

Perspective - Understanding Ourselves More

What God has done so we can be one with Him forever defies complete explanation. This is because the words do not exist to use for such a task. Even if it was possible for us to know God completely while we are on this earth, no words in any language could totally describe His Glory.

Some people contend that even if we could completely describe God's eternal miracles in Christ, no one would ever read it because of the complexity of the explanation. It would be too much for people to grasp and contain mentally and emotionally. Perhaps they are correct. Especially if we leave out the Holy Spirit Who teaches and guides us.

Less daunting is the attempt to share information about my observations concerning people. There are some things that can really help us if we know them about ourselves. Understanding a bit more about the formation or our foundational ways of thinking, and how change can take place might be helpful.

As with other areas explored in this journey my intent is not to explain authoritatively how we think. Science and theology can take on that task to whatever degree is desired. This is just my attempt to assist us in exploring some practical and basic thoughts on the subject.

A General Description for All of Us

The world of a person still in the womb of their mother, or soon after they are born would probably be an amazing world to explore. Here we want to start after our birth when we are able to see clearly and have the ability to recognize things and realize connectivity.

Perhaps it's relevant to mention the first time our hand flies through space and we see it, we may wonder how that can be made to happen again. If we knew words it might be like thinking, "Whoa! What was that?" "Hey there it is again." "How did that happen?" "Where does that thing go?" As fun as it might be for me to carry on with our early discoveries, there is something that hopefully we can agree on.

We begin to learn about ourselves through our bodies. Ok? Please, allow me to refer to this as our physical domain. After birth, our bodies continue to be a bit like sensory driven learning machines.

A part of that is learning how our sensors work as our brain seeks to soak up every piece of information it can acquire. At what point we become the originator of our own thoughts is unknown to me. More

easily defined is when we begin to express emotions, which seems to happen shortly after we enter this world separated from the womb.

If we don't cry right after birth then we seem to easily learn how to do that, and it's a lesson we can make use of the rest of our time on the earth. Unfortunately for our parents, we all seem skilled at doing this whenever it strikes our fancy, and we're especially equipped to use that skill nightly much to the irritation of mom and dad.

Already our brains are forming links between sensations and emotions. As soon as we are able our brains are storing sensory information and emotions that are connected to specific circumstances within our environment. We learn very quickly.

Generally, it seems we continue to develop with our bodies being the primary lens through which we consider everything initially. Even when considering concepts. How we feel about the source that we interact with usually makes a difference concerning our acceptance of any information.

Perhaps we primarily consider some of our original thoughts briefly using only our mental and emotional faculties. Even then it is likely our physical domain and how we feel comes into play with dominance. Anything we think probably produces some physical, mental, and emotional response.

We may not be aware of all the connections we have within us. Often, we may rely upon certain of our physical and emotional responses to an idea before we trust it for further consideration.

Probably, through our developmental years up to adulthood there are times we may consider thinking and feeling as our primary lens of understanding. My guess is our bodies are the main driver as we gather sensory information about our circumstances.

It seems to me some adults often shift what is dominant from sensory to emotional. If our body lines up with our feelings, then we may believe our interpretation of something to be accurate. Some people refer to this as us flying by emotional radar...

As we develop, our discovery process may begin to differentiate between our sensory information and its connections with prior experiences such as memories, supporting feelings and thoughts. Later, some may even understand the interactivity between our ideas of truth, values, perspectives, and attitudes to be an indication of something beyond those capabilities, even though we don't think about them so categorically.

Our understanding seems to also rely on something more than what we've depended on in the past. This is something different than our dependency upon our sensory information, and information stored concerning thoughts, feelings, prior conclusions, and lessons learned.

This source we use for considering something seems to come from some part of ourselves we don't really understand but know exists. As we continue our development and understanding of ourselves, not only do we sense the existence of something different, we also experience an awareness of an unmet need.

We all seem to develop our awareness of these two aspects of ourselves in different ways, at different times, and for different reasons. It's interesting that so many of us can be told it is simply a higher level of cognition, which in my opinion is not correct.

These new discoveries about ourselves clearly go beyond that type of existence. We probably only have fleeting thoughts about this that may be pieced together somehow, forming an awareness that becomes more difficult for us to ignore over time.

Also, nothing seems to satisfy our sense of this unmet need within us no matter how much focus we give to ourselves or our environment. Most likely we end up being introduced to the idea of a part of ourselves that exists distinctively from what we've known previously. If not when younger, then possibly before we leave our teens.

