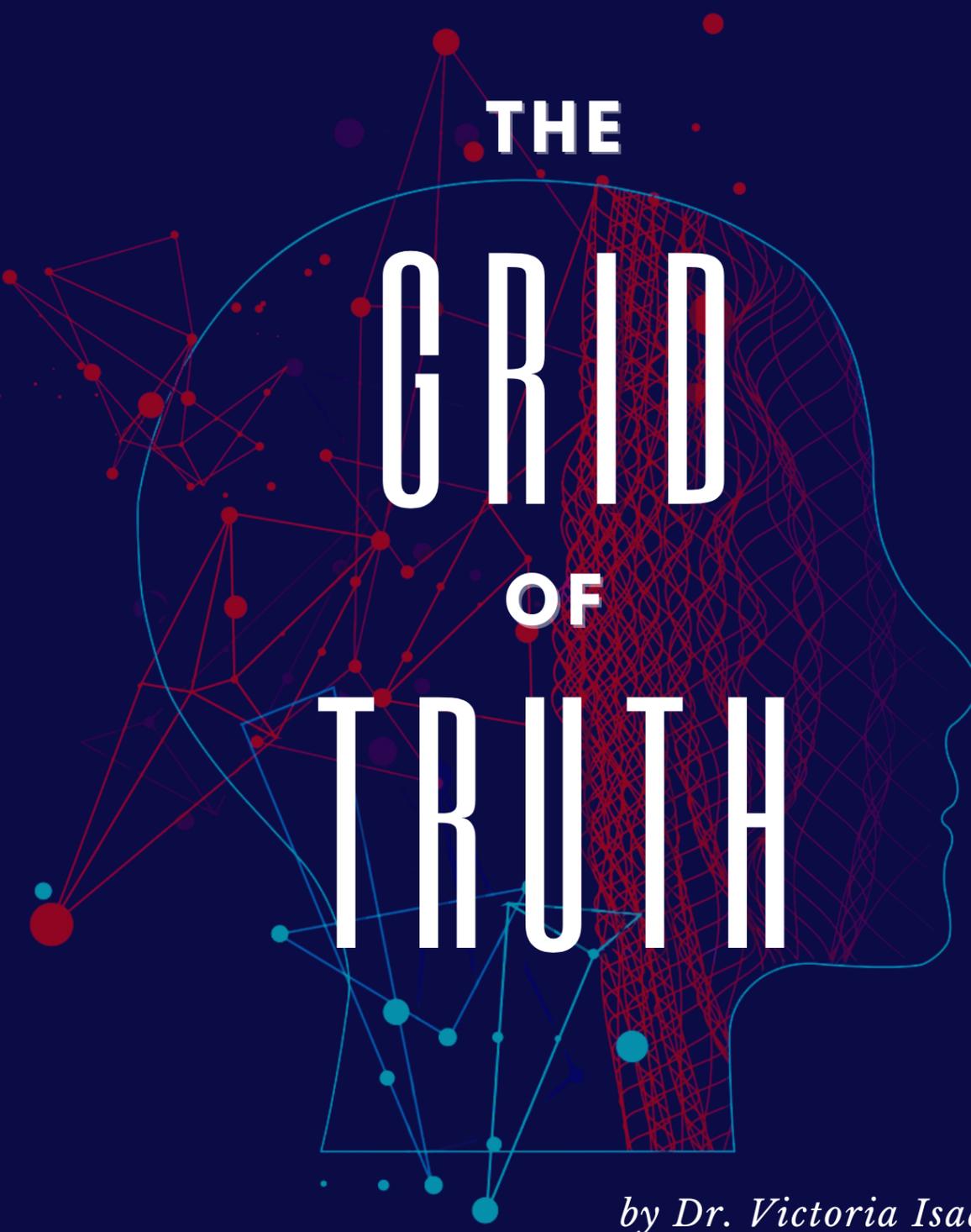


*How to Think Biblically  
in a Deceptive World*



THE  
GRID  
OF  
TRUTH

*by Dr. Victoria Isaac*

# THE GRID OF TRUTH

## *How to Think Biblically in a Deceptive World*

*“We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.”*

2 Corinthians 10:5

What we see and experience is a present-day reality. Fear, anger, sorrow, disappointment, disillusionment, regret, shame, confusion...  
The list goes on.

