comes with a requirement: **we must forgive others**.

## The Command to Forgive Others

Jesus clearly teaches us, “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (Matthew 6:14–15 NIV).

Additionally, in Mark 11:25 (NIV), Jesus says, “And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

Forgiving others is not optional. It is a command—and it is for our benefit.

## True Forgiveness Comes from the Heart

Forgiveness is hard, especially when someone has hurt us deeply. Sometimes, we say the words “I forgive you” but hold onto bitterness in our hearts. How do we know if we have truly forgiven someone? Ask yourself:

*How do I feel when I think about or see the person who wronged me?*

*Do I feel bitterness, anger, or a desire for revenge?*

If those feelings overwhelm you, it is a sign that you need to forgive again—and keep forgiving until your heart is free.

Jesus teaches us to forgive *“seventy times seven”* (Matthew 18:22 NLT), meaning there is no limit to how often we must forgive.

## Loving Your Enemies

The only way to truly forgive is through God’s love working in us. Jesus said, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:44–45 NIV).

Praying for those who have hurt us softens our hearts and releases us from anger. It does not mean that what they did was okay, but it frees us from the weight of unforgiveness.

Romans 12:20 (NIV) reminds us, “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.”

When we choose to bless those who hurt us, we allow God’s love to flow through us, replacing bitterness with compassion.

## Jesus: The Perfect Example of Forgiveness

While hanging on the cross, in unimaginable pain, Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34 NIV).

Similarly, Stephen, while being stoned, cried out, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin” (Acts 7:60 NKJV).

Both Jesus and Stephen forgave from their hearts. They teach us that forgiveness is not about our feelings; it is a choice to obey God and trust Him to heal our wounds.

## Forgiveness Brings Freedom

When we forgive, we release others from the debt we think they owe us. More importantly, we release **ourselves** from the prison of bitterness, resentment, and anger.

Psalm 103:12 (NIV) says, “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”

If God forgives us completely and wipes the slate clean, we must do the same for others. Holding onto unforgiveness is like drinking poison and expecting someone else to suffer—it only harms us.

## A Prayer to Forgive

Father God, thank You for forgiving me of all my sins. Help me to forgive those who have hurt me, just as You have forgiven me. I release all bitterness, anger, and resentment to You. Lord, keep my heart pure, and teach me to walk in love, even toward those who wrong me. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* God forgives me.
* I choose to forgive others daily.
* Forgiveness sets me free.

## Action Steps

1. **Examine your heart.** Is there anyone—living or dead—you need to forgive? Write down the names of anyone who comes to mind.
2. **Release them to God.** Pray over each person, asking God to help you forgive them fully from your heart.
3. **Let go of the “record.”** Forgiveness means wiping the slate clean. Ask God to help you let go of past hurts completely.
4. **Pray for those who hurt you.** Bless them as Jesus commanded. Pray for God to heal their hearts and lives.

**Remember**: Forgiveness is not about excusing someone’s behavior; **it is about freeing your heart from the weight of bitterness.** When you choose to forgive, you open the door to healing, peace, and God’s love. Forgiveness is God’s way—and His way always leads to freedom.

# Chapter 10

# God’s Pressing Way

# Pressing On Despite Opposition

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:14 (ESV)

When I surrendered my life completely to God, I committed to living a “sold-out” life for Him. But I was surprised by the opposition that came from family, friends, and even fellow believers.

Just as I had totally given myself over to the lifestyle of drugs and alcohol, I passionately gave myself to God. I would hear things like, “*It doesn’t take all that*,” referring to my church attendance, praying, and living for Christ. What people did not realize is that it took all that and more!

Their opinions and misunderstandings could have stopped me. But I chose to press on. Why? Because the prize—**Christ Jesus**—is worth far more than anyone’s opinion. And to this day, I continue to press forward because nothing compares to walking in God’s way.

## The Misconception of an Easy Life

Many people believe that once they accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior, life will become smooth and trouble-free—a “bed of roses.” Unfortunately, that is not what God promises.

God does not call us to lives of ease, comfort, or pleasure. Those are empty promises the world offers through money, relationships, alcohol, or other pursuits. People chase after these things but never find true satisfaction.

Instead, God calls us to **Jesus Christ**, where we find true righteousness, peace, and joy in the Kingdom of God (Romans 14:17 NIV). Life with Christ is not free from struggle, but it is filled with purpose, strength, and eternal rewards.

## The Call to Press On

The word *“press,”* according to Strong’s Concordance, means **“to pursue earnestly with all haste.”** It implies urgency, effort, and perseverance.

In Philippians 3:14 (NIV), the apostle Paul compares the Christian life to a race. We are called to **press on**—to run with focus and determination, aiming for the ultimate prize: **Christ Jesus**.

You might ask, *“If I’ve already received Jesus as my Savior, why do I need to press on?”* The answer lies in **God’s narrow way**: “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it” (Matthew 7:13–14 NIV).

The narrow way requires pressing because it is **constricted** and filled with challenges. It is God’s way, and it requires perseverance.

## Why We Must Press

As we walk in God’s way, opposition will come that wants you to:

**Give up**—stop altogether because of discouragement or exhaustion.

**Give in**—compromise and go along with what is against God’s will.

**Give out**—become physically, emotionally, or spiritually drained.

The enemy (*Satan*) will use these tactics to stop you. He knows that if you give up, give in, or give out, you lose blessings and miss out on God’s purpose for your life.

But here is the good news: **God equips you to press on**. If you do not give up, give in, or give out, you will overcome!

## Overcoming Opposition

The opposition may come from unexpected places like family, friends, or even other believers. They may not understand your commitment to living fully for Christ. Sometimes, they mean well, but they can unknowingly be used by the enemy to distract or discourage you.

Jesus experienced this with Peter, one of His disciples. “Jesus turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns’” (Matthew 16:23 NIV).

It is important to recognize that the enemy works through people to try to stop you. However, the Bible reminds us, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 6:12 NIV).

## How to Press Through

1. **Submit to God and Resist the Devil**

“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7)

Focus on pursuing God, not the enemy. Submit to Him, stand firm in His Word, and resist the devil’s attacks through prayer and Scripture.

1. **Speak God’s Word**

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, He resisted the devil by quoting Scripture: *“It is written …”* (Luke 4:4 NIV). Knowing God’s Word equips you to fight back when the enemy tries to steal, kill, or destroy your peace and purpose.

1. **Rely on God’s Strength**

When you feel tired, weak, or discouraged, turn to God for strength. He promises to renew you when you wait on Him (Isaiah 40:31 NKJV).

1. **Keep Your Eyes on the Prize**

Press on, knowing that your ultimate reward is Christ Jesus. The struggles and challenges you face now will pale in comparison to the joy of knowing Him fully (Philippians 3:14 NIV).

## A Prayer for Strength to Press On

Lord God, I come to You today asking for strength to press on. In the areas where I feel weak, tired, or discouraged, renew my energy and fill me with Your power. I submit to You, Lord, and I resist the devil. Help me to never give up, give in, or give out as I pursue Your way for my life. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I submit to God and resist the devil.
* I press on toward the prize of Christ Jesus.
* I will not give up, give in, or give out.

## Action Steps

1. **Identify areas of struggle.** Are there areas where you have given up, given in, or given out? Write them down and bring them to God in prayer.
2. **Search the Scriptures.** Find verses that encourage perseverance and victory. Memorize them so you can speak the Word of God over your life during seasons of opposition.
3. **Submit daily to God.** Start each day by committing your life to God and resisting the devil through prayer.
4. **Refocus on the prize.** Keep your eyes on Jesus and remember that pressing through challenges will lead to eternal rewards.

**Remember**: God’s way is not always easy, but it is always worth it. Press on, no matter what the opposition may be. **Your reward is greater than you can imagine, and God will give you the strength to keep moving forward.** The prize of knowing Christ Jesus fully is worth every effort!

# Chapter 11

# God’s Way of Holiness

# Finding Joy in Holiness

Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

Hebrews 12:14 (NIV)

When I became a Christian, I heard about “holiness,” and I thought it meant looking and acting very stern and unappealing. I visited a few churches whose denomination was “Holiness,” and it seemed as though no one smiled or laughed much, and all the women were dressed in long, drab dresses and wore no makeup. It seemed like holiness was serious business in those places. Because of this, I was afraid of what holiness would cost me—fun, relationships, and comfort. But as I began walking with the Lord, I discovered that holiness for me meant that:

* I no longer needed external things to find peace. I had the **Prince of Peace** within me.
* I didn’t need substances or distractions to feel good. The **Holy Spirit** brought real, lasting joy.
* I was **transformed from the inside out**. My heart, thoughts, and actions changed naturally because of God’s presence in my life.

Holiness, which once seemed restrictive, became a source of **freedom** and **purpose**. I gained far more than I ever lost. I finally realized that holiness allows us to live in closeness with God and discover the joy, peace, and freedom that come from following His ways.

Isaiah 35:8 (NLT) says, “And a great road will go through that once deserted land. It will be named the Highway of Holiness. Evil-minded people will never travel on it. It will be only for those who walk in God’s ways; fools will never walk there.”

## Holiness: Misunderstood Yet Essential

Holiness is often misunderstood. Many view it as a set of strict rules, outward appearances, or a long list of “dos and don’ts.” This shallow understanding misses the heart of what holiness truly is.

Holiness is not about looking religious on the outside. It’s about being **set apart** for God—an inner transformation that leads to an outward reflection of Christ. As my copyrighted poem “Transformation” says, “Look inside where Christ resides and see the new creation that you were born again to be; Allow the process of transformation to begin taking you off the ground and into the trees; Flying high in the Spirit with wings like none you’ve ever seen. But now you possess and your soul can caress life and that more abundantly!”[[3]](#endnote-3)

Holiness isn’t restrictive; it’s **liberating**. It’s not about loss; it’s about **gaining everything God has for you**.

## What Does “Holy” Mean?

Holiness means being **set apart**—separated from sin and dedicated to God’s purposes. The Bible uses two powerful words for holiness:

**Qodesh** (Hebrew, Isaiah 35:8): “Set apart, consecrated for a special purpose.”

**Hagiasmos** (Greek, Hebrews 12:14): “To sanctify, to make holy, to purify.”

## From Secular to Sacred

Holiness changes how we live and what we prioritize. The difference between the **sacred** and the **secular** lies in their **use**.

*Sacred:* Devoted to God and used for His purposes.

*Secular:* Disconnected from God and God’s purposes. Although for believers, God uses everything to work together for our good. (Romans 8:28)

When we are saved, God sets us apart. We move from being “only human” to becoming **partakers of the divine nature.** Second Peter 1:3–4 (NLT) says, “By His divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life … And because of His glory and excellence, He has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share His divine nature and escape the world’s corruption caused by human desires.”

Holiness is the process of **living out God’s nature** in us. It’s about being different than, not better than, others.

### Step 1: Being Set Apart (Sanctified)

The journey to holiness begins with salvation—surrendering your life to Jesus Christ.

At salvation, we declare:

*“Here I am, Lord.”*

*“I belong to You.”*

*“I trust in Jesus’s finished work on the cross.”*

John 17:17 (NIV) says, “Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth.” Romans 12:1 is another example of a sanctifying Scripture: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”

As we surrender, we separate ourselves from the world’s corruption and devote ourselves fully to God.

### Step 2: Transformation

Holiness is not a one-time event; it’s a **lifelong process** of becoming more like Jesus. Romans 12:2 (NIV) says, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind … .”

## How Transformation Happens

Holiness begins in the **heart** and flows into our words, thoughts, and actions. This happens when we:

1. **Read God’s Word**: The Bible reveals God’s ways and transforms our thinking. It shows us how to live holy lives.
2. **Interact with the Holy Spirit**: God’s Spirit convicts, teaches, and empowers us to walk in holiness. He leads us into all truth.
3. **Fellowship with believers**: Surrounding ourselves with other Christians helps us grow, receive encouragement, and stay accountable.

## What Holiness Gives Us

Second Corinthians 6:17–18 (NIV) promises,“Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” And “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

While holiness may require leaving behind old habits, relationships, or lifestyles, the rewards are far greater:

**Peace**: True peace comes from the Prince of Peace, not worldly substitutes.

**Joy**: The Holy Spirit gives us deep, lasting joy—no temporary highs needed.

**Purpose**: Living for God’s glory brings fulfillment and meaning.

Holiness sets us apart **for God**—and in return, He draws close to us with His presence, promises, and blessings.

## Cleansing the Heart

Holiness is about inner purity, not outward performance. King David prayed, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10 ESV).

When we confess our sins and repent, God forgives and restores us: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9 NKJV).

Daily cleansing of our hearts keeps us aligned with God’s holiness.

