

*Through the Storm presents the...*

*Living Without  
Emotional  
Pain!*

*Prayer Seminar*

*"1 out of every 4 Americans is suffering from some form of mental illness! And, this year, for every 2 murders, there will be 3 suicides!"*



*Rod Pruitt*

*Job pressures? Loss of relationships? Financial fears? No matter what impossible crisis you are now facing, you can learn to live free from the daily emotional pain it produces! Who is this seminar for? ...*

***EVERYONE!!!***

*Through the Storm ministries \* PO Box 701607 \* San Antonio, Texas 78270*



## PART ONE

### “What Did God Promise You?”

What was this life with Christ suppose to be like?

When you first became a Christian, when you first gave your heart to Jesus, what did you dream this life would be like? How did you think your life would change?

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... And more important, “Has it lived up to all you thought it would be? Has it lived up to your expectations?—**Has it been worth living for?**”

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

WHY? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“Your expectations, hopes, and dreams are who you were meant to be! . . . But who you have become, is only what you’ve been willing to settle for!”**

**As Christians, we must come to a place where we will not settle for less than God’s best!**

Do you think that sometimes you have settled for “fast-food” Christianity?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider your level of knowledge of God **higher** or **lower** than the level you experience His presence in your life each day?

\_\_\_\_\_HIGHER      \_\_\_\_\_LOWER

What did you dream this life with God would be like! Do you remember when you first met Him? When you first gave your life and heart to Him? . . . **Or a special time when you desperately needed God, when you cared about nothing more than finding out how real He was? What did it FEEL like?**

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Now, travel back in time, relive that moment, re-experience the abandonment you felt toward Jesus in that moment, . . . .

. . . Nothing else mattered to you! Remember, nothing else mattered but the excitement that God was really alive! Do you remember how desperate you were to be as close to him as possible?

Has your life as a Christian lived up to the expectations you had at that moment when you first felt His presence?

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

What did God promise us this life would be like? . . .

1. "A peace that would pass all understanding!" Phil. 4:7
2. "A full joy that the world cannot comprehend!" John 15:11
3. "A love that would cast out all fear!" I John 4:18

4. "That He would never leave you, nor forsake you!" Heb. 13:11
5. "A Comforter –The Holy Spirit, who would be with you always!" John 16:7
6. "That you would know His voice!" John 10
7. "That you would be one with Him, just as He is one with the Father!" John 17:21-23
8. "Jesus' presence in you would be your hope of glory!" Col. 1:27
9. "That whatsoever you ask in His name it would be granted!" John 14:13
10. "That we could live in a kingdom on this earth, a spiritual kingdom, a kingdom within our hearts, where there would be:
  - No feelings of being unloved, or unwanted anymore!
  - A kingdom where there would be no more sadness or depression.
  - No more feelings of worry or fear.
  - Living so much without anger that others would describe us as gentle, patient, and kind.
  - Living each day with minds clothed in God's righteousness where there is no guilt, no shame, no heart bound in the addictive clutches of some hideous and cancerous sin. No need to hide anymore. No need to pretend. And no fear of being found out!

### **What have you settled for?**

In Revelation 3:14-22, Jesus is saying that it is possible to be a believer, a Christian, and to have something, **A CLOSED DOOR**, in your life that is separating you from having and feeling an intimate relationship with God!

What is this closed door? . . . And how do we close this door in our lives to Jesus?

Jesus said in Luke 14:26 ***“If you come to me, and do not hate your own father, and mother, and husband or wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, yes, . . . and even your own life, (in “comparison” to your love for Me) then you won’t be able to follow me!”***

And then verse 33 . . . ***“So likewise, if you are not willing to forsake (not willing to give up) all that you have, then you cannot be My disciple, you won’t be able to follow me.”***

And then finally, back in verse 27, . . . ***“and if you do not bear your cross and deny yourself DAILY, and come after Me, then you cannot be My disciple.”***

Jesus was saying to us that if we want to follow Him, if we want to be close to Him, to really experience all that He is, . . . then each day, we must take up our cross, and separate ourselves unto Him. We must give up our independence, give up the need to direct our own life, give up the need to call the shots, . . . and make the need to know him the passion of our heart!

**Do you see it? —You and I must be abandoned to a passion to know Jesus, to experience His presence, to love Him above all other wants, desires, wishes, and relationships. —Without hesitation, without compromise, without competition, without exception! He has to be our first love!**

. . . Just the way He was on the day that you first met him!!!

**IMPORTANT:** This is the key that unlocks and opens the door into God's presence!!! A door which must be reopened every day that you live!