What we feel might be real, but that does not make it reality. Circumstances and emotions cannot define biblical truth or right responses. The Grid of Truth process trains Christians to process emotions, thoughts, circumstances, and decisions biblically. Biblical processing moves us forward towards healing, forgiveness, freedom, and joy.

The Grid of Truth equips believers to stand firm with a biblical worldview regardless of how deep the deception in the world we navigate daily.

Professor Victoria Isaac, M.Ed. wrote the book and designed the Grid of Truth Christian discipleship course curriculum. Christians who have read the book and taken the course testify to the freedom they experience from learning to apply God’s perspective to their thoughts, feelings, circumstances, and decision-making through the Grid of Truth process.

[www.fullyequippedbibleinstitute.org](http://www.fullyequippedbibleinstitute.org)

# **AUTHOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to the God of the Universe who knew me before I was born. Thank you for Your unending love and watchful care. Thank you for finding me when I didn't know I was lost. I love You with every fiber of my being and will serve You with every breath of my lungs.

To my husband, Dr. Stephen Isaac - Thank you for believing in me, pushing my thinking, stretching my faith, and strengthening my responses. Thank you for being the man of God you are - strong, courageous, relentless in standing for Truth, and tireless in service to our Lord. You are the love of my life, my safe place, my best friend, and my ministry partner. I love you more than you can imagine.

To my family - Thank you! You keep my heart full to overflowing - how I love and treasure each of you and your unique gifts and callings. Daniel, Brandon, Jennifer, Bonnie, Travis, Jordan, Halie, and Roxane - you are indeed God's gifts to me! And Colton, Peyton, Cainaam, Jaxon, Chloe, and Corban... thank you for the joy, the laughter, the hugs, and snuggles that always put life in perspective.

To Dr. John and Dinah Hodgson - Thank you! I am so grateful for the journey of faith and vision for service that we share. Thank you for your listening ears, wise counsel, and dear friendship. And thank you for the adventures past and adventures yet to come!

To the Reunion Church Community - I am so profoundly grateful for over two decades of learning, growing, and serving with you! Thank you for your passion for God's Word, enthusiasm for service, and warm hearts of welcome. You are an inspiration and a treasure - a true place to call home.

# ENDORSEMENTS

Vickie, I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations for both the concept and the execution of a tremendous book on a much-needed topic. In a moment in which society seems to be hurtling toward abolishing any sense of the absolute, your insights and treatment of this subject provide firm ground for every reader of Scripture to “absolutely” know God’s revealed truth.

I am also struck by the utility you have built into the finished product! For a pastor or teacher, you have created a “bulletproof” template for consulting the necessary elements of context, which are essential for proper exegesis and teaching. Yet, within this same concise volume, you have also created a fantastic tool to guide topical studies for group use or personal study for persons or groups of any maturity level.

In addition, at the end of each chapter, you have encouraged all of us, whether we are a gifted Bible teacher or a brand-new believer to anticipate our next steps for putting what we’ve learned into practice.

Well done! This is one book that will lead many people to a deeper understanding of the heart of God, along with an added determination to live out what they have discovered!

Gary Hay  
Founding Pastor, Hope Church  
Springfield, MO

If you are like me, you are being bombarded with information every day that challenges your fundamental beliefs. *The Grid of Truth* offers a much-needed prescription for believers to maintain a strong biblical worldview. Vickie has outlined a clear, practical way to handle our daily interactions and emotions despite the many external distractions. There is only one source of Truth. If you do not want to stray from it, you need the practical, biblical tools this book provides!

*John McB. Hodgson MD.  
Professor of Medicine, Case Western Reserve University  
Chairman, Hope Education Foundation*

# PREFACE

I was not raised in a family of faith, but a faithful God knew me while I was still in my mother's womb. From brokenness to rebirth and repurposing, God has been more than faithful.