## A Prayer for Holiness

Father God, I ask You to help me become more like Christ. Forgive me for sinning against You in thought, word, and deed. Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me. Help me to walk in holiness, and please set me apart for Your purposes. I surrender my life to You. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I am holy and set apart for God.
* I have the mind of Christ.
* I am living my best life in Christ.

## Action Steps

1. **Pray for transformation.** Ask God to reveal areas where you need to grow in holiness.
2. **Limit distractions.** Step back from people or habits that pull you away from God’s purpose.
3. **Celebrate victories.** Acknowledge where God has helped you overcome things that don’t align with His will.
4. **Meditate on Scripture.** Focus on verses about holiness, like Psalm 51:10, Romans 12:1–2, 2 Corinthians 6:17–18, 2 Corinthians 7:1, and 1 John 1:9.

**Remember**: Holiness isn’t about restrictions; **it’s about being set apart for God’s purposes**. It’s a joyful process of transformation that brings peace, purpose, and God’s presence into your life. When you embrace holiness, you discover the life you were created to live.

# Chapter 12

# God’s Joyful Way

# Joy in the Midst of Trials

Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

Nehemiah 8:10 (NIV)

I experienced the power of joy during some of the most devastating times of my life. It didn’t remove the pain, but it gave me the strength to endure and brought relief and hope. Like the time when my mother passed away. It was a time of great sorrow and joy. Sorrow, because I would miss her dearly, and joy, because God had given her eighty-five years of life.

I was fortunate that God gave me seven years of her living with me before her death. She did not die from a long-term illness. She held her great-granddaughter in her arms in the hospital and fell sick soon after. She never left the hospital.

I didn’t feel like smiling or laughing, but I allowed God’s joy to rise within me as I remembered her love and her awesome smile; it was like spiritual medicine. I could see beyond my pain and remember God’s blessings.

The joy of the Lord is truly my strength!

## The Power and Purpose of Joy

Joy is a powerful and essential part of walking with Jesus Christ. It is God’s way of strengthening and refreshing us, no matter what challenges we face. I like to call joy our **spiritual anesthesia**—it eases pain and lightens burdens, even in the midst of fiery trials.

Many people confuse **joy** with **happiness**, but they are not the same:

**Happiness** depends on what is *happening*. It’s external and temporary.

**Joy** is spiritual, internal, and constant. It comes from God’s presence and promises.

Even in devastating situations, joy has the power to bring **relief** and **hope**. That’s why the Bible says, “The joy of the LORD is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10 NIV).

## What Is True Joy?

In the Bible, “joy” carries profound meaning:

* In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word **chedvah** means *“to rejoice”* or *“to be glad.”* It refers to a deep, spiritual joy rooted in God’s presence and blessing.
* In the New Testament, the Greek word **chara** describes a joy that is not dependent on circumstances but comes from the Holy Spirit. It is a fruit of the Spirit, as seen in Galatians 5:22, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness …”

Joy is not just an emotional response—it’s a **spiritual force** that fuels us to keep going. It comes from our relationship with God and overflows into every part of our lives.

## Joy Gives Us Strength

When we face hardship, it can feel impossible to find joy. Yet, even in the darkest times, joy gives us the **strength to endure**.

Hebrews 12:2 (ESV) reveals this truth: “Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

While suffering on the cross, Jesus focused on **joy**. What was that joy? It was **us**—our salvation and reconciliation with God. The joy of fulfilling His purpose and seeing lives redeemed gave Him the strength to endure the pain.

We can do the same. When you are facing a challenge:

* Look ahead to the finished result, and
* Let the vision of joy give you strength.

For example, if you’re writing a book, picture the finished product in readers’ hands. That joy can inspire and give you the endurance to keep on writing!

## Joy in the Morning

One of my favorite Scriptures about joy is Psalm 30:5 (NKJV), “Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning.”

This verse reminds us that **joy is on its way**. It’s a promise that even the most difficult seasons will pass. Tears may be sown in hardship, but they will be reaped in joy: “Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy!” (Psalm 126:5 ESV).

Joy is part of our inheritance as God’s children. It is **God’s way** of expressing Himself to us and through us.

## Why Joy Is Often Missing

Sadly, many Christians do not fully experience God’s joy. The burdens of life weigh them down, and they rarely smile or laugh. Some even believe they must be serious or stoic to appear “responsible” or “holy.”

But the Bible tells us that **God laughs** (Psalm 2:4 NIV), and we are made in His image. If God laughs, so should we! Joy is not frivolous; it is a powerful, life-giving force.

Isaiah 12:3 (NIV) says, “With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”

Joy is like **living water** that refreshes and restores our souls. It allows us to tap into the depths of God’s presence and power. When we rejoice, we release the Holy Spirit’s glory into our lives and atmosphere.

## Laughter as Medicine

Joy isn’t just spiritual; it’s also good for your health. Proverbs 17:22 (NKJV) says, “A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.”

Modern science confirms what the Bible has always said: laughter is like medicine for the body and soul. Studies show that people who laugh often live longer, have lower stress, and enjoy better overall health.[[4]](#endnote-4)

God’s joy heals, strengthens, and brings life.

## A Prayer for Joy

Father God, I exalt and worship Your holy name, and I ask You to fill me with Your joy today. Let Your joy be my strength in every area of my life. Help me to laugh, rejoice, and experience the gladness of Your presence no matter what is happening. Thank You for the gift of joy. In Jesus’s name, Amen!

## Affirmations

* I am full of God’s joy.
* I am strengthened by the joy of the Lord.
* I will rejoice in the Lord daily.

## Action Steps

1. **Ask God for joy.** Pray for a fresh infilling of His Holy Spirit and the joy that comes with Him.
2. **Laugh intentionally.** Laugh aloud so you can hear yourself. Watch or read something that brings pure, wholesome laughter.
3. **Look for joy daily.** Start each day by finding something to rejoice about—no matter how small.
4. **Speak joy.** Declare God’s promises of joy over your life (Psalm 30:5; Isaiah 12:3).

**Remember**: Joy is not dependent on your circumstances. It is a gift from God, a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and a source of strength. When you embrace the joy of the Lord, you will experience peace, laughter, and a renewed hope that can carry you through anything. **Let God’s joy be your strength today!**

# Chapter 13

# God’s Way of Peace

# Finding Peace in the Forest

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 14:27 (NIV)

I learned the power of God’s peace during one of the most challenging times in my life. As the executive director of Mothers In Crisis, I secured funding for a coalition project, but I was falsely accused of mismanaging a small amount of money. The accusations, coupled with other personal struggles, brought tremendous anxiety and stole my peace.

It was during this time that I began spending hours in the forest at a state park near my home. I would walk the trails, pray, and simply soak in the stillness of nature. In the quiet of those woods, I found God’s peace. It washed over me like a river, calmed my soul, and gave me strength to endure the trial.

During those moments, God gave me the gift of poetry, which became a way for me to express my trust in Him. His peace carried me through the storm and allowed me to emerge victorious.

## The Search for True Peace

We all need peace. It’s the anchor that keeps us grounded in a world filled with chaos, stress, and uncertainty. But many people look for peace in all the wrong places—relationships, money, alcohol and drugs, careers, or material possessions—only to realize that peace isn’t found **outside** of us. True peace comes from **within**, as a gift from God.

## Peace: A Gift and a Spiritual Fruit

God’s peace is not just an absence of conflict or trouble; it’s a deep, abiding **state of calm, well-being, and trust** that flows from our relationship with Him.

The Bible speaks of “peace” as:

**Shalom** (*Hebrew*): Safe, i.e., (figuratively) well, happy, friendly; also (abstractly) welfare, i.e., health, prosperity. We inadvertently repeated the Hebrew word for joy.

**Eiréné** (*Greek*): A harmony and tranquility that transcends external circumstances, anchored in our connection with Christ.

Galatians 5:22 reminds us that peace is a **fruit of the Holy Spirit**, not something we can manufacture on our own. It is **God’s gift**—a tangible force that guards our hearts and minds, keeping anxiety and fear at bay (Philippians 4:6–7).

## Jesus: The Prince of Peace

Jesus knew the challenges we would face in life, so He offered us something priceless: His peace. In John 14:27 (NIV), He said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

As Jesus prepared to endure the cross, He spoke these words to His disciples, leaving them with an inheritance of peace. This same peace is available to us today—peace that calms us like a **warm blanket on a cold night** and strengthens us to face life’s storms.

## Walking in Peace

Even when circumstances are stressful and beyond our control, God’s peace allows us to remain steady and unshaken. Peace is described as part of the **armor of God**, “with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace” (Ephesians 6:15). Peace is something we must:

**Walk in**: Make it a habit to live peacefully.

**Seek**: Be intentional about pursuing it.

**Guard**: Protect it like a treasure.

Philippians 4:6–7 (NIV) tells us how to experience this peace, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

The word “guard” (*phroureó*) means to protect with vigilance, like a soldier guarding a city. God’s peace acts as a shield, keeping fear, worry, and anxiety from overwhelming us.

## Peace and Alignment with God

Living outside of God’s will causes unrest and unease. Isaiah 48:22 (NIV) says, “There is no peace,” says the Lord, “for the wicked.”

When we align ourselves with God’s will, peace comes as a natural result. It’s a sign that we are walking in harmony with Him. If peace departs, it’s often a signal to pause, pray, and get back on track.

God’s peace is not earned or strived for—it’s a gift. All we need to do is:

**Ask for it**: “Lord, fill me with Your peace.”

**Trust Him**: Believe that He is in control and working for your good.

**Receive it**: Open your heart and allow God’s peace to guard you.

## Living in God’s Peace

Let God’s peace flow over your life like a **cool stream on a hot day**. It is a powerful force that:

*Protects your heart and mind.*

*Strengthens you in trials.*

*Allows you to experience God’s presence in any circumstance.*

## A Prayer for Peace

Father God, I thank You for being the God of peace and for sending Your Son Jesus, the Prince of Peace, into the world. I also thank You for the fruit of peace through the Holy Spirit. Lord, I ask You to fill my heart with Your peace today. Remove all anxiety, fear, and worry, and help me to trust that everything will be all right. Let Your peace guard my heart and mind in every situation. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I have the peace of God.
* God’s peace guards my heart and mind.
* God’s perfect peace is mine.
* God, You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. (Isaiah 26:3)

## Action Steps

1. **Ask for peace daily.** Pray each day for God’s peace to fill your heart and guard your mind.
2. **Pause and pray.** When you feel anxiety rising, stop, pray, and read God’s promises of peace (Philippians 4:6–7).
3. **Guard your peace.** Avoid people, situations, and thoughts that steal your peace. Hold onto it tightly.
4. **Spend time in nature.** Find a peaceful place to connect with God, reflect, and allow His peace to calm your spirit.

**Remember**: **God’s peace is not dependent on your circumstances.** It is a gift that surpasses all understanding and will guard your heart and mind when you trust Him. Live in God’s peace and watch how it transforms your life!

# Chapter 14

# God’s Way of Rest

# Letting Go and Letting God

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28 (NIV)

Learning to rest in God is one of the greatest accomplishments of my spiritual journey. Early in my walk with Christ, I was extremely hard on myself and others. I strived for perfection and expected the same from everyone else, leaving no room for error.

One day, after missing the mark, I cried out in frustration, “I can’t believe I did that!” Immediately, I heard the Holy Spirit say, *“I can.”*

That simple response changed everything. I realized I was holding myself too tightly, relying on my own strength rather than resting in God’s grace. I began to see my walk with God as a *relationship*, not a performance. I let go of striving, trusting that God would complete the good work He began in me (Philippians 1:6).

Letting go felt like weights lifting off my shoulders, and it allowed me to experience God’s peace and joy in a new way as I rested in His love. Now I give everything to Him, and it keeps me in a place of rest and trust.

“There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.” (Hebrews 4:9–11 NIV)

## The Gift of God’s Rest

In today’s fast-paced world, busyness is often mistaken for success. We fill our schedules to the brim, constantly striving to do more and accomplish more, leaving little room to breathe, let alone rest. Yet, God calls us to something radically different—**His rest**.

God’s rest is not about inactivity or laziness—it is about **trusting Him** and allowing His strength to work in and through us. It is about laying down the burdens of self-reliance and embracing the peace that comes from knowing He is in control.

## What Is God’s Rest?

The Greek term for “rest” used in Hebrews 4:10 is *katapausis,* which signifies a state of rest or ceasing from labor. This rest is both a **present reality** and a **future promise**, reflecting the peace, fulfillment, and assurance found in God’s presence.

Rest in the New Testament is often used in the context of spiritual rest and refreshment provided by Christ. **It does not mean doing nothing; it means shifting the responsibility to God and letting Him lead.** This is God’s way of helping us to be victorious and successful in this life. Imagine God driving the car while you enjoy the ride, trusting that He knows the way and will get you safely to your destination.