For some of us this happens at a very early age because it is a part of our family's sense of what's important. Others may only have had a rather fleeting introduction to the idea and gave it no further focus until years later. What we may understand is whatever this other dimension of ourselves seems to be it has a purpose for our understanding, or a connection with things beyond the limits of our physical existence.

If we learn more about this aspect of ourselves, we may bump into, or be introduced to the idea of us having a soul, or spirit, or both. There are so many flavors of ideas about this that it's like walking into an ice cream store that will fill us up long before we've taste-tested every flavor.

Even when we are left to a path of self-led discovery without the assistance of others to influence our understanding, we can still create many variations of pathways for this development. Usually, with some structure of organizing our thoughts we learn that there is a spiritual part of ourselves that cannot be fulfilled by personal achievements, possession of things, money, or power.

Some of us experience the miracle of God fulfilling us spiritually by forgiving us and giving us the Life created by His Son, Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Even then for most of us we are just beginning to understand that each of us has a spirit that will continue to exist as a person after our physical death.

So What?

Whether we identify with parts of the process described above or not the point is to recognize that most all, if not all of us clearly begin to understand ourselves and the world around us using our bodies as the means of discovery, learning and differentiation. It is only later that we may learn anything about having a soul, or spirit that can exist beyond our body.

Most often, we need some kind of assistance to understand very much about these other dimensions of ourselves. Still, before we gain much knowledge and understanding concerning these parts of our existence they can influence our thinking about self and everything else.

As we've seen our common development pattern fits exactly what Satan intended as a result of his temptation of Eve and Adam in the Garden of Eden. Rather than experiencing in unity with God all of Life in the Garden of Eden created by God, they were separated from God because of their sinful

rebellion against Him. [If the specific elements of their rebellion are not clearly in mind then please consider reading "Chapter 12: The Garden Event" again]

In the early chapters of this book we explored the fact that separation from God is Death. The kind of Death that supersedes any other form of death that may exist while we are on this earth because Death is eternal separation from God. That is essentially hell even without any of the other suffering people experience when eternally existing in Hell.

Without resolution of our separation from God we will essentially become a part of eternal-Death forever. It's so wonderful to know and experience God's solution given to us freely because He Loves us Perfectly. What makes the most sense to us, being one with Death forever, or one with God for all Eternity?

Some may argue that we are not limited to these two choices. Yes, there are many choices according to the various "spiritual endeavors" available to us, and we may even shift from one to another if we want.

Ok, my understanding is aligned with the adventures people decide fit their idea of personal preferences. If we just go along with that it would avoid any internal conflicts over differences of perspectives. The problem being this would only end up in the eternal Death of those of us who decide their ideas are better than God's gift of Jesus Who is Eternal Life.

Yes, as we have seen God's solution is to make us one with Him through Jesus His Son, Who is Life-Eternal, created especially for each one of us. By asking God to forgive us and to receive His Son Jesus, we are newly created by receiving Jesus-Life and becoming Alive for the first time in our existence.

Until then, however, the foundation of our existence is Death, under the control of Sin, within the dominion of Satan. This means that we will approach our existence and develop our knowledge and understanding of all that is a part of our existence by using our body, mind, and emotions as our structure for understanding.

Our body, mind, and emotions serve as the source, or part of the source for information and understanding of ourselves and everything else. That means that each of us is the final authority for our development and understanding of everything.

This is correct because we are the ones to choose what we are going to believe and allow to be a part of our identity, and our foundation for understanding anything. Our reality begins at the time of our conception. It continues at the time we are born into this world, and that reality is dominated by the fact we exist within the power of Sin.

The result is the essence of our being comes from Sin from the time of our conception. That's why our individual nature is often referred to as our Sin nature. This is our heritage confirmed by our chosen behaviors over time; "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,..." (Romans 3:23)

Bottom-line, even initially we want to be in control. If possible, we want to have things when we want them no matter what they are, or what our demand requires of others. We see this clearly within the behavior of any infant as the little person grows into childhood. That nature will dominate a person's character if early in their childhood such behavior is not limited by learning to respect others and their needs.

This is not just a little child's temporary outlook on its own existence. No, it's the nature we are each born with. It is who we are without Jesus, and we quickly learn that being able to influence our environment and the people within it is the best way to get what we want.

Probably most of us learn to control our demands so they fit within the acceptable cultural expectations of our contextual environment. We are taught or learn the hard way what is acceptable and unacceptable. Our skills grow concerning our abilities to most effectively influence others by meeting their demands necessary for us to obtain what we can, and to exercise as much control as possible over our life and those we love.