In many ways, my faith journey has been a journey of restoration. Starting from scratch as a teenager without roots, God faithfully laid the firm foundations of identity in Him. His identity protected me from seeking the world's solutions and freed me for His service.

Serving the broken in inner cities and fourth-world countries built service and compassion into my life's DNA. God has never allowed me to forget what I have seen, experienced, and learned from the brokenness.

His calling is strong and clear. God placed a passion for His Word deep in my heart. It took root and grew into the hunger for His Truth that I experience and am compelled to share today with anyone who will listen.

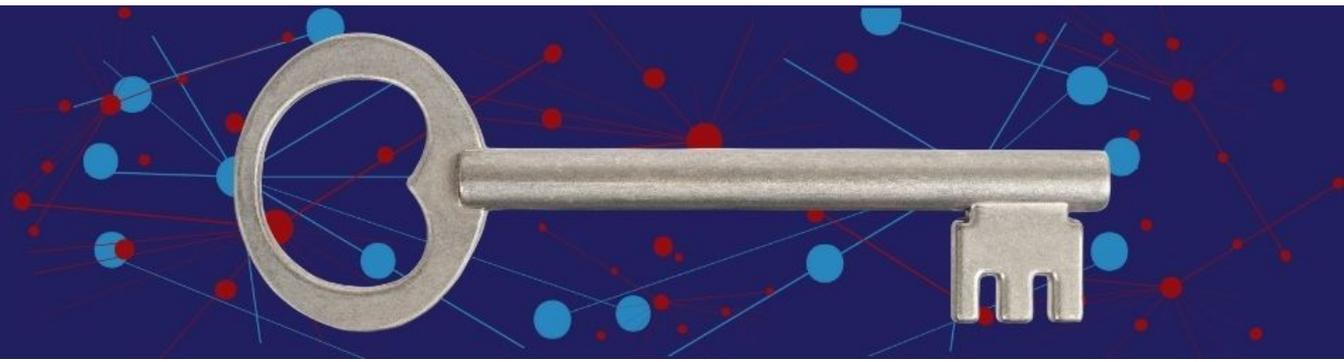
God's Word truly set me free to become who He intended me to be, and not an invention of my own making. Turn by turn on the Potter's wheel, He shapes my purposes and character.

I pray that God will use the Grid of Truth biblical thinking process to bring you personal liberation and fuel a hunger for His Word. As you conform your life to Scripture, a beautiful unfolding of His purposes and plans for you will take place before your eyes. He created you to be free, strong, courageous, purposeful, and faithful to your calling. I pray God will use you as a light of His Truth in a darkening world.

Drink deeply of His Word. Plant it in your heart where it will set you free to be all God created you to be!

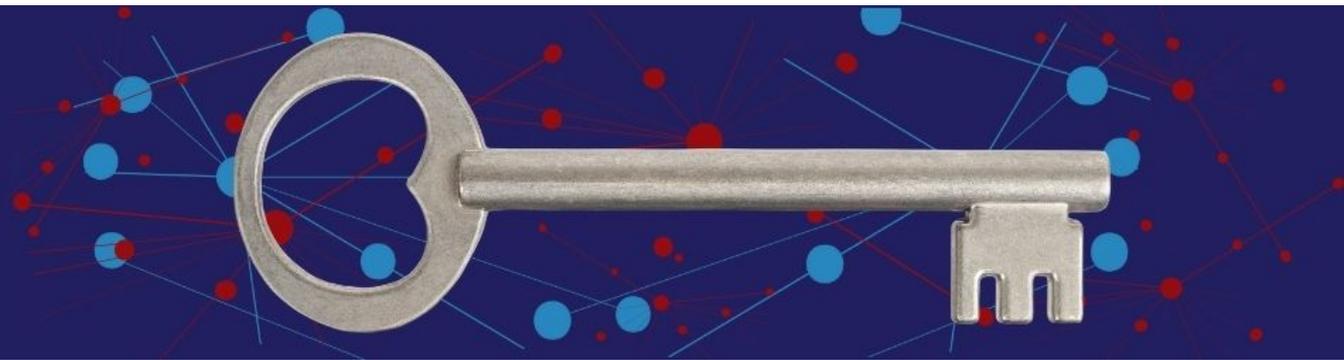
In His Service,  
Dr. Victoria Isaac





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“Woe to those who call evil good  
and good evil,  
who put darkness for light  
and light for darkness...”  
Isaiah 5:20 ESV

# INTRODUCTION

Societal norms are shifting like grains of sand in the wind. Hidden and not-so-hidden organizations are pushing ungodly agendas covered in deceptively attractive packaging. The youngest and most vulnerable are squarely in their targets.