God wants to be present in everything we do so that He can help. He is our helper, and the same Hebrew word used to describe Eve as a helpmate to Adam is used to describe God’s help to mankind (seePsalm 33:20). *Ezer* is used in the Bible to denote assistance, support, or help. It often refers to divine assistance from God, but it can also describe human help. The term conveys a sense of strength and support, rather than subordination or inferiority. Allowing God to be our helper requires complete trust.

## The Power of Trust

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.” (Proverbs 3:5 NIV)

Entering God’s rest requires **deep trust** in Him, especially for those of us who feel the need to stay in control. Control often stems from perfectionism, which creates rigidity and stress.Here is the truth:

**God has not called us to be perfect.** Jesus is the only perfect one.

**We are called to maturity and excellence**, which come from relying on His grace, not our efforts.

When we let go of the need to control everything, we find freedom. Trusting God allows us to rest, knowing that even when things do not go as planned, He is working all things together for our good (Romans 8:28). We just need to sit back and enjoy the ride, knowing that He gets all the glory, and He is responsible for our victory.

When things do not go as planned, trust in the Lord is essential because we can learn great lessons from all of the things that God allows us to experience. **And** **the things that we learn from our failures could never be obtained through our victories.**

## Resting in Hope

Resting in hope is one of the components of the Practice of Hopeology.

(You can visit the Hopeology website simply by scanning the QR code below.)



God’s rest is not just physical; it is spiritual. Psalm 46:10 (NKJV) reminds us:“Be still, and know that I am God …”The Hebrew word for “still,” *raphah,* means to **let go** or **slacken**. It is an invitation to stop striving and trust that God is in control.

When people die, we often say, “*May they rest in peace,*” but while we live, our bodies can rest in hope. Another key to rest is found in Acts 2:26 (NLT), which says, “No wonder my heart is glad, and my tongue shouts His praises! My body rests in hope.”

Learning to rest in God does not mean neglecting responsibilities. Resting in hope means we can:

* Let go of striving.
* Trust in God’s promises.
* **Live with the assurance that better days are ahead.**
* Allow Him to guide and empower us in every area of life, personally, professionally, and spiritually.
* Acknowledge that His strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Even in life’s uncertainties, resting in hope allows us to remain steady and secure, knowing that God’s plans for us are good (Jeremiah 29:11). When we trust God, we can truly rest, knowing that He gets the glory and ensures the victory.

## Mary, Martha, and the One Thing That Matters

In Luke 10:42 (NLT), we see a powerful lesson in rest. When Jesus visited Mary’s and Martha’s home, Martha was busy serving, while Mary sat at His feet, listening. Frustrated, Martha asked Jesus to tell Mary to help her, but Jesus replied: “There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Mary chose to rest in Jesus’s presence, receiving His words and strength. This story reminds us that our relationship with God, resting in Him, is far more important than all the busyness we engage in.

## A Prayer for Rest

Abba Father, I ask You to help me enter into Your rest. Teach me to let go of my striving and trust You completely. I surrender my will and plans to You and rest in the assurance that You are in control. Thank You for Your grace, peace, and strength. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I rest in hope.
* God is in control.
* Today, I let go and let God.

## Action Steps

1. **Assess your schedule.** Identify areas where busyness is stealing your peace. Are your activities truly productive, or are they just distractions?
2. **Create stillness.** Set aside time each day to be still, pray, and listen to God. Turn off distractions such as the television, cell phone, social media, etc., and focus on Him.
3. **Meditate on Scripture.** Reflect on verses like Psalm 46:10, Acts 2:26, and Hebrews 4:9–11.
4. **Listen to praise and worship music that glorifies God.**
5. **Learn to say no.** Do not overcommit yourself. Protect your time and energy by prioritizing rest and reflection.
6. **Trust God’s timing.** Release the need to control every outcome, and trust that God’s plans are better than yours.

**Remember**: Resting in God is not about inactivity—it is about trusting His activity in your life. **When you let go and let God, you will find strength, peace, and assurance** **in His presence.** Rest is not a luxury; it is a necessity for living the abundant life God has for you.

# Chapter 15

# God’s Way of Increase

# Trusting God’s Principles

As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.

Genesis 8:22 (NIV)

As a single mother raising my daughter, Janar, I learned to trust God’s principles of increase. When I began attending church regularly, I heard about tithing for the first time. Although I didn’t have much, I took God at His Word and faithfully gave my tithe and offerings.

God provided for us in ways I could never have imagined. Looking back, I see how He used those seeds to bring supernatural provision into our lives. His faithfulness was evident in every step of our journey, and I’m forever grateful for the blessings that followed.

I learned the power of giving and the truth behind the saying that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

## Everything Begins with a Seed

God’s plan for increase always begins with a **seed**. This principle applies to both natural and spiritual realms. Just as life itself begins with a seed—whether it’s the male reproductive cell or the seeds planted to grow crops—spiritual growth, financial provision, and kingdom expansion also start with seeds sown into fertile ground.

In Genesis 1:28 (NIV), God gave His first command to humanity: “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it … .”

This principle of increase continues to this day. Over eight billion people inhabit the earth because of God’s plan for multiplication through the sowing of seeds.

## The Power of a Seed

Every seed carries potential. Even the smallest seed, when sown into fertile ground, can multiply exponentially. This truth applies not just to physical seeds but also to financial resources, talents, time, and acts of kindness. If you don’t have enough to meet your needs, it may be because what you have is a **seed** waiting to be sown.

“Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness” (2 Corinthians 9:10 NIV).

## God’s Principles of Financial Increase

One of the most practical applications of sowing and reaping is in the area of finances. God has provided a divine blueprint for financial increase through **tithes and offerings**.

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it” (Malachi 3:10 NIV).

The **tithe**—giving back 10 percent of your income—demonstrates trust in God as the ultimate provider. Offerings, missions giving, and acts of generosity beyond the tithe bring even greater opportunities for increase. God’s financial blessings, as described in Proverbs 10:22 (NLT), come without sorrow or regret: “The blessing of the LORD makes a person rich, and he adds no sorrow with it.”

## Supernatural Multiplication

The account of Jesus multiplying the two fish and five loaves of bread in Matthew 14 beautifully illustrates the power of a seed. Faced with thousands of hungry people, Jesus:

1. Took the small offering,
2. Gave thanks to God,
3. Broke it, and
4. Distributed it to the disciples to share.

Not only did everyone eat and feel satisfied, but there were **twelve baskets of leftovers**—an overflow of provision. The lesson here is clear:

**Never eat the seed.** If the fish and bread had been consumed, the miracle wouldn’t have occurred.

**Don’t despise the size of the seed.** Small seeds can yield great harvests when placed in God’s hands.

## Avoiding Financial Pitfalls

It’s important to be discerning about where and how you sow your seed. The enemy often uses schemes and false promises to steal resources. Here are some guidelines to protect your seed:

1. **Pray for guidance.** Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in your giving and investments.
2. **Don’t rush.** Never let anyone pressure you into giving or spending before seeking God’s direction.
3. **Discern good soil.** Sow into trustworthy ministries, missions, and causes that align with God’s Word and your purpose.

When you follow God’s way of increase, you can be confident that your giving will bring blessings without regret or sorrow.

## A Prayer for Increase

Abba Father, thank You for being the ultimate provider and for giving me seeds to sow. Teach me to trust You with my finances and to sow into good soil. I pray over every seed I’ve sown, believing for an abundant harvest. Thank You for Your provision, overflow, and blessings. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I honor and thank God for the seeds He provides.
* I sow my seeds in faith and receive increase and multiplication.
* I live in the overflow of God’s blessings.

## Action Steps

1. **Inventory your resources.** Assess the time, talents, and finances God has given you. Identify what can be sown as seed.
2. **Pray for guidance.** Ask God to show you where to sow your seeds for maximum impact.
3. **Tithe faithfully.** Begin or continue giving 10 percent of your income to your local church or ministry where God has planted you to grow.
4. **Give generously.** Support missions, ministries, and causes that help the poor, widows, and orphans. “Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done” (Proverbs 19:17 NIV).
5. **Practice discernment.** Avoid financial traps and schemes. Always seek God’s wisdom before making decisions.
6. **Thank God daily.** Cultivate a heart of gratitude, trusting that He will multiply your seeds and bring increase.

**Remember**: The seed is small, but its potential is enormous when placed in God’s hands. Trust Him to bring the increase, and watch how He multiplies your efforts and resources. **God’s way of increase is supernatural and never fails.**

# Chapter 16

# God’s Way of the Cross

# How I Learned to Surrender My Life to Christ

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”

Mark 8:34 (NIV)

In my early walk with Christ, I found it difficult to surrender completely. The concept of “dying while alive” baffled me. But as I became more Holy Spirit-led, I experienced the freedom and victory that came from taking up my cross daily.

When I was ordained into ministry, I began wearing a cross as a reminder of my commitment to Christ. I’ll never forget the moments when my grandchildren, as babies, would grab the cross around my neck, curious about its meaning. I would tell them, “*This cross represents how Jesus died for my sins, rose again, and how I must surrender my life to Him every day*.”

These simple moments became opportunities to share the message of the cross with the next generation.

## Living by the Spirit

For many years, I struggled with the concept of “dying to the flesh.” I knew Jesus’s death on the cross was the finished work for salvation, but I couldn’t grasp how to live this out practically.

The breakthrough came when I understood the power of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:16 (NIV) explains, “So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”

Instead of focusing on what I needed to stop doing, I shifted my attention to **being led by the Holy Spirit** and spending time in God’s Word. As I walked in the Spirit, the desires of the flesh began to lose their grip on me. This, I realized, was what it meant to take up my cross.

## The Symbol of the Cross

The cross holds different meanings for people across the world. Historically, it was an instrument of Roman execution reserved for criminals and slaves—a symbol of suffering and shame. But through Jesus Christ, the cross has been transformed into a symbol of salvation, redemption, and God’s boundless love.

For Christians, the cross represents both the finished work of Christ on Calvary and the call to discipleship. Jesus invites us to “take up our cross” daily—a call to surrender, sacrifice, and a life wholly devoted to Him.

## What Does It Mean to Take Up Your Cross?

Many people struggle to understand the meaning of “taking up your cross.” It doesn’t mean literal death on a wooden stake as Jesus endured, but rather, a **complete surrender of our will to God’s will**.

Jesus modeled this surrender in the Garden of Gethsemane. As He faced the agony of the cross, He prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will” (Matthew 26:39 NIV).

Surrendering to God’s will requires dying to:

* **Pride**: letting go of the need to control our lives.
* **Self-reliance**: trusting God instead of our own strength.
* **Selfish desires**: choosing to please God rather than pursuing personal gratification.

Taking up the cross is not a one-time decision; it’s a daily choice to follow Christ, even when it’s difficult, inconvenient, or painful.

## God’s Strength in Our Surrender

The beauty of God’s way of the cross is that we don’t bear it alone. Just as an angel strengthened Jesus in Gethsemane (Luke 22:43), God strengthens us when we surrender to Him.

When we deny ourselves and submit to God’s will, we experience the full cycle of the cross:

* **Death**: dying to our selfish ambitions and desires.
* **Burial**: laying those desires at the foot of the cross.
* **Resurrection**: rising to a new life in Christ, empowered by His Spirit.

As 1 Peter 5:6 (NIV) says, “Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.”

## The Cross as a Symbol of Victory

The cross is more than a reminder of Jesus’s sacrifice; it’s a symbol of resurrection power. Romans 8:11 (NIV) declares, “And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.”

Because of Christ’s victory, we are empowered to live a life of purpose, peace, and power.

## A Prayer for Surrender

Lord God, help me to deny myself, take up my cross, and follow You each day. Teach me to surrender my will to Yours in every area of my life. Strengthen me in my moments of weakness and help me to walk in the victory You have already won for me. Thank You for renewing my strength and leading me by Your Spirit. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I thank You, Lord Jesus, for dying on the cross for my sins.
* I take up my cross as I surrender my will to You.
* I am led by the Holy Spirit and walk in victory.

## Action Steps

1. **Identify your struggles.** Write down the areas of your life that are hardest to surrender to God.
2. **Take them to God in prayer.** Ask for His help and wisdom in each area.
3. **Develop strategies.** Seek guidance from Scripture and trusted spiritual mentors to address these challenges.
4. **Walk by the Spirit.** Focus on being Spirit-led rather than trying to change yourself through your own efforts.
5. **Reflect daily.** Use the symbol of the cross—whether worn, displayed, or visualized—as a reminder of your commitment to Christ.

**Remember**: **The way of the cross is not just about sacrifice;** **it’s about resurrection, renewal, and transformation.** As you surrender your life to Christ and walk in the Spirit, you’ll experience the abundant life He promises.

# Chapter 17

# God’s Way of Life

# From Existing to Living

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.