Our reality remains as described until we learn something different. We can't help ourselves beyond distinguishing the differences in what we want and the way we choose to satisfy our desires. This, my friends, is a very important point. Without Jesus, we have nothing more than what the world offers us to use in getting our needs met and managing our circumstances.

We seek a meaningful purpose for our existence as we operate within the Sin-based systems that dominate the world. Over time our worldly wisdom grows. While our circumstances inhibit us in obtaining a totally fulfilled sense of satisfaction, we continue to struggle to achieve this in whatever ways we choose.

It should come as no surprise to discover how gifted our children are in convincing us to do for them what they want. They are, for the most part master manipulators within their limitations.

We don't even need to be parents to know this because unless something significantly changed about our behavior over time, not only were we master manipulators when a child we probably haven't changed all that much. We've just gotten more skilled at the process or slowed down due the oppressive influences in the world.

While we may have a broad range of emotions about the behavior of other people, but we probably shouldn't expect something different from them. Really, without Jesus, people only have what the world offers for them to exist and try to obtain the kind of living they want for themselves and those they care about.

Also, we should realize that if we are followers of Jesus there is nothing justifying our judgement and condemnation of others. The more we focus on ourselves the greater the tendency for us to be judgmental of others with an oppressive force of condemnation. This is Satan's path, and something he will use that's well within the scope of his delight in our suffering.

Again, Satan's systems and influences are all designed to keep us from having the time, or the interest to seriously consider God's gift of Himself through Jesus Who is Life. That is the purpose of all so-called wisdom of the world. To keep us focused on the physical domain primarily through our circumstances. Satan wants us to remain Dead until our time on this earth is over.

Those who remain Dead after their body quits working will have brought on their own judgment by the Lord because they failed to accept the Life of Jesus God wanted to freely give them. God just wanted them to perfectly enjoy the eternity He originally intended when He created everything in the beginning.

Along with that self-imposed judgment each person's sins will be exposed within the Light that Jesus is eternally. All will be revealed for all of eternity to be used against each person as a part of their suffering in Hell, with Satan and his demons, all within the Lake of Fire.

Nothing is made up in this Truth. The intent is not to scare people, but to warn them so they can make a fully informed decision about their eternity. There should be only one reason to tell others about this and that is the Love of God that exists within us through the presence of Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

If at any moment we mentally and/or emotionally judge people we talk to they will sense this and their defenses will be raised. Why? Because that's what they've learned to do through the pain they've suffered in this messed-up world. We can speak to others without judgement because of God's Love.

God's Love doesn't just exist within us it is what we can experience all the time because we are one with Jesus. We experience this reality by God's Love for us while we exist within God-Love in Christ, and as we Love others with Jesus.

It is a tragedy that more of us who have received Jesus-Life do not freely share our experience with others. Truly, this tragedy is so immense that it is beyond the scope of our imagination or understanding. The reason it is not understood by us more clearly is because of two things, primarily:

1. We have not accepted God's Love for us fully. Therefore, we have limited our ability to understand how precious we are to God. We know the words that God sent His Son to die for us, and we know about the suffering of Jesus, but our experiential knowledge of God is often limited only to our experience of receiving Jesus-Life. It is obvious to us that we should be doing more talking to God and including Him in what we are doing. Perhaps we simply know there must be more to our relationship with God than what we understand, but we're not sure what to do exactly, and our circumstantial demands and life patterns keep us from this.
 - This will not change while we exist on this earth unless we open ourselves fully to God's Love and truly choose to trust in, and experience the presence of God's Love for us that He has already given to us freely in Christ Jesus. We must learn to intentionally Live with Jesus.
 - This miracle is so amazing my brain is at a loss for the best words to use. While my heart is so filled with knowing God's Love in Christ my interest in words fades within the opportunity to tell God how wonderful He is eternally! Please, if any of us have not chosen to totally accept God's Love for us, please trust God Who is Love and choose to Live each moment with Jesus.
2. Without fully accepting God's Love for us, we are unable to truly understand God's Love for others. We simply are not capable. Absent a personal experiential knowledge of God Who is Love, we are unable to recognize and experience God-Love for others. Jesus-Love existed fully for every person He encountered while on this earth, as well as every person who existed at that time, had existed, or would ever exist. Please recall how He asked God to forgive those who crucified Him while He was still nailed to and hanging on the cross. While we may understand God's Love of all people linguistically, that does not mean we understand it experientially beyond receiving Jesus. Thus, we have an extremely limited knowledge of God Who is Love in us and Who longs to be the same within everyone else.