The church continues to lose moral ground to the world. Instead of remaining tethered to God's Word as the authoritative moral compass to combat deception, Christian churches and organizations conform to societal norms in the name of inclusivity. Church members follow their leaders, failing to search God's Word diligently for themselves.

Followers of Jesus get trapped in overcommitted lifestyles. We struggle to gain victory in our own lives, raise godly children, and meet the myriad of job and church commitments that fill our days. How can we possibly expect to stand firmly anchored in God's Word? How can we be a light in the darkness if our own lights are only faintly flickering?

Is this book a sweeping judgment of the world and everyone in it? No. It is a call to return to God's Word as the source of life, hope, and moral compass for how followers of Jesus should live. The Grid of Truth provides tools to bury our anchors deep into God's Word and remain victoriously tethered amidst the darkening storms of deception.

We must know God's Word intimately to stay anchored. "The Grid of Truth, How to Think Biblically in a Deceptive World" equips believers with crucial tools to study God's Word deeply and apply it accurately. When God is the source of life, and His Word is the source of Truth, we can live victoriously in the freedom and joy God promises. His life empowers us to brightly shine Truth into the darkness.

Because we live in a deceptive world, knowing, understanding, and correctly applying God's Word is crucial. It's only with Truth that we can untangle complex struggles and successfully navigate the deceptive traps of this fallen world.

This book outlines a biblical "sorting process," complete with case studies for practical application. The sorting process is twofold. First, we dig deep

into God's Word to understand and correctly apply it. Second, we factually analyze the situation to develop a biblical roadmap toward a victorious outcome.

## **THE SORTING PROCESS - PART 1**

“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

Hebrews 4:12 ESV

## **UNDERSTANDING SCRIPTURE**

Scripture tells us that God's Word is alive. Through Scripture, the Holy Spirit frees us from thinking, feeling, and acting in ways that are not pleasing to Him. The first part of the sorting process is studying God's Word in context. Understanding and correctly applying Scripture requires effort on our part. The Holy Spirit is faithful to reveal Truth as we diligently seek it. Christ is faithful to answer our prayers when we ask for wisdom. Our responsibility is to be serious students of God's Word and deepen our understanding of who God is, His ways, and His call on our lives.

We can use a helpful, step-by-step process in seeking insight from God's Word about particular topics. We start with identifying the topic we need God's guidance on. Most Bibles have a subject index in the back where topics are listed alphabetically. Underneath the topic, there is a listing of applicable Scripture verses. For example, the topic of anger is listed in the subject index. Many Scriptures from the Old and New Testaments are identified underneath the word anger.

Choosing appropriate Scripture for your biblical process requires more than a topical look-up and cursory reading of the Scriptures. Read the passages in the context of surrounding passages. View the passages within the historical, cultural, and literary context of the surrounding content. Numerous online Bible study tools are available to study God's Word in depth by topic and context.

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Understanding the original meaning of a passage is crucial to correctly determining how to apply it to our lives today. The most critical control is recognizing that Scripture cannot mean for you today what the author did not intend with the original writing. Uncovering the original intent and meaning of the author at the time of the writing is critical to accurate interpretation.

Is there a historical context that will help us understand this Scripture? We uncover the original meaning by examining the following:

**Who and Where:** Who is speaking? To whom? If the speaker is not the author, to whom is the author writing? For example, this is true of the Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are the authors of the four Gospels. In many instances of the Gospels, Jesus is the speaker.