John 10:10 (NIV)

Before I surrendered my life to Christ, I was merely existing. My days were filled with things that drained my soul and brought no lasting joy. I was pessimistic, cynical, and hopeless.

Everything changed when I died to that old life and embraced the *zoe* life in Christ. I began to experience peace and joy that soothed my soul. What I once thought was “fun” paled in comparison to the adventures God had in store for me. By His grace, I have traveled the world, met incredible people, and lived a life full of purpose and fulfillment.

This life in Christ is not only abundant—it’s eternal. I now know that my relationship with God doesn’t end when this earthly life is over. It continues forever, and that is the ultimate gift.

## The Abundant Life in Christ

God’s way of life is not just about existing; it is about truly **living**—abundantly, eternally, and purposefully. The life that Jesus speaks of in John 10:10 is described by the Greek word *zoe*.

In the New Testament, *zoe* refers to life in its fullest sense, encompassing both physical and spiritual dimensions. It represents the **eternal life** granted through faith in Jesus Christ. This life is not merely about the length of existence but about its quality—one marked by peace, joy, purpose, and a deep relationship with God.

True life begins when we enter into a relationship with God through Christ Jesus. It directs our present on earth and our eternity with the Lord. This *zoe* life helps us focus on eternal things rather than the temporary distractions of the world.

## The Tension Between Two Worlds

Living God’s way in a finite world can be challenging. It requires navigating the present while keeping eternity in mind.

Jesus emphasizes this in John 12:25 (NIV), “Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.” Here, the Greek word *psuché* is used for “life” in the first two instances, referring to the soul—the seat of emotions, desires, and affections. By contrast, the third use of “life” is *zoe*, eternal life in Christ.

This verse teaches us to prioritize eternal life (*zoe*) over the fleeting pleasures and distractions of this world (*psuché*). We do this by setting our minds on things above, as Paul writes in Colossians 3:2–4 (NIV), “Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”

## Living by the Spirit

The key to living God’s way of life is being **led by the Holy Spirit**. Jesus explains this in John 6:63 (NIV), “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.”

Walking in the Spirit transforms our desires, aligns our priorities with God’s will, and allows us to experience *zoe* life daily.

## Focusing on the Eternal

Many people struggle with anxiety and despair because they focus on the temporary troubles of this world. However, God’s way of life requires looking through the eyes of faith.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:18 (NIV), “So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

When we focus on eternal values—faith, hope, and love—we can navigate life’s challenges with confidence and peace. This eternal perspective helps us to live the abundant life Jesus promised, no matter our circumstances.

## God’s Provision and Purpose

Many believe that money or material possessions are the key to a better life. But God’s way of life is not about riches; it’s about what money cannot buy—peace, joy, love, and purpose.

When we trust God, He provides for all our needs. As Psalm 23:1 (NIV) reminds us, “The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.”

Living the *zoe* life means seeking and fulfilling the purpose for which God created us. When we live life on purpose, guided by God’s plans, our journey becomes meaningful and fulfilling.

## A Prayer for Abundant Life

Lord Jesus, thank You for coming so that I may have life and have it to the full. Help me to focus on eternal things rather than the distractions of this world. Teach me to walk by Your Spirit and trust You for all my needs. May my life reflect Your love, joy, and peace, and may I live each day with purpose and gratitude. In Your precious name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I am alive in Christ Jesus.
* I set my mind on things above.
* I fix my eyes on the eternal values of faith, hope, and love.

## Action Steps

1. **Examine your priorities.** Identify areas where you’re focused on temporary things. Shift your attention to eternal values.
2. **Seek God’s purpose.** Pray and reflect on your unique calling and how you can live it out daily.
3. **Walk in the Spirit.** Spend time in God’s Word and seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance in your decisions.
4. **Practice gratitude.** Regularly thank God for the abundant, eternal life He has given you.
5. **Focus on the unseen.** Remind yourself daily that what is unseen—God’s promises, love, and purpose—will last forever.

**Remember**: God’s way of life is not about existing—**it’s about thriving.** It’s a life filled with peace, joy, and purpose, grounded in the eternal reality of Christ’s love. Embrace the *zoe* life and discover the fullness of what God has planned for you.

# Chapter 18

# God’s Saving Way

# Saved by His Name

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

John 3:16–17 (NIV)

I cannot count the times I have cried out “Jesus!” in moments of fear, confusion, or desperation. His name alone has brought peace to my troubled heart and deliverance from all hurt, harm, and danger. Just as Jesus saved Peter when he began to sink while walking on water (Matthew 14:30–31), He has lifted me out of despair and restored my hope on many occasions.

One of the most unforgettable moments in my life happened when I was on the brink of a car accident. I was driving on a rainy day, and my car’s tires began to hydroplane. I was going down a hill, and the car spun into oncoming traffic as I tried to put on my brakes.

In my fear, I closed my eyes because I didn’t know what to do, and I cried out, “**Jesus**!” In that moment, I felt His presence surround me, filling the car with peace. When I opened my eyes, there were no cars around, and I was safe.

## The Story of God’s Saving Way

God’s saving way is woven throughout the Bible, demonstrating His love, grace, and power to rescue.

* **Noah** found favor in God’s eyes and was instructed to build an ark, saving his family from the flood (Genesis 6:8).
* **Lot** was rescued from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, though his wife’s disobedience turned her into a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:24–26).
* **The Israelites** were delivered from Egyptian bondage through Moses, despite Pharaoh’s resistance (Exodus 3:7–10).

These stories illustrate God’s saving nature and, believe it or not, we still need saving today—not necessarily from physical destruction but from spiritual death, sin, and separation from God.

## Saved by Grace Through Faith

Ephesians 2:8 (NIV) states, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.”

Salvation is a gift that we cannot earn through good works. When people ask, “What do I need to be saved from?” the answer is: **we need saving from sin and its eternal consequences**.

The Greek verb *sózó* means “to save” or “to deliver.” It refers to:

**Physical salvation**: healing or rescue from danger.

**Spiritual salvation**: deliverance from sin and eternal separation from God, culminating in eternal life.

When Adam and Eve sinned, humanity was lost. Jesus Christ reconciled us to God through His sacrifice on the cross, thereby bringing the gift of salvation to all who believe.

## Continual Salvation: The World, the Flesh, and the Devil

Even after accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior, we face ongoing battles with:

**The World**: its values and temptations.

**The Flesh**: our sinful nature and desires.

**The Devil**: his schemes to steal, kill, and destroy.

God equips us with His Spirit and His Word to overcome these challenges.

**The Holy Spirit** acts as our guide, convicting us, leading us into truth, and empowering us to live victoriously.

**The Word of God**: As Jesus used Scripture to counter the devil’s temptations, we must wield the Word as the sword of the Spirit.

## The Power of Jesus’s Name

One of the most powerful tools in God’s saving way is the **Name of Jesus**.

**Demons tremble at His name.**

**Strongholds are broken by His name.**

**Peace and victory come when we call on His name.**

Proverbs 18:10 (NKJV) declares, “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.”

When we are in distress, simply calling out to Jesus can bring immediate peace, deliverance, and assurance.

## Living Out God’s Saving Way

God’s saving work doesn’t end at salvation—it continues throughout our lives. He saves us daily from pitfalls, snares, and even our own mistakes. By relying on His Spirit, Word, and the name of Jesus, we can experience ongoing deliverance and victory.

## A Prayer for Salvation and Deliverance

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to save me from sin and eternal separation from You. I acknowledge my need for Your saving grace and invite Jesus to be the Lord of my life. Strengthen me through Your Spirit, guide me with Your Word, and teach me to call on Your name in every situation. Thank You, dear Lord, for being my Savior and Deliverer. In Jesus’s Name, Amen and Amen.

## Affirmations

* Jesus saves me daily from all hurt, harm, and danger.
* Thank You, Lord, for saving me.
* The name of the Lord is my strong tower.

## Action Steps

1. **Receive salvation.** If you haven’t already, pray and accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Read and pray Romans 10:9–10.
2. **Identify struggles.** Write down areas where you need God’s saving power (e.g., habits, fears, relationships).
3. **Call on Jesus.** In moments of distress, simply say His name and trust in His deliverance.
4. **Use the Word.** Memorize and declare Scriptures that address your struggles.
5. **Rely on the Spirit.** Pray for the Holy Spirit’s guidance and power to overcome daily challenges.

**Remember**: God’s saving way is more than a one-time event—it’s an ongoing journey of grace, deliverance, and victory. Embrace His saving power and experience the abundant life He promises.

# Chapter 19

# God’s Way of Freedom

# My Experience with God’s Freedom

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

John 8:36 (NIV)

God has delivered me from many things, including addiction to drugs. I began using marijuana at age twelve, which led to harder substances and mental breakdowns. During my darkest moments, I saw the mighty hand of God deliver me.

Now, over three decades later, I stand firm in the freedom Christ has given me. I have witnessed countless others experience this same freedom, whether from addiction, oppression, or spiritual bondage. Once you taste the freedom of Christ, nothing else compares.

“Jesus said to the people who believed in him, ‘You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’” (John 8:31–32 NLT)

## Understanding Freedom

Freedom is a universal desire, yet its meaning varies widely. For some, freedom means breaking free from bad habits, toxic relationships, financial debt, or oppressive circumstances. For others, it means liberation from spiritual bondage or emotional chains.

No matter the context, the Bible makes it clear: true freedom can only be found in Christ. Galatians 5:1 (NIV) reminds us, “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

The Greek word *eleutheria*, translated as “freedom,” refers to being liberated, particularly in a spiritual sense. This freedom comes through Christ, releasing us from the grip of sin and the constraints of the world. It is not a license to live recklessly but a call to live righteously and serve others in love.

## The Process of Freedom

Freedom in Christ begins the moment we accept Him as Lord and Savior. For some, deliverance from addictions or harmful behaviors happens instantly. For others, it is a gradual process. Regardless of the timeline, the foundation of freedom lies in remaining faithful to Jesus’s teachings. John 8:36 assures us, “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

The verb *eleutheroó* (to set free) conveys the act of liberation from bondage. This freedom is spiritual, emotional, and physical, encompassing every aspect of our lives.

## Freedom from Spiritual Oppression

The Bible provides powerful examples of Jesus delivering people from spiritual oppression:

**The demoniac in the tombs**: In Luke 8, Jesus freed a man possessed by many demons. The townspeople later found him clothed, calm, and in his right mind (Luke 8:35).

**Freedom for all believers**: As 1 John 4:4 (NIV) declares, “The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”

Jesus’s authority over evil extends to us as His followers. We have the power to resist the devil, break spiritual chains, and live in victory.

## Staying Free

Getting free is one thing—staying free is another. True freedom requires breaking not only habits but also belief systems and behavioral patterns that lead to bondage.

Second Corinthians 3:17 (NIV) states, “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

### Steps to Staying Free:

1. **Renew your mind**. Romans 12:1–2 instructs us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Meditate on God’s Word daily.
2. **Close doors to the enemy**. Ephesians 4:27 warns us not to give the devil a foothold. Identify and eliminate behaviors, relationships, or habits that lead to sin.
3. **Rely on the Holy Spirit**. Freedom is not achieved by willpower alone. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live victoriously.

Even in physically confining circumstances, like prison, believers can experience spiritual freedom in Christ. This freedom transcends external situations and brings peace to the soul.

## A Prayer for Freedom

Father God, thank You for being the ultimate Deliverer. I ask You to set me free from every bondage, stronghold, and habit that hinders me. Help me to stand firm in the freedom You have given me through Christ. Fill me with Your Spirit, guide me in truth, and protect me from the enemy’s schemes. Thank You for Your grace, mercy, and unending love. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I am free in Christ Jesus.
* I stand firm in my freedom.
* The Greater One lives in me.

## Action Steps

1. **Inventory your life.** Identify areas of bondage or habits you want to break.
2. **Pray for deliverance.** Bring these areas to the Lord in prayer, asking for His help on a daily basis.
3. **Declare Scripture.** Memorize verses like John 8:36, Galatians 5:1, and Romans 12:2 to speak over your life.
4. **Seek accountability.** Connect with a trusted spiritual advisor or prayer partner to help you stay on track.
5. **Celebrate victory.** Acknowledge God’s deliverance and give Him glory as you experience newfound freedom.

**Remember**: Freedom in Christ is not just about breaking chains—**it’s about living abundantly in the truth of God’s love and grace.** Stand firm, trust His Spirit, and walk boldly in the freedom He has provided.

# Chapter 20

# God’s Kingdom Way

# Discovering the Kingdom of God

For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 14:17 (NLT)

For years, I misunderstood the concept of the Kingdom of God. I thought it was an external place only to be accessed after death. It wasn’t until I began studying Scriptures about the Kingdom that I realized it was a real, present reality within me.