Just quickly, it seems important to point out the order of the words above, "of God Who is Love in us and Who longs to be the same within everyone else." For me this is a more accurate reference to what we usually refer to as, "God's Love for us." Again, Love is not a what. Love is a Who and that Who is God

Himself: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He Loves us by longing to and eternally becoming one with us and everyone else who receives forgiveness and Jesus-Life. Why? Because no other state of being exists that is better than unity with God Who is Perfect Completeness. Now, moving on:

Again, we should not be surprised at the state of the world around us. What we witness is the result of people relying on themselves and other people who suffer from the same limitations. All existing within the Sin-based systems and influences of Satan in the world.

Only because of God Who is Love do any influences exist in the world to help us realize there is True Life. Because of the Love that God is we can receive Jesus and be set free from the power of Sin in and over us and the world. A world that is Satan's domain.

The only person who never lied to influence the understanding of another person is Jesus, the Son of God. All the rest of us have told lies, and for many of us this happens on a fairly regular basis. Perhaps most of the time our lies have no intent of doing harm to anyone in any way. We are likely just trying to make others feel better or make ourselves look better in some way to others. Still, we should not fool ourselves about whether we are lying.

It's like that for so many of us justifying the things we do that are wrong. But we do them anyway because we've learned to accept the idea we must do them if we are going to get what we need and want.

There are more than a thousand ways to justify our actions, and we make ourselves more comfortable with our behavior by being the first ones to believe the justifications we create mentally. This has fostered a downward trend in the moral character of people that continues to this day.

Perhaps it's different for many of us, but from my experience it is accurate to say that many people seem to lie more frequently these days and are less concerned about someone else lying to them. Maybe we've come to believe our own justifications so much that we feel as though we have to accept similar justifications from others.

If we start holding other's feet-to-the-fire about telling us every lie, then shouldn't we expect the same treatment when we tell a lie? Obviously, we don't care for that scenario so maybe we think it's best to just go with the flow unless real harm is done. Sadly, for many of us that's only when real harm is done to us. Some of us are not so particular about harm done to others. "After all, that's just the way the world works", we may think.

Corruption is a growth industry in the world. There are so many stories from my experiences it would be a mistake to get started telling them. At the core of that corruption is a set of lies practiced frequently.

Ok, maybe it's just me and none of that happens, but it's very difficult to let go of my suspicions especially given my experiences. Actually, there are places in the world where corruption is a systemic artform solidly integrated within the national culture. It is, in fact, just part of doing business.

Cheating is living a lie, yet culturally it seems like many people believe not cheating in some way when given the opportunity is foolish. Maybe some of us have come up with a nicer word than cheating to help it be more acceptable? It also seems these and other problems have been solved by some by simply ignoring these issues, or creating a system that accommodates such practices.

Then there's the knife-in-the-back syndrome, or it's probably better to just use the word "betrayal". It is amazing to me how many people find it acceptable to try and "get something" on someone just so they can use it against them at an opportune time to benefit themselves. All of this usually happens without the knowledge of the person being betrayed until it is too late.

Some people just make things up to accuse their target person, and if necessary, the perpetrator can always find co-conspirators to back up their lies. It's like people want to manage their circumstances at the expense of others, and should they get caught they'll just need to lie their way out of the problem.

They seem to think, "Whatever we do, we must continue to sell the lie. Never under any circumstances should we admit to the lie unless there is absolutely no other way out. Then confess sorrow, and shame as we ask for another chance." Isn't that the harsh wisdom of the world for many people?

Whether each of us identifies with anything just described or not, from my perspective the morals of the world are definitely not improving. It is from that environment that people are learning what's required, or smart, or wise so we learn about how to navigate the challenges we all face. That's what the world and world systems have to offer.

It's important that we all accept the fact that the world systems, and worldly wisdom we have experientially known has slowly but deeply been integrated into our identity. This includes the perspectives we use to understand the world around us.

This causes us to learn and accept the way Satan wants us to see or think about anything related to ourselves and the world around us. We either pick up on the principles that support this world's systems, or we end up learning the hard way. Our mind may never construct or accept these principles, but we adapt or suffer for not adapting, and often our behaviors change causing the same result anyway.

Since this world is accepted as our primary reality within which we must navigate our circumstances successfully, our experience is that if something we learn is not relevant for helping us within that reality it is of little use. We may think if something doesn't contribute to us achieving what we want to accomplish, meet our needs, or provide what we want then what good is it anyway.