What would it be worth to you, if for twenty-four hours around the clock, you could be and feel consumed by the presence of God?

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What would it be worth to never again feel unloved, or afraid, or rejected? What price would you pay for contentment? . . . Or unequaled peace? What would it be worth to you?

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What would it be worth to you to lose your need for destructive habits within your life?

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Could it be possible that something has become more important to you than knowing, experiencing, or loving God?

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

Have you crossed over the barrier from God's kingdom back into the plane of this world? Is something on your mind each day more than your desire to be intimate with Jesus?

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

What are they?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

AS A RESULT, HAVE YOU FELT THE DOOR CLOSE?

Does God sometimes feel distant?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

NOW, BE STILL: Re-experience the moment you first met Jesus.

***The door opened in that moment when your passion to know Jesus, to love him became more important to you than life itself. When you abandoned yourself to Him above all other wants, and desires, and wishes, and relationships—without hesitation, without compromise, without competition, without exception!***

***. . . And the door only closed when something else began to consume your thoughts, . . . money, possessions, a job, a ministry, the relationship with someone you love or have become deeply troubled over. Yes, they were all good things. But never were they to become the focus of your life, the passion of your heart, . . .***

***. . .that can only belong to Jesus.***



## Prayer Time

**Re-evaluate:** Jesus said, “. . . Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Matthew 6:19-34 And scripture also tells us, “For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he” Proverbs 27:7 What is on your mind most of the time? What do you think about most often?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Repent: (repent means to turn away from) Tell God that you are sorry that other things (listed above) have become more important to you than knowing Him, experiencing Him, and loving Him. . . . And that, right now, you want “loving Him” to be the focus of your life!**

**Refocus: Remember what it felt like at some point in your life when nothing else mattered to you than being close to God, experiencing Him, and finding out how real He could be in your life? Travel back in time and re-experience those emotions! . . . It’s time to reopen the door!**

**REMEMBER: The door opened in that moment when your passion to know Jesus, to love him became more important to you than life itself. When you abandoned yourself to Him above all other wants, and desires, and wishes, and relationships—without hesitation, without compromise, without competition, without exception!**



## **PART TWO**

### **OVERCOMING FEAR!**

#### **(FEAR THAT PREVENTS POWERFUL PRAYERS!)**

If you are like most people, you probably have no difficulty praying. Whenever you or I are faced with the unknown, the overwhelming, or the painful, . . . all of us pray.

Let someone just mention a word like, “cancer”, . . . and inside, for most of us, every part of our being wants to panic! And even though it may have been some time since we prayed, still when facing these circumstances, we probably find ourselves just “naturally” crying out to God for help!

But the real difficulty, when we are confronted with such a traumatic and emotional crisis, is found in a question which usually darkly covers our hearts, . . .

**. . . “Will God answer my prayer?”**

How do we deal with the fear, each of us feel at the moment we are overcome with seemingly impossible situations? First, we must admit the truth: It is there.

And, until that fear is dwelt with, it will always be difficult, for any of us, to pray “powerful prayers!”  
**Because until the fear is gone, . . . we will find ourselves having difficulty believing that God will answer or reward us when we pray!**

Are there “areas” within your life right now, that when you are praying, . . . you feel a sense of fear, anxiety, or think that the outcome of your prayer is *probably* “not going to be good?”

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

**What are those areas?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Hebrews 11:6 tells us that, “. . . Without faith it is impossible to please God, and ***“those who come to Him, or come into His presence,*** must, . . .

**Number one – *believe that He is, or that God exists,***  
and, . . .

**Number two – *that He is a rewarder to those who seek Him.***”

Probably every Christian believes the first condition found within this scripture. -- **God does exist!**

Aahh! But it is that second condition, which usually causes you and I great difficulty!

**. . . THAT GOD—WILL—ANSWER—OUR—PRAYERS!**

For you to begin to pray “powerful prayers”, this fear of God not answering, ***or of not answering the way you want Him to answer,*** has to be dwelt with!

**“FEAR IS A RESPONSE BIRTHED  
OUT OF A HEART STRUGGLING  
TO BE INDEPENDENT!”**

What is it that causes us to not trust God? The fear we feel inside is *usually* evidence of that fact. If you or I trusted God, really trusted Him, then when we hear words like, “cancer”, would we still feel that same “panic” inside? **Remember:** God promised because He loves us, He will “heal all of our diseases!”