Through prayer and surrender, I learned to live by Kingdom principles. The righteousness, peace, and joy I found transformed my life. I now experience the Kingdom daily, and it has become my foundation and refuge. It is like Eden was for Adam and Eve, a place where I can meet with the Lord as I access the Kingdom of God within.

“The time has come,” he [Jesus] said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1:15 NIV)

## Understanding the Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is God’s dominion, authority, and sovereign rule in the hearts and lives of believers. While “the Kingdom of Heaven” expands to include external territories and broader influence, the core begins with God reigning within us.

The Greek word *basileia*, translated as “kingdom,” signifies dominion, realm, or royal authority. In the New Testament, it encompasses both the present spiritual reign of God in believers’ lives and the future physical manifestation of His rule.

When Jesus began His ministry, He declared that the Kingdom of God was near, urging people to repent and believe the good news. By accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior, we are ushered into this Kingdom—a realm characterized by righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

## The Kingdom and the Church

The Church, established by Jesus, operates within the Kingdom of Heaven. While there are many churches and denominations, there is only one Kingdom of God.

Jesus affirmed this in Matthew 16:18 (ESV), “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

The Kingdom is a place of safety, authority, and victory over the enemy. After His resurrection, Jesus spent forty days teaching His disciples about the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:3 NIV). This highlights its central importance in God’s plan for humanity.

## Parables of the Kingdom

Jesus often used parables to explain the principles and value of the Kingdom of God.

1. **The Hidden Treasure**

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.” (Matthew 13:44 NIV)

This parable emphasizes the incomparable value of the Kingdom. Once discovered, it becomes worth sacrificing everything to obtain.

1. **The Mustard Seed**

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed … Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree … .” (Matthew 13:31–32 NIV)

The Kingdom may start small in our lives, but as we nurture it through faith and obedience, it grows and impacts others.

1. **Childlike Faith**

“Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:3–4 NIV)

Entering the Kingdom requires humility, trust, and dependence on God, much like the innocence and reliance of a child.

1. **Advancing the Kingdom**

“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.” (Matthew 11:12 NKJV)

Advancing the Kingdom requires intentionality and perseverance. The opposition from worldly systems means we must actively pursue God’s will with determination.

## Living in the Kingdom

The Kingdom of God is not merely a future reality but a present experience for believers. As Jesus said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:20–21 NKJV). By living in Christ, we experience the Kingdom’s benefits:

**Righteousness**: A life aligned with God’s will.

**Peace**: An unshakable calm rooted in God’s presence.

**Joy**: A deep, abiding gladness from the Holy Spirit.

When we walk in Kingdom principles, we advance the Kingdom within us and around us, influencing the world for God’s glory.

## A Prayer for the Kingdom

Lord God, I thank You for establishing Your Kingdom in my heart. Help me to live by its principles daily and to seek Your will above all else. Teach me to value the treasure of Your Kingdom and to advance it in my life and the lives of others. Thank You for righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* The Kingdom of God is within me.
* I live by the principles of the Kingdom.
* I am advancing the Kingdom of Heaven.

## Action Steps

1. **Study the Scriptures.** Dive into passages about the Kingdom, such as those found in the Gospels and Epistles of the Bible.
2. **Evaluate your life.** Identify areas where you can align more closely with Kingdom principles.
3. **Pray daily.** Ask God to reveal more of His Kingdom in your life.
4. **Advance the Kingdom.** Share the good news, serve others, and live as a Kingdom citizen.

**Remember**: **The Kingdom of God is not just a place but a way of life.** By embracing its principles, you experience the fullness of life in Christ and bring His light to the world.

# Chapter 21

# God’s Suffering Way

# ****A Few of My Experiences with Suffering****

For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:5 (NIV)

Suffering has been a defining part of my journey, teaching me invaluable lessons.

* After enduring rejection from a man I loved, I found solace in God’s unconditional love and acceptance.
* The loss of my stillborn baby drove me into deep depression, but through hope and a vision of a brighter future, I overcame the darkness.
* Overcoming addiction was another painful yet transformative experience where I learned to deny my flesh and embrace the Spirit.

Today, I use my experiences to empathize with and support others, demonstrating God’s love and compassion.

## A Man of Sorrows

Isaiah prophetically described Jesus, “He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him” (Isaiah 53:3 NKJV).

Jesus experienced suffering throughout His earthly life, culminating in His crucifixion, where He bore the weight of humanity’s sins. His suffering was both physical and emotional, as He faced rejection, betrayal, and unimaginable pain.

Rejection, in particular, is a profound form of suffering. Jesus came to His own, but His own did not receive Him (John 1:11). Rejection cuts deep, often leaving emotional scars. Yet, Jesus did not let rejection define or deter Him from His mission. Instead, He turned to the Father, who accepted, loved, and affirmed Him.

## Allowing Suffering to Draw You Closer to God

Just as Jesus learned obedience through what He suffered, we can also learn when we allow suffering to draw us closer to God, His will, and His way. In moments of deep pain, turning to God opens the door to His comfort, guidance, and healing. Allow suffering to lead you to seek God’s presence.

“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” (Psalm 34:18 NIV)

“Even though Jesus was God’s Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered.” (Hebrews 5:8 NIV)

## Suffering That Leads to Intimacy with Christ

Suffering unlocks a unique place in God’s presence—a place of surrender and strength. Jesus demonstrated this in the Garden of Gethsemane, where He submitted to the Father’s will despite overwhelming sorrow.

“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.” (Matthew 26:38 NIV)

“Yet not as I will, but as You will.” (Matthew 26:39 NIV)

This place of surrender strengthens us to endure and fulfill our purpose. The apostle Paul expressed a desire to know Christ both in His resurrection power and the fellowship of His suffering (Philippians 3:10–11). Through suffering, we identify with Christ and experience a deeper intimacy with Him.

## Suffering That Leads to Joy

We can endure suffering as Jesus endured because of the joy awaiting. There is always joy on the other side of suffering when we suffer according to God’s way. We can trust and believe that suffering does not last forever, and joy is on the horizon. During suffering, shifting focus to the hope of future joy can bring the strength to endure.

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.” (Psalm 30:5 NKJV)

“Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne.” (Hebrews 12:2 NLT)

## Suffering That Leads to Compassion

Suffering cultivates empathy, allowing us to comfort others in their pain.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.” (2 Corinthians 1:3–4 NIV)

## Suffering That Leads to Life in Christ

Denying the flesh and saying “yes” to the Lord often involves suffering, but it leads to abundant life in Christ. By resisting sinful desires and yielding to God’s Spirit, we find true freedom and renewal.

“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.” (2 Corinthians 4:17 NIV)

## Suffering That Leads to Hope

Suffering produces perseverance, character, and hope. Reflecting on God’s past faithfulness strengthens our hope during current trials.

“We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” (Romans 5:3–4 NIV)

## A Prayer for Strength in Suffering

Lord God, thank You for being with me in my suffering. Help me to surrender my will to Yours, trust in Your strength, and find joy in the midst of pain. Use my suffering to bring me closer to You and to show compassion to others. Thank You for the hope that sustains me. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I share in Christ’s sufferings and His victory.
* My suffering draws me closer to God.
* Through suffering, I find joy, hope, and compassion.

## Action Steps

1. **Reflect on your suffering.** Identify areas where pain has drawn you closer to God or equipped you to help others.
2. **Seek intimacy with Christ.** Spend time in prayer, surrendering your will to His.
3. **Shift your focus.** Look ahead to the joy and hope that God promises.
4. **Comfort others.** Use your experiences to empathize with and support those who are suffering.

**Remember**: **Suffering is not meaningless.** In God’s hands, it becomes a tool for transformation, intimacy, and purpose. Through it, we draw closer to Christ, find joy and hope, and share His love with others.

# Chapter 22

# God’s Way of Blessing

# I Am Too Blessed to Be Stressed

Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

Luke 6:21(NIV)

I learned to recognize God’s blessings more clearly over time. There were seasons in my life when I was so consumed by challenges that I failed to see the good things God placed before me.

As I grew in my faith, I began to intentionally look for His blessings, and I found them in abundance. From the love of family and friends to the strength to face each day, God’s hand has been evident in my life.

Even in times of loss and struggle, His blessings have been a source of hope and joy. Today, I live with a heart full of gratitude, knowing that every good thing in my life is a testament to His faithfulness.

## The Nature of God’s Blessings

We often hear the phrase, *“Count your blessings.”* While this is sage advice, it can be challenging to do so in the face of difficulties. In times of trial, we may find it easier to focus on our troubles than on the blessings God has already provided. However, Scripture reminds us time and again of God’s goodness and His abundant blessings, even when they may not seem immediately visible.

Genesis 12:2 (NIV) reveals the very heart of God when He spoke to Abram, promising, *“I will bless you … and you will be a blessing.”* The Hebrew word *barak* used here signifies an act of divine favor or benefit. God delights in blessing His children, not because we earn or deserve it, but because He loves us unconditionally.

Similarly, in Luke 6:21 (NIV), “Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh,” Jesus reminds His followers that blessings are not always tied to immediate circumstances. The Greek word for “blessed” is *makarios*, which emphasizes a state of spiritual joy and well-being, transcending the material or temporary. Even in times of hunger or sorrow, Jesus assures us that a time of satisfaction and laughter is coming. This underscores a powerful truth: **God’s blessings are constant and enduring, even if they are not always immediately apparent.**

## Recognizing God’s Blessings in Everyday Life

God’s blessings manifest in countless ways, from the seemingly small to the miraculous. Ephesians 1:3 (NIV) states, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.” Here, the Greek word *eulogia* refers to blessings that are both spoken and bestowed. These blessings include God’s provision, His protection, and the spiritual riches we have in Christ.

It’s essential to remember that not all blessings are spectacular. Often, we overlook the everyday blessings—the gift of waking up in the morning, the love of family and friends, the ability to work, and the joy of a peaceful moment. When we shift our focus from what we lack to what we have, we begin to see the richness of God’s blessings all around us.

## Living as a Blessing to Others

One of the profound truths of God’s way of blessing is that we are blessed to be a blessing. Genesis 12:2 highlights this purpose when God tells Abram, *“You will be a blessing.”* This principle is repeated throughout Scripture, reminding us that the blessings we receive are not solely for our benefit but are meant to flow through us to others.

When we live with a mindset of gratitude, we become vessels of God’s goodness. Our actions, words, and resources can be used to uplift others, fulfill needs, and glorify God. This cycle of receiving and giving creates a ripple effect of blessing that extends beyond our immediate sphere of influence.

At times, people may feel guilty for their blessings, especially when others around them are struggling. However, guilt is not God’s intention. Instead, He calls us to be stewards of His blessings, using them to make a difference in the lives of others. As we walk in obedience and gratitude, we honor God and become an extension of His love to the world.

## Obedience and the Experience of Blessing

While God’s blessings are freely given, our ability to fully experience and enjoy them often depends on our obedience to His Word. Psalm 1:1 describes the blessed life as one that avoids the path of the wicked and delights in the law of the Lord. Similarly, Jesus teaches that true blessing comes from hearing and obeying God’s Word: “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it” (Luke 11:28 NIV).

Obedience positions us to live in alignment with God’s will, allowing His blessings to flow unhindered in our lives. Disobedience, on the other hand, can create barriers that prevent us from fully experiencing the peace, joy, and favor that God desires for us.

Even in moments when we fail, God’s blessings remain steadfast because His love is unchanging. However, living in obedience brings a deeper sense of fulfillment and joy as we walk in harmony with His purposes.

## God’s Blessings in Times of Struggle

It’s natural to feel disconnected from God’s blessings during times of hardship. Yet, even in these moments, His blessings are present. Luke 6:21 reminds us that those who weep will laugh, and those who hunger will be satisfied. These promises assure us that our struggles are not permanent, and God’s blessings will ultimately prevail.

Blessings are not always about the absence of problems but the presence of God’s peace, comfort, and provision in the midst of them. When we trust in God’s goodness, we can experience His blessings even in the darkest seasons.

## A Prayer for God’s Blessings

Father God, I thank You for Your endless blessings in my life. Help me to see Your hand at work, even in challenging times. Teach me to walk in obedience and to be a blessing to others. Forgive me for the moments when I have taken Your blessings for granted. I bless Your holy name and praise You for all that You have done and will continue to do. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I am blessed by God, and His favor surrounds me.
* I bless the Lord with all my heart and soul.
* I am a blessing to others, sharing God’s goodness.

## Action Steps

1. **Gratitude journaling.** Write down the blessings you experience each day, no matter how small they may seem. Reflect on these regularly to cultivate a spirit of gratitude.
2. **Be a blessing.** Look for opportunities to bless others—whether through words, acts of kindness, or generosity.
3. **Obey God’s Word.** Commit to walking in obedience, knowing that God’s blessings flow through a life aligned with His will.
4. **Celebrate God’s goodness.** Take time to worship and thank God for His blessings, recognizing His faithfulness in your life.