It is also important to note what location the author is writing from. The location of the author helps provide additional insights into the message. For example, the Apostle Paul wrote a joyful letter to the Philippian church while in a Roman prison. How does knowing this impact the strength of Paul's message?

**Who and Where:** Who is the audience that the author is addressing? Where is the audience located?

**What and When:** When was the Scripture written? What was going on at the time of the writing? What is the circumstance or situation the author is addressing?

# CULTURAL CONTEXT

Is there a specific cultural meaning that can shed further light on the subject? For example, at the time of Jesus, Jewish people thought they were highly generous if they forgave someone seven times. Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive someone. When Jesus replied with "seventy times seven," Peter was absolutely astonished. Understanding cultural context helps us understand the full impact of the author's message.

# LITERARY CONTEXT

Words have meanings in sentences, sentences in paragraphs, etc. The context around the sentences, paragraphs, and overall passages provides substantial insight into the author's original meaning and intent.

Understanding the genre, or writing style, of the Bible's books is very helpful in grasping the original meaning. For example, the Book of Leviticus is a historical narrative that chronicles events. The Book of Revelation is apocalyptic literature full of symbolism that should be understood within the writing's historical, cultural, and literary contexts.

Identifying the keywords of the passage and examining the words in their original language is extremely helpful. We look at the Hebrew words for the Old Testament. For the New Testament, we look at the Greek keywords.

## **PASSAGE POINTS - THE ORIGINAL MEANING**

After examining the historical, cultural, and literary context of the passage(s), the crucial question is, "What are the primary points of the passage?" Don't create your own points. Identify the key messages of the author to understand the original meaning.

# SCRIPTURAL APPLICATION

To accurately apply God's Word to our lives, we must look at the BIG PICTURE of who God is and what His word says consistently throughout Scripture. Are there additional Old and New Testament Scriptures that address the topic you are researching?

Identifying consistency through other Scripture protects us from being "cherry pickers" who randomly pick verses, regardless of whether they are rightly understood and applied. We should not inaccurately pull Scripture out of context to defend or condemn a behavior. Additionally, using a single verse to inform ourselves about a particular issue may not be the correct application.

Through our research, we can determine if the instruction is an answer for a specific issue (precept) or a Scripture intended for all people at all times (principle).

**PRECEPT:** This is a direct scriptural instruction applicable to a specific situation. 1 Corinthians 14:35 provides an excellent example of a precept. The Apostle Paul was addressing the church in Corinth. The church included Gentiles and Jews who accepted the Messiah. It was a melting pot of nationalities, backgrounds, and languages from across the Roman Empire.

Many female prostitutes from Corinth's Temple of Aphrodite (goddess of sexual love and beauty) received Jesus as their Savior and attended churches in Corinth. Their heads were shaved, making them easily identifiable from the other women whose heads were covered. They were unaware of Jewish etiquette for women in services and spoke freely. They covered their heads, and Torah law instructed them to be silent in the synagogue. One might imagine the uproar bald, uncovered heads and free conversation caused among the Jewish wives! The church services were getting unruly, and the Jewish wives were riled up! Paul decided to hush all women to keep the order (and perhaps the peace in the Jewish homes)! He issued specific instructions to this church, "It is shameful for a woman to speak in church." 1 Corinthians 14:35.

Scripture records Peter in Jerusalem proclaiming that God will pour out His Spirit on all people and that daughters will prophesy (Acts 2:17-18). The definitions of the Greek word for prophesy include "to speak under inspiration, to exercise the prophetic office." Peter confirmed that the Holy Spirit would inspire women to speak divine insights with authority.

These two passages might seem contradictory. Paul told women they were not allowed to speak in church. Peter told them that God would use their speech. It will seem contradictory until you dig into the Scripture to determine if a passage is a precept (specific instruction) or an overarching principle. If this issue piques your interest, dig into the Word to find out!

**PRINCIPLE:** To determine overarching biblical principles, we must see if the passage points are in other places in Scripture. God is consistent! Are there passage points addressed in the Old Testament and then carried forward into the New Testament (Ex: "Love the Lord your God")? Or is it a New Testament principle illustrated in multiple New Testament passages? (Example - salvation is a gift of God's grace).