**What are some of the things that YOU THINK you have trouble trusting God for?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

**WHY?**

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*So how do we overcome the fear we feel, when we are forced to face the seemingly impossible?*

**IMPORTANT: The only thing that can overcome this fear in our lives, is the faith, that unshakable knowing, that God really loves us! No matter what! No exceptions, no conditions, and no possibility of ever ending!**

**But if we are unsure of God’s love, we will always want to somehow be in control of the outcome of the crisis! And if we feel we are losing this control, our response will be fear!**

Read I John 4:16-18 , and **“FEEL”** what it is saying to you:

***“And we know (understand, recognize, are conscious of, by observation and by experience), and believe (adhere to and put faith in and rely on) the love God cherishes for, or toward us. God is love, and he who dwells and continues in love dwells and continues in God, and God dwells and continues in him.***

***(And) in this (union and communion with Him) love is brought to completion and attains perfection with us, that we—may—have—CONFIDENCE, (skipping down to verse 18)***

***There is no fear in love—dread does not exist; but full-grown (complete, perfect) love turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror! . . . “***

***I John 4: 16-18 Amplified***

**Do you hear what God is saying? **When you or I are facing those times when we find ourselves in nightmarish situations, overcome by unending fear, overwhelming panic, and seemingly devoid of any hope, . . . if we will seek and find and dwell in that place of rest, that chasm of God’s unending love, then every trace of the terror will leave! Vanished entirely!****

How do we find this place of overpowering love? – A place of love which is so great that it has the ability to destroy all of our fears? . . .

Scripture tells us to “be angry and sin not”. In other words, anger is not sin, but ***what we do with it can be.***

. . . The same way that the first thought of temptation is not sin, but what we do with it, is what determines its effect on our life. Do we embrace it, or do we with an unconditional surrendered dependence on God find power to walk away from it!

Fear is the same. . . . ***Fear is not necessarily sin, but what you do with it can be!***

**Embraced fear WILL ALWAYS become unbelief!**

. . . and scripture tells us that “unbelief” is sin.

Jesus had times in His life when He experienced something very akin to fear! And He, just like you and I, had to search for this place of rest. Scripture tells us that He was tempted in all ways that we are.

There is no more revealing time in His life of this possible fear, than when He goes to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray, . . . knowing that He is about to die.

In three of the gospels it records that as He enters the garden and begins to pray, He begins His prayer by asking God to “take this cup away!”

And in the gospel of Mark it records that He goes back a second time to ask God the same thing again. He announces, “I don’t want to do this! I don’t want to go through this pain. God, if there is any other way!”

And the physician Luke records that the agony over this decision is so intense, so overwhelming, that Jesus begins to “sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground.”

I believe Jesus was struggling with fear. ***But by the time He left the garden, He had found in the love and intimacy of the presence with His Father, the courage to take on the sins of the world!***

***. . . And He left that garden with no fear of the cross!***

## **How did it happen?**

Jesus stayed in the presence of His Father, in prayer, allowing the love of God to be perfected (at that moment within His own emotions and mind), until He could come to the place within His own heart that there was no longer any fear!

A place so devoid of fear that Jesus was able to say, without any hesitation, “Whatever you choose to do in this situation, is okay with me. You know what my desire is, and that hasn’t changed. If you choose to provide a way of escape, so be it. But if you choose not to, . . . “nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done!”

**\*So how do we deal with the fear, each of us feel at the moment we are overcome with seemingly impossible situations?**

RE-READ I John 4:16 -18

(And) in this (union and communion with Him), when you and I make the decision to stay in God’s presence, ***choosing and deciding that we will not leave His presence until the fear is gone***, then God’s love (will be) brought to completion and attain perfection within us, **that we—may—have—CONFIDENCE, . . .**

**Confidence for what?** . . . Confidence and assurance within our hearts that He will reward us when we pray, because He loves us!

Remember: ***There is no fear in love — dread does not exist; but full-grown (complete, perfect) love turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror.***



**\*You must chose to stay in God's presence until the assurance of His love for you becomes so overwhelming, that you find the ability to place the outcome of the crisis into His hands – No matter what that may be, no matter what the situation! And once the outcome of the crisis is placed into His care, . . . the fear within your heart will be gone!**

And just as Jesus did, in this place of rest and unconditional love and peace, you will THEN find the ability to hear the voice of God.

. . . And once hearing His voice, standing in this place of rest and peace, in the presence of God, you will find yourself full of the confidence that His love brings!

And standing in faith, with those words spoken within your heart, . . .

**. . . you will find yourself beginning to pray powerful prayers!**

## Prayer Time

**Right now, when you pray, what do YOU THINK you are having trouble trusting God about?**

- 1.
- 2.

### DO YOU KNOW WHY?

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Ask God to show you if He answered these prayers *the way you wanted Him to*, what personal **“emotional needs” of yours** would be met?