**Remember**: **God’s blessings are abundant, unchanging, and freely given.** As you walk in gratitude and obedience, you’ll not only experience His blessings but also become a channel of His goodness to the world.

# Chapter 23

# God’s Way of Speaking

# My Experience with Hearing God

Then Jesus said, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

Mark 4:9 (NIV)

I remember when I first became a believer, I desperately wanted to hear God’s voice. I would listen to sermons and buy books about hearing the voice of God, trying desperately to learn how.

At first, it was extremely difficult. My thoughts often got in the way, creating doubt and confusion. Over time, I learned that I could not hear Him when I was anxious and worried. It was only when I learned how to quiet my mind and listen with my heart that I understood His voice in my life.

One of the most profound moments of hearing God’s voice came during one of the darkest seasons of my life. I had just endured the heartbreaking loss of my baby girl, delivering her stillborn at six months. Overwhelmed with grief, I found myself sitting by the water, staring out at the waves, searching for peace, for answers, for something to hold onto.

As I poured out my heart in prayer, I sensed the Lord speaking to me—not in an audible voice, but deep within my spirit. He spoke of my future, of hope beyond the pain, of a purpose yet to unfold. That encounter forever changed me, teaching me the power of waiting on the Lord and trusting His perfect timing.

Over the years, I have discovered that God speaks to me in many ways—through Scripture, dreams, other people, the Holy Spirit, and even the beauty of nature. Hearing and obeying His voice have become foundational in my faith journey.

## Hearing God’s Voice: A Divine Invitation

When God speaks, it is essential that we listen and obey. Hebrews 12:25 (NLT) says, “Be careful that you do not refuse to listen to the One who is speaking. For if the people of Israel did not escape when they refused to listen to Moses, the earthly messenger, we will certainly not escape if we reject the One who speaks to us from heaven!”

God’s voice carries the power to guide, transform, and bring life.Yet, recognizing His voice can sometimes be challenging. In Hebrews 12:25, the Greek word for “speaking” (*laleó*) refers to meaningful, purposeful communication. Similarly, in John 10:27, Jesus assures us, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” The word “hear” in this verse is *akouó* and implies not just listening but understanding and responding.

God’s voice is dynamic and can manifest in various ways. In Matthew 3:17 (NIV), God spoke over Jesus at His baptism, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” On other occasions, God’s voice was not understood by all. Some thought it was thunder (John 12:28–29 NIV), showing that discerning His voice requires spiritual sensitivity. God’s voice can sometimes sound like our own thoughts or resemble the voices of our spiritual leaders. For example, when God first spoke to the prophet Samuel, Samuel thought it was Eli calling him. It took Eli’s discernment to recognize that it was God and instruct Samuel to say, “Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:9 NIV).

Some believers have testified to audibly hearing God’s voice, while others hear Him through impressions, thoughts, or the inner witness of the Holy Spirit. Although I have not personally heard God’s audible voice, I have experienced Him speaking to me in countless ways that are just as real and transformative.

## Ways God Speaks

* 1. **Through His Word**

The Bible is God’s primary means of communication. It contains His thoughts, promises, and guidance. As we study Scripture, the Holy Spirit illuminates passages that apply directly to our lives. Hebrews 4:12 describes the Word as “living and active,” meaning it has the power to speak into every situation.

* 1. **Through the Holy Spirit**

God speaks directly to our spirits, often through impressions, promptings, or thoughts that align with His Word. The Holy Spirit is our Helper, guiding us into all truth (John 16:13). This inner witness is a gentle yet powerful way God uses to communicate with us.

* 1. **Through Nature**

Creation declares the glory of God: “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (Psalm 19:1 NIV). The sound of waves, the beauty of a sunrise, and the rustling of leaves—all can remind us of His presence and speak to our hearts about His power and faithfulness.

* 1. **Through Dreams and Visions**

God often uses dreams to convey messages. In Matthew 1:20 (NIV), an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, giving him guidance about marrying Mary. These divine encounters still happen today, offering direction and encouragement.

* 1. **Through Others**

God frequently speaks through people, whether it’s a prophetic word, a sermon, or a simple conversation. He can use anyone to deliver His message, including spiritual leaders, friends, or even children.

* 1. **Through Circumstances**

Sometimes, God allows events in our lives to grab our attention. Challenges and blessings alike can serve as His way of communicating His will or redirecting our paths.

## Discerning God’s Voice

Hearing God requires spiritual sensitivity. Here are some principles to help discern His voice:

1. **Alignment with Scripture**

God will never contradict His Word. If a thought or impression conflicts with biblical principles, it is not from Him.

1. **Confirmation**

God often confirms His messages through multiple sources, as stated in Matthew 18:16 (NIV), “Every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

1. **Peace**

God’s voice brings peace, not confusion. Colossians 3:15 (NIV) reminds us to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts as a guiding principle.

1. **Accountability**

Share what you believe God is saying with a trusted spiritual advisor for guidance and clarity.

## Barriers to Hearing God

Several factors can hinder us from hearing God’s voice:

1. **Unbelief**: Doubting that God speaks today can close our spiritual ears.
2. **Distractions**: A noisy, busy life can drown out His still, small voice.
3. **Sin**: Disobedience can create a barrier between us and God, making it difficult to hear Him clearly.

To overcome these barriers, we must cultivate a lifestyle of prayer, repentance, and quiet reflection.

## Responding to God’s Voice

When God speaks, obedience is key. James 1:22 (NIV) warns us to “not merely listen to the word … Do what it says.” Delayed obedience is disobedience. As we respond to His instructions, we position ourselves to hear Him more clearly and frequently.

## A Prayer to Hear God’s Voice

Lord God, thank You for speaking to me in so many ways. Please help me to discern Your voice clearly and to respond with faith and obedience. Remove any barriers that hinder me from hearing You. Thank You for drawing me with Your love and speaking words of truth and comfort into my life. I surrender my ears, heart, and mind to You. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I hear the voice of the Lord clearly and confidently.
* God is always speaking to my heart.
* I respond to God’s voice with faith and obedience.

## Action Steps

1. **Start journaling.** Write down what you believe God is saying to you through Scripture, prayer, or impressions.
2. **Pray for clarity.** Ask God to remove distractions and give you ears to hear His voice.
3. **Spend time in nature.** Observe God’s creation and listen for His voice in the stillness.
4. **Seek confirmation.** Share what you hear with a trusted spiritual advisor for guidance and encouragement.
5. **Practice listening.** Set aside dedicated time each day to sit quietly before the Lord, asking Him to speak to your heart.

**Remember:** God is always speaking—through His Word, His Spirit, and His creation. **The key to hearing Him is cultivating a heart that listens and responds.** As we grow in intimacy with Him, His voice becomes clearer, guiding us into all truth and His perfect will for our lives.

# Chapter 24

# God’s Patient Way

# Learning Patience through the Healing Process

Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

2 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

One of the most profound lessons I’ve learned about patience came after I fractured several bones in my wrist while rollerblading. The healing process was slow and required both physical and emotional endurance.

A nurse wisely told me, “Healing is a marathon, not a sprint.” Those words became a reminder to trust God’s timing and embrace the process of recovery with faith. Through this experience, I discovered that God’s patient way is transformative, teaching me to rest in His love and grace.

## God’s Patient Nature

Patience is a cornerstone of God’s character, deeply intertwined with His love and mercy. In Exodus 34:6, God proclaims Himself as “slow to anger,” demonstrating His willingness to withhold judgment and extend mercy. The Hebrew word *arek*, meaning long-suffering, captures the essence of His patience.

“Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, ‘The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.’” (Exodus 34:5–7 NIV)

In 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV), we see a profound reflection of God’s long-suffering nature, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” The promise referenced here is the return of Jesus Christ. Though it may seem delayed, God’s patience is driven by His desire for all to come to repentance.

This truth fills me with gratitude when I remember how God was patient with me during the times I lived apart from His will. His delays are not denials—they are opportunities for transformation, salvation, and growth. Hebrews 6:12 (NIV) reminds us, “We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.” Patience is the bridge between God’s promises and their fulfillment.

## The Process of Becoming

As we wait for the Lord, it’s important to recognize that God’s primary concern is not what we do but who we are becoming. Oftentimes, we prioritize activity—tasks, achievements, and results—when God is more concerned with our transformation. Our becoming informs our doing.

We cannot work our way into patience; it is cultivated through trials and challenges. James 1:3–4 (NKJV) teaches us, “… the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”Patience is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, which is formed in us as we endure tests with faith and trust in God.

In Galatians 4:19 (NIV), the apostle Paul states, “My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.” The English word “formed” is the Greek verb *morphoó* and is used in the New Testament to describe the process of forming or shaping something. It often conveys the idea of an inward transformation or the development of a particular character or nature.

In a spiritual context, *morphoó* refers to the formation of Christ’s character within believers.Paul understood the importance of becoming and how it is often painful for both the one being transformed and the one assisting in the transformation, but it is worth it!

## Trusting God’s Timing

Waiting on the Lord with patience requires faith, trust, and hope. Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV) reminds us, “But those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” This renewal comes from actively trusting God’s timing, even when circumstances feel stagnant or delayed.

Romans 8:28 (NIV) assures us that “in all things God works for the good of those who love Him.” Even in seasons of waiting, God is working behind the scenes, orchestrating circumstances for our ultimate good. Patience allows us to rest in this assurance, knowing that His plans are always perfect.

## Patience in Relationships

Just as God extends patience to us, we are called to extend it to others. Ephesians 4:2 (NIV) encourages us to be “completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” In our relationships—whether with family, friends, or coworkers—patience reflects God’s love and fosters harmony.

Jesus is the ultimate model of patience. Despite the constant misunderstandings and failures of His disciples, He patiently guided and taught them. His example reminds us to show grace and understanding, even when it’s difficult.

## The Power of Perseverance

In Hebrews 12:1–2 (NIV), believers are encouraged to “run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” Perseverance, or *hupomoné* in Greek, conveys steadfastness and endurance under pressure. It is through perseverance that we develop the patience to remain faithful in trials, trusting that God’s promises will be fulfilled in His perfect time.

Waiting on the Lord is not passive; it is an active, hope-filled process of surrendering our desires and timelines to Him. This act of trust brings peace, even in the midst of uncertainty.

## A Prayer for God’s Patience

Father God, thank You for Your patience with me. Teach me to wait on You with trust and hope. Help me to grow in patience as I face trials, and let me reflect Your long-suffering love to those around me. Strengthen me as I wait for Your promises and let my life honor You in every season. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I trust God’s perfect timing.
* I wait patiently for the Lord’s promises.
* I extend patience to myself and others.

## Actions

1. **Take time to reflect** on areas in your life where you struggle to wait on God. Surrender them to Him in prayer.
2. **Practice patience** in your relationships by responding with grace and understanding.
3. **Meditate on Scriptures** **about patience**, such as 2 Peter 3:9 and Isaiah 40:31.
4. **Journal your experiences** of waiting on the Lord and how He has worked in your life through those seasons.

**Remember**: Patience is not just about waiting—it’s about trusting. As we embrace God’s patient way, we learn to rely on His timing, grow in faith, and become a reflection of His enduring love. In every season of waiting, God is working, transforming us into His likeness, and drawing us closer to Him.

# Chapter 25

# God’s Healing Way

# My Divine Healing Experience

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:5 (NIV)

I personally experienced God’s miraculous healing during my struggle with drug addiction when I endured several psychotic breakdowns. The worst episode occurred while I was hospitalized in Miami, Florida. The doctors were unsure how to treat me, and I was given medications that left me barely functional.

My family came to the hospital, formed a prayer circle, and fervently sought God on my behalf. As they prayed, I felt a sense of clarity return to my mind. The fog lifted, and shortly afterward, I was discharged from the hospital. By God’s grace, I have never experienced another psychotic breakdown from that day to this one. This miraculous healing and deliverance taught me to trust in God’s power and faithfulness.

## Healing Through Christ’s Sacrifice

“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; ‘by his wounds you have been healed.’” (1 Peter 2:24 NIV)

Healing is one of the primary themes of the New Testament, and it is deeply rooted in God’s covenant with His people. Acts 10:38 (NLT) states that Jesus “went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil … .” The importance of healing as a miraculous sign of God’s power is just as relevant today as it was in biblical times. Even with modern advances in medical science, sickness and disease remain constant reminders of the world’s brokenness.

In 1 Peter 2:24, the Greek verb *iaomai* describes healing not only as physical restoration but also as spiritual and emotional wholeness. Jesus’s death on the cross ushered in salvation and a new way of living that includes divine health and healing. God’s ultimate desire is for us to experience wholeness in spirit, soul, and body (see 1 Thessalonians 5:23).