None of this is meant as judgement, so please receive it within the Love of Christ. These are only statements meant as information for us to consider. If we have done or still practice these things then we have the addition of personal experience we can use for our consideration. My hope is we will seek the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Here's some scriptures we often set aside:.... Matthew 5:48...Jesus says that we are to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. Matthew 6:33 ...we are told by Jesus not to worry about all the stuff that seems to consume our time. Instead we are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be provided for us. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 ... we are to pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks to God. Mark 11:23.... if we say to a mountain to be lifted up and be cast into the sea it will happen if we believe it enough. Do we completely believe all these verses?

Then there's the demand throughout the Old and New Testament for us not to sin...and we know we are going to commit more sins so this can't be practical. In Luke 9:23 we learn If we want to follow Jesus,

then we need to take up our cross and follow Him. John 15:12 ...Jesus commands us to Love one another just as He Loved us.

These Scriptures and others don't seem practical to many of us, especially since we know what is required of us in this world just to get ahead, or even to survive. While the context may help us understand these things better it will not remove our sense that they each require things that are impossible for us. More importantly they are not practical in this world, so not worth the effort.

Some of us will say that we believe every verse in the Bible, and everything is possible if we have enough faith and obey God. Ok, let's go with that, got it. Now my question is are all these things true in anyone's life that you've ever met up to this point?

How about our own lives on this earth? How are we each doing concerning the demands of us in the Bible? Do we really believe each of these things to be true? Do these qualities exist in each one of us through experiential knowledge in a consistent manner? None of us really need to answer do we. Why? Because we know we don't have all of these qualities within the characteristics of our chosen individual behavior all of the time.

Since we live in a performance-based-acceptance world we are caught in a kind of trap. We know that even if all these things were possible for us, we would never have the time to achieve such accomplishments and maintain consistency.

We'd have to go live by ourselves very simply and do nothing but work on these achievements that are demanded of us within the Bible. So, again these demands are not practical in our opinion. Our framework for thinking, originating from the world systems forces us to face this reality.

If a minister tells us that we must gain these qualities by clothing ourselves daily with the nature of God, many of us sit politely letting those kinds of demands go-in-one-ear-and-out-the-other. If nothing else, it may justify our doubts about their practicality. Some even accept the idea that this minister apparently doesn't have much experience living in this world like the rest of us or forgot what it's like.

Perhaps we feel these demands and ideals we're supposed to believe can easily set us up for failure. Jesus is our Truth, furthermore Jesus is The Truth. Therefore, anything not found within His Truth, within Jesus, has been predicated upon the power of Sin.

Because of our acceptance of worldly wisdom, success simply remains just out of our reach no matter what we do. Many of us deal with this by focusing on what we can do and trusting God's grace to take care of the rest through forgiveness in Christ. After all, we are doing the best we can given the circumstances.

What's the Truth?

Nearly every one of us are thinking about these things from a perspective that is the exact opposite of God's perspective. So, guess who has the issue that needs to be resolved. God or us?

Yes, it's a rhetorical question because the answer is obvious. Perhaps all of us, certainly this includes me, only see a small part of all that needs to change within our thinking and emotions. What we are aware

of at any given time, without a sense of guilt, is most likely what the Holy Spirit is trying to help us understand. We need to participate with Jesus in changing the way we think under the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit.

On what information is that statement made? My experience, and the many others it's been my privilege to visit with through the years. Please know that my beliefs are centered in Christ Jesus. While trying to avoid the usual way of saying things my mind and heart have tried to be dependent upon the Holy Spirit while working with the Lord. That may sound audacious to many but what's here is simply my understanding of what the Lord has shown me over many years, while seeking the leading of the Holy Spirit while writing.

Ministry has been a part of my life for over 50 years, and what's written in this book has all pretty-much been learned the hard way, needlessly. There was a good three or four years where my efforts to live for Jesus failed miserably, nearly to the point of being non-existent. During that time my existence was a perfect example for proving the wisdom of the world doesn't work where our relationship with God is concerned.

Through the years God has directly intervened and very unexpectedly at times. Like when just turning seventeen during church choir practice while waiting as the director worked with the sopranos and altos, there was nothing to do but wait and think. My mind was intensely focused on getting criminals off the streets. Then in my imagination, while vividly closing the jail cell door on a criminal, Jesus took me to a place to talk to me and very specifically called me to ministry.

Most other times were during hours of prayer when God taught me so much it felt like my head and heart would explode. Fewer times it's been during conversations, like the time a brother in Christ made a type of throw-in comment. After his comment my brain felt and saw what looked like 1,000's of flash bulbs going off inside of my head. Instantly a mass of pieces of information the Lord had previously given to me finally came together perfectly for my understanding.

My recalled experiences support the fact most things were learned by me over time by making mistakes. Many times, over and over again until there was no longer any desire in my heart for me to master that issue. God's patience and consistent Love is overwhelming! My hope is God will either confirm these thoughts, or people will be led by God to ignore them completely.