# 1 above    A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

# 2 above    A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

Now, spend time in prayer, *in that place of surrender of your life to God*, being embraced by His love, until you can place the “outcome” of the crisis, and your “needs” (from above), into God’s hands.

**How will you know? . . . When you can “feel” the peace that comes from looking and expecting God to meet those emotional needs, *rather than the expectation of the “end of the crisis” supplying the need*, then the trust has been transferred to God!**



**PART THREE**  
**BREAKING THE WALL OF SILENCE!**  
**(HOW DO I KNOW THAT'S YOU, GOD?)**

The first step to hearing God's voice is your decision to want to hear Him!

IMPORTANT: You and I have difficulty becoming emotionally involved with anyone or anything that our senses, (touching, hearing, smelling, seeing, and tasting) cannot respond to or bond with!

Or in other words, if you or I cannot touch or feel something, if we cannot hear it, if we cannot smell or taste it, if we cannot see it, then it is very difficult for us to believe that it is real. And the fewer of our senses that are involved, . . . the less we will become emotionally attached to something!

Think about this: Can you fall in love with someone you can't see, can't touch, can't smell, or can't hear?

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

The problem with our need for bonding with God, is that He most often chooses to communicate with us from within our spirits — ***and not to our outward senses!!!***

God most often does not choose to allow us to physically see Him, nor does He normally audibly speak to us, nor can we smell Him when He enters a room as we could another human, . . . nor can we physically touch Him. (Yes, there are exceptions to this in scripture, but they are just that, . . . exceptions.)

Have you ever had a time when you found it difficult to feel emotionally involved or bonded with God!

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Or does it often seem that you are spending very little time with God?"

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT:** If our senses don't connect with God, if we can't feel, or see, or taste, or smell, or hear Him, then it becomes impossible for us to feel close to Him, or trust Him, or be faithful to Him, or love Him!

And without this bonding with God taking place, you and I will live somewhat distant from God. And, as a result, we will also live with a "God Void" in our lives. A void of emptiness and neediness that will cause endless emotional pain in our lives!

Scripture says, "God is spirit". In other words, usually for us to hear Him, we have to accept the fact that when He talks to us that He speaks to our spirit. (That part of our being that is so wonderfully created in His image.) But our understanding of what He is saying to us, comes through our mind!

Your mind is the receiver to "understanding" what God is trying to communicate to you. Your mind is not God. (I hope you know that!) But "it" is the receiver that carries the understanding of what He is trying to communicate within your spirit.

**PROBLEM!** Your mind is also the receiver for every other "call" that you get! Your understanding of everything, and every emotion you feel calls you through that receiver!

In other words, most of the time within our minds it is as if we are on a “party line”. — Lots of “people” talking all at one time. And, as a result, it’s difficult to distinguish one voice from another!

Have you ever asked yourself this question? —“Was that really God, or was that just my emotions?”

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

In order for us to know whether or not, what we are hearing is from God, or just our emotions or our own thoughts, . . . we must learn to disconnect from our “party line” and decide to only take a “personal call” from God!

IMPORTANT: To hear God, to really know what He is saying to you within your spirit, you must first give up the control of the outcome of your prayers!!!

How do we come to a place where we can emotionally release those things that are most important to us?

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Scripture talks about Jesus’ “habit” of going off to pray. Luke 5:16 says “But He Himself would often slip away to the wilderness (in lonely places) and pray”. Mark 1:35 speaks of Him going out “in the morning” to pray. Matthew 14:23 and Mark 6:46 of going to pray “in the evening”. And Luke 6:12, speaks of Jesus spending the “whole night in prayer to God”.

To clear the “phone line”, to know His Father’s will, and to be willing to place the control of His life into His Father’s hand . . . ***Jesus was willing to spend time in prayer until His emotions were at peace with anything that the Father was asking of Him.***

And for you and I to clear our “phone lines”, it can be no different. We spend time in prayer not to change God’s mind, but to change ours. You do not have to beg God for His best. He wants that for you! You only have to come to a place of rest where you can receive it!

. . . And for us to hear God’s voice, to clear our “phone lines for a personal call”, we must be willing to spend the time in prayer until we can come to a place within our spirits and emotions, where we can release our “fears of the unknown” to God. And it is then, and only then, that we can open the door of our hearts to hear the wonder of God’s voice, and feel the peace of His unending, unconditional love for us!

Important: Never accept the difficulties of life in a defeatist attitude. But learn to run to the Father letting Him know what your desires are. Then stay in His presence, in prayer, until you sense His peace overriding your panic, until you can say, “Father you know my desire, but whatever answer you give, I am at peace. I trust you!” . . . Then wait for His answer!