## Biblical Accounts of Healing

There are countless testimonies in the Bible of people being healed by Jesus, and one of the most remarkable is found in Matthew 9. A woman who had been bleeding for twelve years, after exhausting her resources on doctors to no avail, came to the faith-filled conclusion that if she could only touch the hem of Jesus’s garment, she would be healed. She pressed through the crowd, reached out, and touched His cloak. Instantly, her bleeding stopped.

Jesus, noticing her faith, said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well*”* (Matthew 9:22 ESV). The Greek verb *sózó* used here means “to save” or “to deliver,” encompassing physical, spiritual, and emotional healing. This story highlights two key principles:

1. **Faith is essential for healing.** We must believe in God’s power and His willingness to heal.
2. **Persistence leads to breakthrough.** Like the woman, we must be willing to press through obstacles to reach Jesus.

## Healing Through the Faith of Others

In Mark 2, four friends demonstrated extraordinary faith when they lowered a paralyzed man through a roof to place him in front of Jesus. Moved by their faith, Jesus healed the man. This account illustrates that the faith of others can play a crucial role in someone’s healing. Praying for others and standing in faith with them can lead to miraculous outcomes.

## When Healing Does Not Come

While many experience miraculous healing, others do not. Does this mean they lack faith? Not necessarily. Jesus taught that faith as small as a mustard seed is enough (Matthew 17:20). We must remember that God is sovereign, and His ways are higher than ours. Our faith and trust in God must stand firm, knowing that He is in control and is for us, not against us. Therefore, as we wait patiently on the Lord, we know He will hear and answer our prayers. Also, we need to understand that healing comes in many forms, not just the absence of sickness and disease, but also the healing of the soul. This occurs as we draw closer to God, reaching out to Him in prayer.

Salvation is the ultimate healing that ensures eternal wholeness. In 2 Corinthians 5:8 (NIV), Paul writes, “We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.” Even when physical healing does not occur, eternal life with God is the ultimate restoration.

## The Power of God’s Word in Healing

Psalm 107:20 (NIV) declares, “He sent out his word and healed them … .” God’s Word—both the written Scriptures and the living Word, Jesus Christ—is a source of healing. Meditating on and declaring God’s promises strengthens our faith and aligns us with His will.

## Faith and Practical Steps

God desires for His children to live in divine health. While miraculous healing can occur instantly, God often uses a combination of supernatural intervention and practical steps, such as medical care, diet, exercise, and rest. As I always say, “*We are in partnership with God. He has His part, and we have ours. We cannot do His part, and He will not do ours*.” Walking in divine health requires listening to the Holy Spirit’s guidance and taking intentional actions to care for our bodies and minds.

## A Prayer for Healing

Lord, I thank You for being my Healer. I receive Your healing power today and declare that by the stripes of Jesus, I am healed. Teach me to walk in divine health and trust You through every health crisis. Thank You for Your love, healing, and faithfulness. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I am healed by the blood of Jesus.
* I walk in divine health and healing.
* I am complete and whole in Christ.

## Action Steps

1. **Faith in action.** Build your faith by meditating on healing Scriptures, such as1 Peter 2:24, Isaiah 53:5, and Psalm 107:20.
2. **Physical care.** Take practical steps to maintain health, such as eating nutritious foods, exercising, and getting regular check-ups.
3. **Seek medical guidance.** Trust God to work through doctors and treatments while continuing to pray for His touch.
4. **Pray for others.** Stand in faith with loved ones, believing for their healing.
5. **Celebrate small victories.** Acknowledge progress, no matter how small, as evidence of God’s healing work in your life.

**Remember: God’s healing way encompasses the totality of our being—spirit, soul, and body.** While physical healing is significant, the ultimate healing is found in the salvation and wholeness that come through Christ. As you trust God’s promises and take intentional steps to align with His will, you will experience the fullness of His healing power in every area of your life.

# Chapter 26

# God’s Glorious Way

# Consumed By His Glory

Who is he, this King of glory? The LORD Almighty—he is the King of glory.

Psalm 24:10 (NIV)

I first encountered the glory of God in a profound way during a revival service led by my spiritual father, Dr. Steven Govender. The presence of God was so tangible that I was filled with uncontainable joy and laughter. It was as if every burden I carried melted away in the light of His glory.

Beyond the emotional experience, these moments marked a turning point in my spiritual journey. I developed a deeper hunger for God and a renewed passion for His Word and His presence. Over thirty years later, that fire still burns in my heart, a testament to the transformative power of God’s glory.

## The Nature of God’s Glory

Psalm 24:10 refers to God as the *King of Glory*, a title that underscores His supreme power and majesty. Similarly, Hebrews 1:3 explains that Jesus, as the Son of God, radiates this same glory. Through Jesus, the fullness of God’s glory is revealed, offering salvation and the opportunity for transformation.

“The Son radiates God’s own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.” (Hebrews 1:3 NLT)

God’s glory is the essence of His presence, power, and majesty. It represents His infinite goodness and sovereignty as they are revealed to humanity. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for glory, *kabod*, conveys a sense of weightiness, honor, and splendor, emphasizing the divine presence.

In the New Testament, the Greek term *doxa* refers to God’s majesty and divine nature and highlights the visible manifestation of His presence. This glory not only reflects who God is but also serves as a transformative force in the lives of believers.

## Experiencing God’s Glory

Seeking God is a vital part of the believer’s walk with Him. Isaiah 55:6 (NIV) says, “Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.” One of the clearest ways we encounter the Lord is through His glory as we worship, pray, and study His Word. Psalm 16:11 (NIV) declares, “You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.” In God’s presence, we experience fullness of joy, and His glory becomes evident in tangible ways.

While our relationship with God is rooted in faith rather than feelings, there are moments when His presence touches us deeply, manifesting through tears, laughter, or a sense of peace. At times, believers describe physical sensations like warmth, tingling, or a powerful sense of awe. These experiences serve as reminders of God’s closeness and the depth of His love for us.

Moses famously asked God to show him His glory in Exodus 33:18–19 (NIV). God responded by revealing His goodness: “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence.” God’s glory is His goodness manifested in ways that draw us closer to Him.

## God’s Glory as Protection

God’s glory also serves as a shield of protection. Isaiah 58:8 (NIV) promises that “the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.” His glory surrounds His people, creating a hedge of safety against harm. Therefore, the safest place that we could ever be is in the presence of God. While this divine protection is a source of comfort, it can also provoke opposition. First Peter 4:14 (NIV) explains, “If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.” Those who carry God’s glory may face persecution or reproach, but the protection and assurance of His presence give us the strength to endure.

Romans 8:18 (NIV) reminds us, “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” God’s glory sustains us through trials, allowing us to focus on His eternal promises rather than temporary struggles.

## God’s Glory Transforms

God’s glory is not just something we experience—it’s a force that changes us. Second Corinthians 3:18 (NIV) describes this process: “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” As we spend time in God’s presence, His glory works within us to conform us to the likeness of Christ.

This transformation isn’t just for our benefit; it empowers us to reflect God’s glory to the world. When others see the evidence of God’s work in our lives—peace in trials, joy in hardships, love for others—they are drawn to Him.

## Glorifying God

We were created to bring glory to God. Romans 15:5–6 (NIV) instructs us: “May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” One of our primary purposes as believers is to glorify God.

When Jesus was going to the cross, He said in John 13:31 (NLT)*,* “The time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory, and God will be glorified because of him.” The Greek word for “glorify,” *doxazó*, means to honor, magnify, or praise. Jesus glorified God by being obedient to the Father and fulfilling His purpose. By living in obedience to God’s Word and walking in love and unity with others, we also bring Him glory. When we glorify God, we acknowledge His greatness and direct others to Him. This can happen through our words, actions, and attitudes.

We must always remember to give all the glory to God because He deserves it all. Acts 12:22–23 (NLT) states, “The people gave him a great ovation, shouting, ‘It’s the voice of a god, not of a man!’ Instantly, an angel of the Lord struck Herod with a sickness, because he accepted the people’s worship instead of giving the glory to God. So he was consumed with worms and died.”This account of Scripture illustrates a dire consequence of not giving all the glory to God. We should always give God the glory, even when people try to worship and exalt us because of our gifts and talents. Remembering that it was God who gave them to us will help us to thank Him and point others to Him.

God’s glory is also evident in creation. Psalm 19:1 (NIV) declares, “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.” From the vastness of the universe to the intricate beauty of a flower, every aspect of creation points to God’s majesty. As those made in His image, we are called to reflect His glory in how we live and interact with others.

## A Prayer for God’s Glory

Dear Father God, in the name of Jesus, I pray that You would fill me with Your glorious presence. Transform me into the image of Christ and help me to live a life that brings glory to Your name. Protect me with Your glory and give me strength during times of suffering and persecution. I surrender every part of my life to You and ask that Your glory be revealed in me. Thank You for Your goodness and faithfulness. All glory, praise, and honor belong to you alone. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I am filled with God’s glory.
* God’s glory transforms me into the likeness of Christ.
* I live to glorify God in all I do.

## Actions

1. **Seek God’s presence daily.** Spend time in prayer, worship, and the Word, inviting God to reveal His glory in your life.
2. **Journal your encounters.** Write down moments when you sense God’s presence or see His glory at work in your life.
3. **Observe God’s glory in creation.** Take time to appreciate the beauty of nature and reflect on how it reveals God’s character.
4. **Live a life that glorifies God.** Let your words, actions, and relationships point others to God’s greatness.
5. **Surrender to transformation.** Ask God to reveal areas in your life that need change and allow His glory to work within you.

**Remember:** God’s glory is His goodness, power, and presence made manifest. As we seek Him, we experience His transformative touch, are protected by His glory, and empowered to reflect His majesty to the world. **Let His glory shine through you as you live each day in awe of His greatness!**

# Chapter 27

# God’s Way of Wisdom

# How God’s Wisdom Changed My Life

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

James 3:17 (NIV)

I remember when I was young in my faith, I went to my pastor for advice about a difficult situation at work. There was a climate of competition, confusion, and jealousy concerning positions and promotions. I found myself caught up in the conflict, feeling frustrated and uncertain about how to proceed.

My pastor directed me to James 3, showing me the difference between God’s wisdom and worldly wisdom. I had never read these scriptures before, but once I did, God opened my eyes to what was happening. I realized that I was being influenced by the negative atmosphere rather than walking in peace and wisdom. I repented and asked the Lord to give me His wisdom regarding my career.

When I surrendered the situation to God, He gave me a deep peace, and I no longer felt the need to compete or prove myself. I focused on doing my work with excellence while trusting God for the outcome. That shift in perspective not only helped me spiritually but also led to unexpected opportunities and favor throughout my career.

“No, we declare God’s wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.” (1 Corinthians 2:7 NIV)

## The Value of God’s Wisdom

The Bible speaks extensively about wisdom and its necessity in the lives of believers. Proverbs 4:7 (NIV) states, “The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.” Similarly, Proverbs 8:11 (NIV) declares, “For wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her.” These scriptures highlight the immeasurable worth of divine wisdom, emphasizing that it surpasses material wealth and worldly achievements.

Wisdom is crucial, especially in today’s society, where deception is prevalent, and discernment is essential. Without wisdom, we are vulnerable to making poor choices that lead to failure, hardship, and unnecessary struggles. This is why King Solomon, when given the opportunity to ask God for anything, chose wisdom.

God was pleased with Solomon’s request, responding in 2 Chronicles 1:11–12 (NIV), “Since this is your heart’s desire and you have not asked for wealth, possessions or honor, nor for the death of your enemies, and since you have not asked for a long life but for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king, therefore wisdom and knowledge will be given you. And I will also give you wealth, possessions, and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have.”

Solomon’s decision to prioritize wisdom over riches or power resulted in abundant blessings beyond his request. This illustrates a profound truth: **When we seek God’s wisdom first, everything else falls into place.**

## God’s Wisdom vs. Worldly Wisdom

Many people mistake wisdom for common sense, but there is nothing “common” about God’s wisdom. In the New Testament, *sophia* is the Greek word for wisdom, referring to divine wisdom that provides both practical and spiritual insight. Unlike human wisdom, which is limited and often flawed, God’s wisdom leads to righteousness and aligns with His divine purposes.

Thankfully, God generously gives wisdom to those who seek it. James 1:5 (NIV) encourages us, “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.” However, after asking for wisdom, we must wait on the Lord and not act impulsively. God’s wisdom often comes as peace in our hearts, leading us toward the right decision. It may not always seem logical from a worldly perspective, but trusting God’s wisdom means trusting that He sees beyond what we can comprehend.

Unlike us, God sees our past, present, and future simultaneously. While we may only understand our immediate circumstances, He knows the full picture. This is why we can confidently rely on His wisdom, even when it contradicts human reasoning.