Jesus is our Lord-Leader-Friend, the Holy Spirit our Teacher-Guide-Comforter, and the Father is a part of all God is always caring for His children whom He Loves so much. His children are composed of us and everyone who is alive in Christ. More accurately stated would be that the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are Alive within us, Loving us without hesitation or reservation. God is One, so whatever Jesus is doing the Spirit and Father are doing as well.

Trying to understand God can be something our minds can grasp more easily if we can kind-of understand some of what each Person of the Trinity has done in the past, and is doing now, At the same time knowing and seeking to understand more fully the fact these Three Persons are One God. So, let's get down to considering How God's Truth encourages us to think, and what's so different about it that means it's exactly the opposite of how we've learned to think growing up in this world.

Thinking the Opposite of God

In a way of demonstrating this let's review what we've learned already, stated from the world's view verses God's view:

- Life is the process of us seeking to manage our circumstances in a manner that enables us to live what we understand to be a good life as much as is possible VS God is Life and there can be no Life apart from Him. Therefore, we can only Live the Life God is within us by Living with God moment by moment in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit
- Death comes when we reach the end of our existence on this earth, our bodies cease to function and our conscious presence either just ends, or it goes on into a different eternal existence somehow VS Death is separation from God Who is Life
- It is our right and responsibility to make the best decisions we can as we determine what the right or wrong course of thinking and acting might be given the circumstances VS We do not have, never had, and will never have the right to run our own life, to make decisions or determine for ourselves what is right or wrong, good or evil. For us to do that is a rebellious act against God because only God has that right, and we can either be a willing partner with God, or we are actively working against God
- We learn to think of ourselves and the world around us primarily from the perspective of our body using our mind, emotions, and our ability to learn, understand, analyze, create, and make decisions within the context of our perspectives and preferences VS God sees us primarily as the eternally-existing-spirit-person who exists within our body that is a temporary vessel. Our body is only an ancillary element of our existence and our identity while on this earth should be based upon our existence as a eternal-spirit-person. We are the spirit-person who dwells within our body and our focus is to be about living with Jesus all the time as we share everything with Him in an eternal partnership
- Our primary need is to be forgiven of our sins and be saved by Jesus, the Son of God VS Our primary need is to ask for and accept God's forgiveness and receive the Life of Jesus. That results in the elimination of our sins by forgiveness through Jesus' Death on the cross, His resurrection, and ascension that created redeemed Life in Christ. This is so God can make us Alive for the first time during our existence since our conception. We are made a new creature/creation by God coming into us through Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus comes into us by the Holy Spirit and becomes one with us, and we are united with God as we are in Jesus. We are not God or a god, but we are eternally one with God, which is the greatest miracle we can every experience!
- Once we have been saved, we must learn about God and our new relationship with Him, seeking to know His will, and striving to be obedient to Him through faith, humility, and surrender VS After becoming one with God in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit our focus remains on God and our relationship with Him. We will learn about God as we experience being one with Him, doing everything with Him, talking to Him about everything as we intentionally include Him in everything because we have been made one with God. The more we know Him the more we will Love God within the obedience, faith, humility, and surrender that is the natural result of

Living with Jesus. These characteristics of Jesus-Life will Live within us because we are united with Jesus, Loving Him, and doing everything with Him