And once you have heard His voice, . . . stand in faith!!!

Why do you need to be able to hear God’s voice? Why is it so important?

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**NO MONEY BACK GUARANTEE!:** Now, how many of you know that nothing that I say today is going to change your life! Nothing! No matter how true it is!

. . . You see knowledge can not change your life, only God can do that!

. . . And that's why success in this life can only come from Him! Because success in this life, true success, is not based on your ability to learn formulas, or programs, or three steps or six steps or ten steps to something, . . . it is based upon the depth of your love relationship with God!

What do you think is the greatest hindrance to you having an ability to hear God speak to you?

YOUR ANSWER :

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The greatest problem, the greatest hindrance to you being able to sense God's presence and to hear His voice . . . is your ability to relax!

For just a moment, think about this question: Whenever you are faced with a crisis in your life is your "first" reaction or thought, "What do I have to do to make this better?" Or, "How can I solve this problem?" Or, "What am I going to do?" Or "How can I change this?"

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Most people, when faced with a crisis or difficulty in their lives, usual initial response are almost always one of self-reliance or self-dependency? -- I can, I have to, I am going to, etc. . . . There is a reason for this!

Scripture tells us that each of us are "born in sin" or born separated from God. As a result, from birth each of us are plunged into an emotional darkness full of loneliness and emptiness, filled with emotions of being



unlove, unwanted, unneeded. We are overcome with feelings of fear and insecurity.

. . . And within the core of our being is a void of emptiness that no human can survive!

And, as a result, we quickly learn that it is up to us to make sure our needs are met. To look out for number one!

We learn to live independent! In fact, most of us spend all of our lives striving to live this way. And the result is, that after we become Christians, we still do not “naturally” depend upon God. Trusting Him is not our first response!

We usually live most of our lives deciding what we want to do, what we want to happen, who we will become, and the outcome for all of our decisions . . . and then we pray and expect God to make it happen.

In fact, usually it is only after we have exhausted our own resources and knowledge of how we handled past experiences that we even think to ask for God’s help!

You and I have been “practicing” living independent from God for so long that it has become instinctive? So how do we change that?

Even though you are faced each day with problems, crisis, and difficulties that you think you can handle on your own, you must begin practicing going to God before each situation and acknowledging that you, “can do nothing of ourselves”. (John 5:19, 30, John 15:5)

\*Start each day with this acknowledgment, and at the end of the day, take the time to ask God to forgive you for all of the areas during the day that you failed to depend upon Him fully.

What causes you and I to fail to relax? . . . Little foxes!!!.

***Take us (catch) the foxes for us, the little (young) foxes, that spoil (or ruin) the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.***

***Song of Solomon 2:15***

Most of us tend to have “little foxes” in our spiritual lives. Small animals, unnoticed, that gnaw away at the base of our relationship with God. Small things that somehow seem to always distract and keep us away from God. What are some of your “little foxes”?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

“Little foxes” cause you to lose the most important relationship that this life has to offer!

**. . . Your relationship with God!**

*. . . And that is too high of a price for any of us to pay!*

Three additional reasons why we have so much trouble relaxing when we want to hear God speak to us!

**1<sup>ST</sup> REASON: WE ARE TOO PREOCCUPIED!**

We’re on the job, we’re praying, but we’re mentally not there! We’re just doing our job, “talking to God, asking for His help,” so that, we will feel “covered” in any situation that we might or are facing!

How often have you spent time in prayer, voicing your request, and as soon as you have worked down your list, . . . you just got up and left!

Never \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Frequently \_\_\_\_\_ Always \_\_\_\_\_

## **2<sup>ND</sup> REASON : WE ARE TOO INTENSE!!!**

These are the people that have an overwhelming need to accomplish specific objectives. Their goals are set! And no one, no one is going to deter them from bringing their visions to pass!

Or, these are people who are so intensely emotionally wrapped up in their own problems that they can't hear a word that anyone speaks! They have already determined the terrible outcome to every problem. And it is always the worst imaginable!

As a result, they are poor listeners, irrational in their thinking, and often unconsciously not really even looking for answers. Their minds are made up! They stopped listening to other people years ago. And now they have even stopped listening to God! . . . And yet they wonder why God seems so distant, so far away, so hard to hear?

Are you ever involved in your own world so much, that if God was trying to speak to you, you don't think you would hear Him?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

## **3<sup>RD</sup> REASON: WE ARE APPREHENSIVE!!!**

We have begun to listen to our fears! We have begun to believe those fears so much so, that we can no longer relax and hear God anymore!