## The Characteristics of God’s Wisdom

James 3:13 (NIV) provides a key indicator of true wisdom: “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.” Genuine wisdom produces humility. No matter how much knowledge we accumulate, God’s wisdom will always lead to a posture of humility rather than pride.

On the contrary, James 3:14–16 (NIV) warns, “But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such ‘wisdom’ does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.”

The Greek word *eritheia* for “selfish ambition” describes a self-centered attitude that fuels division and conflict. It represents a spirit of rivalry that prioritizes personal gain over unity and righteousness. When evaluating our actions, we must ask: *Is this decision driven by God’s wisdom or by personal ambition, pride, or envy?*

James 3:17–18 (NIV) gives a clear distinction*:* “But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”

True wisdom is not about seeking revenge or repaying negativity with negativity. Rather, it trusts in the message of Hebrews 10:30 (NKJV): “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. Walking in God’s wisdom means trusting Him with the outcome while striving for peace and righteousness.

## A Prayer for God’s Wisdom

Father God, I ask for Your wisdom in every area of my life. Help me to discern between godly wisdom and the wisdom of the world. Forgive me for the times I have relied on my own understanding instead of seeking Your guidance. I trust You to lead me in the right direction, and I submit my decisions to You. Let my life reflect humility, peace, and righteousness. In Jesus’s Name, Amen.

## Affirmations

* I am wise, and I walk in humility.
* I trust God with all things in my life.
* I receive the gift of wisdom from God the Father daily.

## Actions Steps

1. **Evaluate your decisions.** Identify areas in your life where you are relying on worldly wisdom instead of God’s wisdom. Seek the Lord for direction.
2. **Repent and seek wisdom.** If you have made decisions based on selfish ambition, pride, or envy, repent and ask God for His wisdom and peace.
3. **Study the Book of Proverbs.** Proverbs is filled with godly wisdom. Read one chapter a day and meditate on its teachings.
4. **Surround yourself with wise counsel.** Seek advice from mature believers who walk in wisdom. Proverbs 11:14 (NIV) states, “For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is won through many advisers.”
5. **Apply God’s wisdom daily.** As you grow in wisdom, put it into practice by making decisions based on righteousness, humility, and peace rather than impulsiveness or selfish ambition.

**Remember:** God’s wisdom is available to all who seek it. As we walk in wisdom, we experience peace, clarity, and divine direction. **True wisdom is not just about knowledge but about applying God’s truth to our daily lives.** When we embrace God’s wisdom, we position ourselves for His blessings and success.

# Chapter 28

# Walking in God’s Way

# The Conclusion of the Matter

**This is what the LORD says:** “Stop at the crossroads and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls. But you reply, ‘No, that’s not the road we want!’”

**Jeremiah 6:16 (NLT)**

Believe me, I have tried many other ways, and they all led to great peril and disappointment. When I finally began walking in God’s way, I found through personal experience that His way is best. His way is not always the easiest, but it is the most rewarding. It is an adventure that lasts for eternity, filled with grace, renewal, and divine encounters.

Walking in God’s way is not about striving for perfection but embracing a lifelong journey of faith, growth, and transformation. There are no failing grades in God’s process—only lessons that shape us into who He created us to be. Every challenge, mistake, and detour becomes an opportunity to learn and realign with His purpose.

As you journey forward, trust God’s way. When you stumble, get back up. Keep walking, keep growing, and keep pressing toward His calling. **The best is yet to come!** Walking in God’s way will help you find the true peace and joy that we all crave. May God bless you abundantly as you walk in His way.

## Points to Remember

* **Finding God’s way is a journey,** **not a race.** Each step brings you closer to the life He has planned for you—a life of peace, purpose, and abundance. You’re not alone. God is with you, guiding you every step of the way.
* God longs to spend time with you—not because He has to, but **because He loves you deeply.** In His presence, you’ll find peace, joy, and clarity like never before.
* God’s way is not just better—it’s **higher**. When you follow Him, you rise above challenges, discover your purpose, and experience a life filled with peace and joy. Let Him take you higher today!
* Jesus is not just the way to eternal life—**He is the way to a fulfilled, abundant life here and now.** When you follow Him, you will find clarity, peace, and purpose. Choose **His way** today!
* Grace is God’s gift to you—not something you earn. **It empowers you to live free**, love others, and rest in Him. Let His grace flow through you today!
* Faith is the force that connects you to God’s power. **It is not about what you can do but about trusting what He can do.** With faith, mountains move, miracles happen, and victory is assured. Hold on to your faith—it will never fail you.
* Hope is not wishful thinking. It is a confident expectation that God will do what He has promised. **Hope keeps us moving forward**, even when life feels uncertain. Let Jesus, the door of hope, guide you through every valley and into the promises of God.
* Love is not just a feeling—it’s a choice and a force that changes lives. God’s love is patient, kind, and unconditional. When we allow His love to flow through us, we become instruments of His grace in a world that so desperately needs it. **Choose to walk in** **God’s force of love** **today!**
* Forgiveness is not about excusing someone’s behavior; it is about freeing your heart from the weight of bitterness. When you choose to forgive, you open the door to healing, peace, and God’s love. **Forgiveness is God’s way**—and His way always leads to freedom.
* **God’s way is not always easy, but it is always worth it.** Press on, no matter what the opposition may be. Your reward is greater than you can imagine, and God will give you the strength to keep moving forward. The prize of knowing Christ Jesus fully is worth every effort!
* Holiness isn’t about restrictions; it’s about being set apart for God’s purposes. It’s a joyful process of transformation that brings peace, purpose, and God’s presence into your life. **When you embrace holiness, you discover the life you were created to live**.
* **Joy** is not dependent on your circumstances. It is a gift from God, a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and a source of strength. When you embrace the joy of the Lord, you will experience peace, laughter, and a renewed hope that can carry you through anything. **Let God’s joy be your strength today!**
* God’s peace is not dependent on your circumstances. It is a gift that surpasses all understanding and will guard your heart and mind when you trust Him. **Live in God’s peace** and watch how it transforms your life!
* Resting in God is not about inactivity—it is about trusting His activity in your life. When you let go and let God, you will find strength, peace, and assurance in His presence. **Rest is not a luxury; it is a necessity** for living the abundant life God has for you.
* The seed is small, but its potential is enormous when placed in God’s hands. Trust Him to bring the increase and watch how He multiplies your efforts and resources. **God’s way of increase is supernatural and never fails.**
* **The way of the cross is not just about sacrifice; it’s about resurrection, renewal, and transformation.** As you surrender your life to Christ and walk in the Spirit, you’ll experience the abundant life He promises.
* **God’s way of life is not about existing—it’s about thriving.** It’s a life filled with peace, joy, and purpose, grounded in the eternal reality of Christ’s love. Embrace the *zoe* life and discover the fullness of what God has planned for you.
* God’s saving way is more than a one-time event—**it’s an ongoing journey of grace, deliverance, and victory.** Embrace His saving power and experience the abundant life He promises.
* Freedom in Christ is not just about breaking chains—**it’s about living abundantly in the truth of God’s love and grace.** Stand firm, trust His Spirit, and walk boldly in the freedom He has provided.
* **The Kingdom of God is not just a place but a way of life.** By embracing its principles, you experience the fullness of life in Christ and bring His light to the world.
* **Suffering** is not meaningless. In God’s hands, it becomes a **tool for transformation, intimacy, and purpose.** Through it, we draw closer to Christ, find joy, hope, and share His love with others.
* **God’s blessings are abundant, unchanging, and freely given.** As you walk in gratitude and obedience, you’ll not only experience His blessings but also become a channel of His goodness to the world.
* God is always speaking—through His Word, His Spirit, and His creation. **The key to hearing Him is cultivating a heart that listens and responds.** As we grow in intimacy with Him, His voice becomes clearer, guiding us into all truth and His perfect will for our lives.
* Patience is not just about waiting—it’s about trusting. **As we embrace God’s patient way, we learn to rely on His timing, grow in faith, and become a reflection of His enduring love.** In every season of waiting, God is working, transforming us into His likeness, and drawing us closer to Him.
* **God’s healing way encompasses the totality of our being—spirit, soul, and body.** While physical healing is significant, the ultimate healing is found in the salvation and wholeness that come through Christ. As you trust God’s promises and take intentional steps to align with His will, you will experience the fullness of His healing power in every area of your life.
* God’s glory is His goodness, power, and presence made manifest. As we seek Him, we experience His transformative touch, are protected by His glory, and are empowered to reflect His majesty to the world. **Let His glory shine through you as you live each day in awe of His greatness!**
* God’s wisdom is available to all who seek it. As we walk in wisdom, we experience peace, clarity, and divine direction. **True wisdom is not just about knowledge but about applying God’s truth to our daily lives.** When we embrace God’s wisdom, we position ourselves for His blessings and success.

**Appendix**

# Fruit of the Spirit Self-Assessment Scale

The *Fruit of the Spirit Scale* is based upon the nine Fruits of the Spirit as found in Galatians 5:22–23 (NIV). The Fruit of the Spirit Scale is designed to rate your ability to become aware, grow, activate, and live a Holy Spirit-filled, fruitful life.

On a scale from 1–10 (1 being the least and 10 being the greatest), rate your level for each characteristic. Afterwards, add your score. The top score available is 90. (Circle your number for each fruit and add score daily.)

**Love**

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Joy**

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Peace**

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Patience**

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Kindness**

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Goodness**

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Faithfulness**

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Gentleness**

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Self-Control**

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Fruit of the Spirit Scale Daily Assessment**

* **90 You are living a Fruitful, Spirit-Filled life.**
* **70–90 The Fruit of the Spirit is alive and active in your life.**
* **50–70 You are growing in the Fruit of the Spirit.**
* **30–50 You are beginning to activate the Fruit of the Spirit.**
* **09–30 You are aware of the Fruit of the Spirit.**

**Keep up with your weekly progress to determine growth:**

**Score for Day 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Score for Day 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Score for Day 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Score for Day 4 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Score for Day 5 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Score for Day 6 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Score for Day 7 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Total Weekly Score \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Pray daily about all the characteristics of the Fruit of the Spirit and especially for areas that do not increase over time. Look up Scriptures and read the Bible concerning those areas. Be intentional and patient with yourself because growth takes time.

# Additional Resources

I invite you to begin or continue on your journey in God’s way by meeting me at a Hope Immersion Retreat Workshop.

Hope Immersion Retreat Workshops, led by Hopeologist Dr. Rosalind Y. Lewis Tompkins, are designed to help you experience and immerse yourself in hope through the Practice of Hopeology.

The Practice of Hopeology is a self-help empowerment tool designed to help individuals become more hopeful and effectively share hope with others.

You will be pampered in Hope while:

* Learning practical steps to Envision Hope.
* Learning how to Share Hope with Others.
* Learning how to Think, Speak, and Imagine hope.
* Learning how to move from Despair to Hope while Resting in Hope.

You will leave the Hope Immersion Retreat with practical ways to stay hopeful and equipped with tools to help family, friends, and others become and remain hopeful.

Please visit [www.hopeimmersionretreat.com](http://www.hopeimmersionretreat.com) to sign up for the next Hope Immersion Retreat or scan the QR code below.



# About the Author

**Dr. Rosalind Tompkins** knows firsthand the power of God’s way. Once bound by addiction, she experienced a life-changing transformation and has been walking in divine freedom for over three decades. As an **apostle, author, non-profit leader, and founder of the Hopeologist® Academy**, she has dedicated her life to spreading the message of hope and faith. Her journey—from brokenness to wholeness, from struggle to victory—serves as a living testament to the life-changing power of God.

As a global advocate for transformation, **Dr. Tompkins’ work extends across continents**, establishing churches and providing aid to communities in Africa, Asia, and beyond. She has written several inspiring books, including *As Long as There Is Breath in Your Body, There Is Still Hope*.

If you’re ready to step into **God’s Way** and embrace all He has for you, this book will be your **roadmap to a life of purpose, power, and divine breakthrough**.

For more about Dr. Rosalind Tompkins and her ministry, simply scan the QR code below to her website: makeahopeconnection.com



>>>INSERT QR CODE LINKED TO: <https://makeahopeconnection.com/speaker-author-president-hopeologist-dr-rosalind-lewis-tompkins/> <<<

# Notes

1. **Chapter 3**

 Michelle Obama first spoke her famous aphorism July 25, 2016, at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: “When they go low, we go high.”

**Chapter 8** [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “Loving Your Enemies,” sermon delivered on November 17, 1957, at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

**Chapter 11** [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. “Transformation,” original poem by Rosalind Tompkins, *You Are Beautiful* (Strategic Book Publishing, 2009).

**Chapter 12** [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. “Laughing with Friends linked to lower risk of disability,” Heidi Godman, Harvard Health Letter, February 2022, *Preventive Medicine,* https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/laughing-with-friends-linked-to-lower-risk-of-disability. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)