**PERSON:** What do the Scriptures reveal about the character of God – is it consistent with what we know to be true about the character of God (Ex, loving, merciful, wise, etc.)?

**What We Share in Common:** Correct Scriptural application occurs when:

**Precepts:** We can apply precepts or specific instructions to our lives when we share in common the circumstances with the people the writer was originally addressing. By understanding the issue being addressed and determining if our problem is the same, we can determine if the instruction applies to us.

For example, in 1 Corinthians 11:14, Paul says that it is degrading for a man to have long hair. Other New Testament Scripture says that women should have their heads covered. Do these Scriptures apply to us today? You now have the biblical study tools to uncover the Truth and accurately apply it!

**Principles:** We accurately apply biblical principles to our lives and the world we live in by identifying overarching biblical principles that apply to all people at all times. Examples of biblical principles include the love of God, the forgiveness of God, the blessing of God for obedience, the call of God to service, etc.

## THE SORTING PROCESS - PART 2

“So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

John 8:31-32 ESV

The second part of the sorting process involves the practical application of the Scripture to the situation. Hearing it, believing it, and living it is the “abiding” in the Word that Jesus references in the above Scripture.

There are often layers of challenges when applying God’s Word to complex situations. How do you sort through decision-making using God’s Word? Perhaps you have two options that seem right, or perhaps both might seem wrong. You will notice throughout this book that your case studies will grow more challenging as your skill level increases. After all, life is complicated, but God equips us with truth as a lamp to our feet and light to our path.

In addition to complex, layered problems, our emotions can add confusion to the mix. What we feel can inform what we believe. Anger, resentment, bitterness, fear, lust, unforgiveness - the list goes on. Emotions have the power to deceive us if we do not process them truthfully. For example, we forgive someone who wronged us grievously. From time to time, we feel bitterness towards them crop up. Does it mean we have not truly forgiven? Or, a different example - if you sense a physical attraction towards someone, does it mean you committed the sin of lust?

### TRUTHS ABOUT EMOTIONS:

- Just because we feel it doesn’t make it true.
- Just because we feel it doesn’t make it sinful.
- Just because we feel it doesn’t mean we must act upon it.

How can we know when we have crossed the line? When does what we feel become displeasing to God? Emotions are not inherently sinful. Feelings

paired with wrong actions produce sin. Actions can be inward or outward. Harboring a wrong thought process is a sinful inward action. Swearing at someone is a sinful outward action. God holds us accountable for both thoughts and actions. The Apostle Paul admonishes us to take every thought captive.

“We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ...”  
2 Corinthians 10:5 ESV

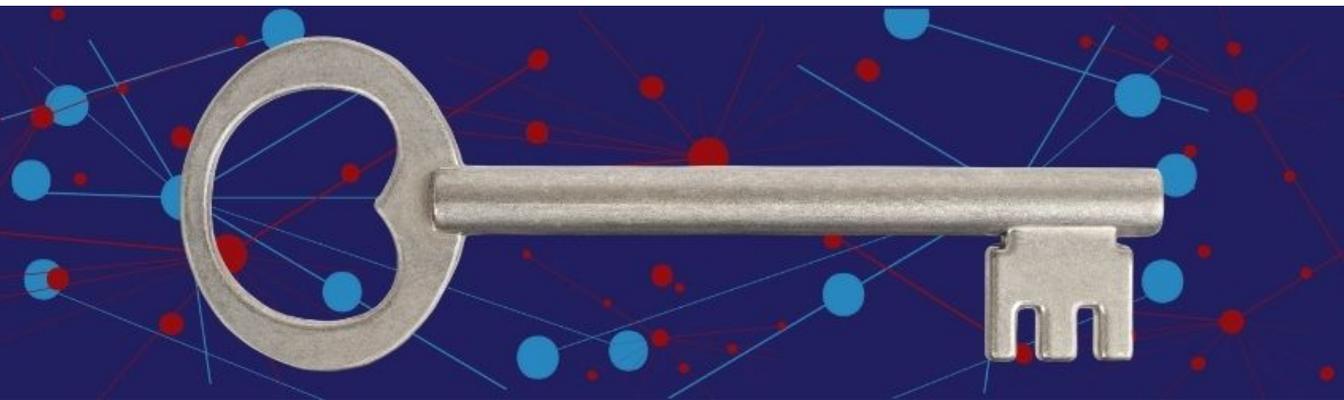
Sometimes, our emotions are so powerful that they seem like a strong tide pulling the feet out from underneath us, washing us out to sea. Depression or grief can feel that way. Other times, we feel we will explode if we don't do or say something to release the pressure building inside. How do we handle intense emotions in a manner pleasing to God?