Research shows that people:

- 60% of the time are obsessed about the future!
- 20% of the time are rehashing the past
- And only 20% of the time are living in the present

Read Hebrews 6 :13-20. God took an oath and swore by Himself! He will be faithful!!!

- He is not a man that He could lie.
- He will never leave me nor forsake me!
- Even if I am unfaithful, He will remain faithful, because He cannot deny Himself!

Faith is trust in God's spoken word to us. But hope is trust in God's character!

And it is hope, that trust in His character, that takes you into His presence, past the torn veil of the temple where Jesus, who understands your problems and the difficulties of your life, has entered on your behalf!!!

And when in the greatest storms of our lives, when we don't know what is going on, it is only the trust of His character, that can calm our fears. When our fears are gone, you and I can enter into God's rest, into His presence, with our eyes wide opened, and hear His voice! And then, faith is created within our hearts!

**IMPORTANT:** When we become intimate with God, it produces the emotions of love, peace, joy, gentleness, faithfulness, meekness, God produced self-control, righteousness, goodness, and patience.

And because of our desperate need for the relief brought by these emotions, often, our attachment to God can become nothing more than a search for these feelings, . . . rather than His friendship, or an intimate love relationship with Him.

Or to say it another way, these emotions become our god, . . . rather than God Himself!\*

Remember . . . your dreams are who you were meant to be. But who you become is what you're willing to settle for!

. . . And never, never, never settle for less than God's best!!!

\*Most reoccurring block in Rod's own personal life, that most often causes him to not be able to feel God's presence, . . . nor to hear His voice!

## Prayer Time

Once again, **at this moment**, is knowing God more important to you than anything else in your life?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

**REMEMBER: This decision will determine if, right now, you will open the door to God's presence, or live independent from his care!**

**NOW, CLEAR THE PARTY LINE!** TODAY, rather than taking a problem to God for an answer, decide that all you want is just to enjoy His presence and listen to anything He might want to say to you.

If all that is on your mind is some problem in your life, **then tell God that you want to talk to Him about that later.** But right now all you want is to enjoy His presence.

Now relax for just a moment. Remember the greatest hindrances to this!

1. PREOCCUPIED! -- with something, or someone else. Get rid of those "little foxes" on your mind!
2. TOO INTENSE! – Wrapped up in your own goals or problems, and how to solve them? . . . And as a result, you have lost your ability to listening to God? RELAX!
3. APPREHENSIVE – Are you listening to your fears, those "what ifs?", or "if onlys"? Thinking about the mistakes of your past, or those disappointing past experiences with God? START ANEW!!!

One last question to ask yourself: Are you looking for an experience, or an emotion, . . . rather than God! Could the emotions you feel in God's presence have become your god, **rather than God Himself?**



**PART FOUR**  
**“RELEASING EXPECTATIONS,  
CASTING CARES!”**

**Whenever the door within our heart, our life, is closed to God—If He is standing on the outside, knocking and calling to us—and if we choose to not open that door, (for what ever reason, and whether or not that decision is a choice of the mind or the heart) then the result is that there is a vast chasm of unmet needs created inside of us!!!**

A void of emptiness, a “God Void”, which regardless of whether we are Christian or not, torments us every waking moment that we breathe. As humans we may not even believe in God . . . **but we still feel His absence!**

. . . We feel alone, isolated, overwhelmed by life. We feel unloved and unwanted. Afraid. Rejected. And as a result of these emotions, we begin to seek to camouflage and hide our true selves from others.

**Because of this unending emotional pain, the pain created from living separated from God, we begin to search for diversions or escapes that we hope will provide us with any momentary relief . . . *regardless of the cost!***

This separation from God, and the chasm of unmet needs it creates, and the torment of these needs going unmet, day after day after day causes us to also look and search for other sources, **“God Substitutes”!**

**God Substitute: Any source that we as humans begin to *trust and depend upon* to relieve the emotional pain within our lives, other than God. And a source, . . .**



**. . . which we have come to *need*, to momentarily produce temporary relief in our lives from the pain of our unmet emotional needs.**

**Sources of “God Substitutes”:**

- 1. Parents
- 2. Friends
- 3. Husbands or Wives
- 4. Jobs
- 5. Carriers
- 6. Money
- 7. Possessions

**IMPORTANT: The presence of a continual emotional struggle can be a sign that at some point you have closed a door to Jesus being the first love of your life!**

Are there areas within your life that you seem to worry about, or are causing you emotional pain whenever you think about them, on a fairly consistent basis? Can you list them?