- We must endeavor to be faithful to God, which means trusting Him, learning more about Him, thus getting to know Him through study, fellowship, worship, and living a disciplined obedient life for Him. That is how we will please God VS God doesn't need us to do anything for Him. The more we get to know God better and better experientially the more we will enjoy experiencing His Love for us. As a result we will talk to Him more frequently about everything and do everything with Him as partners with Him leading the way. We'll naturally do this because He is God and knows everything, making study, fellowship, and worship the natural result of being in a Love relationship with God
- We serve God by being attentive to His will, and doing what He wants us to do, as He expects it to be done for His purposes VS Serving God is the natural result of us Living with Jesus, talking to God about everything and doing everything together with Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit
- We should see every new day as a day of possibilities as we trust God, and act on that trust the best we can at all times, asking for forgiveness whenever we fail VS Every new day means we get to Live a day full of miracles with Jesus, because being able to do everything with Jesus is a miracle. Therefore, anything we do with Jesus miraculously has an eternal effect far beyond anything this world can match. The impact isn't even within the human ability to imagine. Not even if we use our imagination to come up with something creatively
- If we are faithful to the Lord, we may be blessed by seeing a miracle, or even being used by God to miraculously do something like healing someone VS The greatest miracle a person can ever see or be a part of is God coming into their own, or another's spirit-person causing them to truly Live in Christ forever. Anything God does with or without us is a miracle because His actions cannot be accounted for by anything or anyone else's actions in the world. If we Live in partnership with Jesus all of the time then each moment is a miracle
- We need to accept the fact that we are sinners who just happened to be saved, we will always be sinners while we are on this earth VS We were slaves of Sin before we were saved. Receiving Jesus-Life is something that could only happen because of the sacrifice of God's Son Jesus, and the work of the Holy Spirit to encourage all people to be forgiven and receive Jesus-Life. As a new creature in Christ we have been changed from being Dead to being Alive with Jesus-Life. Our sins have been separated from us as far as the East is from the West, and we are within God's Righteousness having been made perfect in Jesus.
- When we make mistakes, otherwise stated, when we commit a sin, we need to ask God for forgiveness, thank Him for our forgiveness and salvation in Jesus, turn away from that behavior and faithfully follow Jesus VS God has made us new in Christ, and our eternal-spirit-person who is now Alive and is one with God cannot commit sins, they come from the effects of Sin that remains in our flesh. We have been completely forgiven for all eternity. If a mistake is made due to the effects of Sin in our flesh, then we should admit it and thank God for His forgiveness of us as newly created eternal beings in Christ. Then we focus immediately on our unity with God by talking to Him about everything and living with Him at all times. Living with

Jesus brings the natural result of repentance, turning away from old sinful patterns, as we turn our full attention as partners with Jesus to Living with Jesus rather than anything else.

- Our mistakes distance us from God by causing us to lose our focus on Jesus, which acts as a barrier to experiencing the fullness of the presence of God within us. Until we make this right with Jesus our ability to know and do God's will is negatively impacted VS Our mistakes are not what God desires us to focus on. If sins occur we know the Holy Spirit will call our attention to the opportunity to grow closer to God. We understand that the Holy Spirit is not trying to make us feel guilty, so we agree with God concerning our mistake, apologize and thank God for His forgiveness while focusing on Living at all times with Jesus. Nothing can ever separate us from the Love of God in any way. We still get to do everything with Jesus. So, no barrier can exist. At any moment we can freely set our minds on Jesus and move forward in unity with God if we weren't doing so already.
- There are some things that are still a part of me that are wrong, and there's no way God can love that part of me, so we'll have to wait until we die to be free from all of these things. Thus we are not completely worthy of God's Love, but He loves us anyway. Jesus will remove any barriers to our relationship with God if we only seek His forgiveness and let Him remove them VS God Loves every person absolutely, without question, and will Love us for all eternity. Those of us who are forgiven and have received Jesus-Life received the complete Love of God. We have Jesus-Life and experientially know God's Love, so we can be a part of God's Love being manifested in the world. There is nothing about who we are in Jesus that is not fully Loved and celebrated by God. His Perfect Love for us is His Grace extended to us. God's Love for us and His desire to be one with us for all eternity is what makes us worth the cost to God of being able to give us Jesus-Life. We can do nothing to be worthy. So, what is right or wrong about us has nothing to do with God's Love for us. When we are a new creation in Jesus any and all barriers are removed, but in our flesh sinful patterns can rule our thoughts and actions. If so, the choice to allow the members of our body to serve Satan eliminates the potential in those moments for us to manifest God in the world with Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- The greatest challenge we face after salvation is to remain faithful to the Lord. So, prayer, study, discipline of ourselves and remaining obedient to God are key factors in overcoming this challenge VS When God gives us Jesus-Life we are forgiven and existing in unity with God. We know we can trust God completely by talking to Him and doing everything with Him. Our greatest challenge will be to unlearn what we think we know from living in this world. Through the teaching of the Holy Spirit we will learn to understand God's Truth and depend upon God for everything. Jesus has already overcome any challenges so He will show us what the best is we can do so we Live with Him in victory. Thereby experiencing our full potential in Jesus Christ
- Satan is very powerful, and we must be careful not to let him control us, which could lead to us backsliding in our relationship with the Lord. This can ruin our ability to obey God's will. If these ways become too dominate we might fall under the control of Satan or perhaps a demon VS Satan has no control or power over us unless we allow old or new patterns of sinful behavior to become our focus. These patterns of sins can control our thoughts and actions. Then we will be focusing on trying to manage our circumstances rather than focusing on our unity with Jesus and the miracle of us getting to do everything with Jesus. Still our relationship remains intact with God's complete forgiveness, Jesus-Life forever, and unity with God for all

eternity. So, we get to remain faithful to God by talking to Him, doing everything with Jesus, and Loving God with all that we have become in Christ. We can do that at any moment by simply doing it. Just start talking to Jesus