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Is it possible that you have begun to look to some of these sources (or changes in them), to relieve the emotional pain in your life, that for some reason, isn't coming from God?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus understood this empty void in the lives of people. In fact, because of it He was moved with compassion. He embraced sinners, ridiculed the self-righteous, and gave His life for those who would seek the fulfillment of this void.

He knew that the only hope of relief for all of mankind, could only be found in a “first love” relationship with His Father. And He also knew that if you or I were to ever find this sort of relationship with God, . . . we would need His help!

“Do you know what this void looks like, or feels like? Do you know what emotional needs of yours are going to be **unmet** if God is not in the proper place within your heart and life?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

**This is important:** . . . It is so important that you know what these needs are, because they are the needs that YOU will begin to demand that others meet!

**God is . . .**

- ❖ **Love**—His presence inside of me takes away any sense of being unloved, unwanted, unneeded. Any sense of being undesired.
- ❖ **Peace**—the peace of His presence does away with any tension, pressure and depression within our lives. God is my . . .
- ❖ **Joy**—this aspect of His personality in me brings a sense of happiness within my spirit. It causes life to be lived enjoyably and worth living! God is also our . . .
- ❖ **Patience**—This is that sense inside that no matter what difficulties you may be facing, that in the end, for you, when all is said and done, you can feel at ease, you can wait because everything will turn out okay! God is my,

- ❖ **Gentleness**—Because I am at peace within, with my needs being met by Christ’s presence, then as a result of the loss of great expectations of others, I find myself . . . . . able to be gentle in my dealings with others, . . . . . regardless of their actions. God is my . . . . .
- ❖ **Goodness**—Because I am secure with who I am, I find a natural ability to forget myself and my own needs, and to begin to love others unconditionally! God is my . . . . .
- ❖ **Meekness**—because of the security of Christ’s love for me, and as a result of the great sense of acceptance I feel inside, there is now a true humility, and the lack of a need to prove myself acceptable, nor to succeed by competitively destroying other people. I have lost the compulsion and addiction to have to annihilate, butcher, and eradicate others in order to be number one! God is my . . . . .
- ❖ **Self-control or Righteousness**—His very presence meeting my emotional needs causes my spirit to no longer need addictions, escapes, and diversions to temporarily mask over any need being unmet! And God is my . . . . .
- ❖ **Faithfulness**—Because Christ has truly become the source of actually meeting my needs, I find within no need to continually search for something else to satisfy! And as a result—my commitments, my promises, my vows, my word, my faithfulness, loyalty and fidelity—become easy to keep! And also because I know that my future is secure, that God is greater than any crisis I may face, and because I can depend upon His faithfulness . . . . . I can now live without any fear of the unknown!

Does it sometimes seem to you that there are very few Christians who are successful living this way? —Living with their needs actually being met?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

**“Why not”?** —Why do so few Christians ever seem to live with their emotional needs being met in this life?

**IMPORTANT: Most Christians are failing to have their needs met in Christ, because of a basic flaw in their belief system. They believe that success in this life is based on formulas, rather—than—a—relationship!**

**. . . Based on formulas, and their ability to finally “get it right”, rather than a desire to have an intimate romantic “head over heels” love relationship with God!**

. . . Now why would God set it up so that you could never learn enough to live with your needs met and free from emotional pain?

So why did God set it up so that the only way you were ever going to be happy was to surrender to seeking a passionate “head-over-heals” first love relationship with Jesus?

**. . . Because He loves you!**

**Think about this: You can walk away from Jesus, but He will never walk away from you! You can neglect His presence, abuse His goodness, and disrespect Him, . . . and He will never stop loving you!**

**You can slam the door of your heart in His face and live the rest of your life unfaithful to Him, . . . but He will remain faithful to you!!! (II Timothy 2:13)**

**The only stable love in this world is God’s himself! I Cor: 13 tells us that everything else will pass away, but Love will never pass away. Because God is love!!!**

That's the reason Jesus said in Matt. 6 :19 - 21 ***“Don't store up treasures on earth! Moths and rust can destroy them, and thieves can break in and steal them! Instead, store up your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy them, and thieves cannot break in and steal them. Your heart will always be where your treasure is!”***

**God knew if we put our hopes  
into anything or anyone other than Him,  
that our heart would end up broken!**

Are you beginning to realize that the only way you are ever going to be able to feel whole, complete, unwounded, healed, secure and unconditionally loved is with the surrender of your whole life to seeking a passionate “head-over-heals” first love relationship with Jesus?

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_ SOMETIMES\_\_\_\_\_

Most people spend their lives running from one source after another—even asking God to provide them—never understanding that no one but Jesus can cause us to “never thirst again”!

In our prayers, don't we sometimes send a telegram, a prayer, that reads, “Send money, send food, and send someone to get me a better job, rather than asking God to be the source to fill the emptiness of our emotional chasm?”

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

Mankind still believes the deception that there is something or someone out there who can make us happy, make us feel secure, make us feel important or needed, make us feel loved!

**. . . THERE ISN'T!!!**

**What is the greatest problem with the door of your heart being closed to God?**

***\* The result of this closed door is the creation of a void of unmet needs. A void, that unfilled, is so painful that in desperation, we will seek to find a new source to fill the emptiness and hopefully end the pain! In other words, we will seek someone, or something to replace God! —A God substitute!***

And tragically that source will usually be the relationships with those whom we feel the closest to, whom we are the most comfortable with, whom we believe will provide the greatest probability of meeting our needs!

Who or what do you look to, ***other than God***, to be the greatest source of meeting your needs?

ANSWER:\_\_\_\_\_

Do you think this source has ever become a “God substitute” for meeting your emotional needs?

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*: Whenever we make another source our first choice to meet our emotional needs, we will always place an overload of expectations on them! And if this expectation remains constant, or most often as our first choice, it will destroy the relationship!**

If you are married, what sort of expectations do you have of your husband or wife? And, what sort of expectations do you think they believe you expect of them?”  
. . . Do the list match?

ASK YOURSELF: Do I expect them to make me feel . . .

Secure? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Protected? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Loved? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Needed? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

. . . How do you think they would answer these questions about you?

Scripture tells us to have a love for each other that will cover a multitude of sins. The word “sins” in this scripture means the “flaws, faults, offenses, and sins” of another person!

Ask yourself this question. Don't you have to get to really know someone to begin to see his or her faults?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Who do we have the greatest difficulty with overlooking their flaws, faults, and the offensive habits they exhibit?

Is it the people we have only just met?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

. . . Or, is it the people we spend the most time with?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

That is because, usually the closer we get to someone, the GREATER THE EXPECTATIONS we have of their ability to meet our needs.

And when those expectations grow to an unachievable level, above reality, when we begin to expect any person to be able to fill the “God void” in our lives, then the flaws and faults of that person will begin to really grade on us! . . . Especially the people we are the closest to!

**IMPORTANT:** It’s only when the passion of your heart is to know and love Jesus above everything else in this life, that you will ever become a good friend or a good spouse!

Because it’s only in those times, when Jesus is the love of your life, that you will find the ability to love someone else, unconditionally!

**NOTE: When a marriage is filled with two people who are passionately romantically, head-over-heals in love with Jesus above everything else in their lives, . . .**

**. . . When the desire to know Him is the most consuming thought on those two people’s minds day after day, . . . it is then and only then, that a marriage can truly become stable, giving, romantic, and loving!**

. . . What sort of unachievable expectations do you think you possibly have put on your spouse or your closest friend?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

High demands and impossible expectations are the very thing that causes the person, who at one time loved you more than anyone else ever has, . . . to now want to avoid you.



They feel that no matter how hard they try, how much they change, it will never be enough!

Remember this, . . . only Jesus can fill the emptiness you feel inside! Only Jesus can cause you to feel loved and special, protected and cared for. Only Jesus can cause you to feel at peace, and to be happy. Only Jesus can cause you to no longer struggle with fear and depression. Only Jesus can cause you to never thirst again!

Open the door to Jesus! Go back in time. Relive, re-experience, give your life away again! Return to your first love! And once again, begin to drink from the well that never runs dry.

## Prayer Time

**List the areas, (GOD SUBSTITUTES) within your life that you believe you have possibly begun to look to, to expect to relieve the emotional pain in your life,!**  
**Areas, when you think about them, seem to cause you to worry, to feel stress, to be depressed, or to feel some consistent emotional pain on a fairly regular basis.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

**What sort of unachievable expectations do you think you possibly have put on the person you feel closest to?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Now, in prayer tell God that you are releasing that person from those expectations, and that from now on you are going to place those expectations in Him.**

**Now with each expectation and the emotional need provided by it (one at a time), tell God you want to right now come to Him and place the fulfillment of these emotional needs into His care and responsibility!**

**EX. (Need to feel loved!) “God, You are the only one who can make me feel loved! I release all of the past sources I have expected to provide that constant feeling of being loved. I ask you to forgive me, because no one could ever fill the emptiness I feel inside but You! OTHERS: the emotion to make you feel needed, wanted, important, protected, happy and joyful, etc.**