- We approach our sense of self, our identity, and our understanding of the world around us. What we generally think comes from the perspective of the physical domain (including emotions, mental capabilities, and will), but we can develop a true perspective of the spiritual domain if we obey the Lord ...VS... God approaches us from His perspective of our eternally-existing-spirit-person made perfect in Jesus, and then our emotional-mental-will capabilities, with the physical domain being least important
- We approach the idea of having a relationship with God from a personal behavior perspective. The idea being that if we pray enough, read our Bible and learn Scriptures enough, go to church and participate effectively, financially support the church and other ministries as God desires, strive to understand God's will and be obedient enough, avoid sinning and confess it when it happens, then we have a good chance of having an effective relationship with God ...VS... God's approach is for us to have an effective relationship with Him, which is given to us and gets to be Lived in unity with Jesus. Then our behavior will change and align with God's will. We don't need to do things to have an effective relationship with God, because He has already given that completely to us in Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit. All we need to do is Live in our relationship with by Living each moment with Jesus. Talking to God, getting to read the Bible, fellowshiping with other believers, and the other activities will be the natural result as we get to Live with Jesus on a moment-by-moment basis.
- We must ensure that we remain humble before God ...VS... Humility is the natural result of Living in the presence of Almighty God, which is our reality anyway if we have been forgiven and received Jesus-Life.
- Learn all you can about God so we can have a strong relationship with Him as we serve Him by living faithfully for Him ...VS... Knowing about God does not mean that we know God. We can only know God experientially. God doesn't need us to do anything for Him. He wants us to do everything with Him. We get to do this, and each moment we do so is another moment that is miraculous.

Something That Holds Us Back

Yes, we each may have our own reasons and perspectives, but deep within we most likely suffer from a self-sustained restraint that can interfere with us Living each moment with Jesus.

Why? At least three primary reasons:

1. It seems like the power of Sin within the world always manages to convince us that we are not good enough to enjoy the kind of existence we really want. Even the most wealthy and powerful of us face this, and in some cases to a greater degree than people who have very little of what they want. It seems there is almost an infinite number of ways for evil to oppress each of us, depress us, deceive us, and diminish us within our own defined reality. If we exist on this earth then Satan seeks to find some way to either get us to feel worth less than is healthy, or to get us

to feel more important than others based on false values, or a combination of both. The diversity is amazing of how so many people manage these feelings that are often locked away within them. We seldom or never seem to be able to manage things so our life is what we believe it should be.

2. Traditionally, we learn what's right and wrong within our families. That still happens but often with a shift of focus away from things that reflect the influence of the Scriptures. Unfortunately, some parents seem to be increasing their dependency upon their community's educational system to teach their children what is acceptable or unacceptable. How children learn these lessons comes from multiple sources, increasingly from sources of their choosing with the use of technology. Regardless, we learn to focus on ourselves, and our chosen actions. Much of the time we learn what's wrong in ways that include some form of punishment. It might be ridicule, withholding something of value from us, or diminished acceptance of us by someone we care about or who controls what we want. For some this includes physical punishment, even to the point of abuse. Too many children exist within environments of conflicts and death where fear dominates their living. Others enjoy the protection and love of parents combined with encouragement and support within life's adventures. The variations defy inclusive description because there are so many variables. The result seems to be a new normal, but how do we effectively describe it? At least we can say that it seems the effectiveness of the family as a stable foundation for child development is weakening overall. Maybe that's wrong, but it sure seems accurate. Along with these experiences we learn it may be important for us to know about evil as well as knowing what is good, so we can make the right decisions and protect ourselves.
3. ["I'm sorry for any offense" caused within this point.] We have been taught to focus on what we do that's wrong, have done, or might do that will be wrong in the future. This emphasis comes through clearly in some of the teaching within various church congregations in one way or another. Generally, it's due to the broad emphasis of avoiding sins and living in alignment with the Scriptures, which ends up with us primarily focusing on ourselves. The Bible is infallible, but how we use it is not. So, it doesn't require any more than a brief comment for people to get the message that they should always do what's right and avoid doing what's wrong. We are to discipline ourselves to live obediently in the will of God. If we don't then something is wrong with us, or something is missing, or we don't have enough faith in God, or.....whatever someone may say who attempts to explain this to us. Regardless, we clearly get the message telling us we must focus on ourselves, how we think, and how we act to ensure good behavior as God desires. We must figure out the will of God and make sure we obey God in all circumstances.