Using an active biblical process to govern emotions frees us from sinful thoughts, responses, and even years-old habit patterns. Biblical thinking moves us forward in the healing process, preventing us from staying trapped. Stubborn habits can't imprison us with the “This is just the way I am” rationale because Jesus promised the Truth would set us free.

## **THE FIVE WHATS:**

When emotions arise, we can stop, take a step back, and use the Five What's practical process to examine the emotions and the situation. The Five What's can help us respond to God in a pleasing way. You will practice using the Five What's on your case study worksheets.

- What are the facts about the situation?
- What am I angry (sad, depressed, confused, etc.) about?
- What does Scripture have to say about this issue?
- What did I do?
- What should I do now?



“The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple, he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father’s house a house of trade.”

John 2:13-16 ESV

# CHAPTER 1: ANGER

It is time to start using the Grid of Truth biblical process by applying it to our emotions, circumstances, relationships, and decision-making. As a disciple of Jesus, you need to conform your life to His example and teaching.

The first topic we will tackle through the Grid of Truth is anger. Let's look at a time when Jesus was angry and started turning over tables.

“And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you make it a den of robbers.”

John 2:13-16 ESV

## **WHO AND WHERE - AUTHOR**

Author of the Gospel - the Apostle John, son of Zebedee, is the author of the Gospel of John and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Epistles of John and the Book of Revelation. John was a Jewish fisherman from Galilee. John and his brother James were repairing fishing nets in a boat with their father when Jesus called them to follow him. They were fishing partners with Simon Peter and Andrew.

John most likely wrote the Gospel of John from Ephesus before his exile to the island of Patmos around 90 AD.

Jesus is the speaker in this passage, and John, as an eyewitness to Jesus' words and actions, is recording what happened.

## **WHO AND WHERE: AUDIENCE:**

The Audience of the Gospel: John's audience was Jewish and Gentile believers in Asia Minor and the larger Greco-Roman world.

## **WHAT AND WHEN:**

It is believed that John wrote the Gospel of John in approximately 90 AD from Ephesus, where he pastored. After the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD, Jerusalem's population dispersed to other parts of the Roman Empire, including a large Jewish population living in Ephesus. At the time of the writing of John's Gospel, Emperor Nero's reign of terror had passed, and

Emperor Domitian now ruled Rome. Domitian's heavy persecution of Jews and Christians occurred approximately 80-96 AD.

## CULTURAL CONTEXT

Gentiles who practiced the Jewish faith were not allowed to worship inside the Temple. The Court of the Gentiles was the only place on Temple grounds where they were permitted to worship. Because the Jews did not respect the Gentiles, merchants were allowed to sell animals for sacrifice and exchange coins there. The busy, loud environment was a terrible distraction to worship and prayer.

## LITERARY CONTEXT

### GENRE:

The Book of John is a Gospel. The word Gospel means Good News! The Gospels are historical narratives of the life of Jesus.

### KEYWORDS:

**Whip:** The Greek word for whip used in this passage is "phragelliion," meaning a scourge, lash, or whip.

**Drove:** The Greek word for drove used in this passage is "Exebalen" means to throw out, banish, or eject.

**Marketplace:** The Greek word for marketplace is "emporion," meaning a place of traffic, market, or market-house.

### PASSAGE POINTS:

It is clear from the cultural and literary context of the event that John is recording that the Jewish religious leaders are cheapening the Temple as a sacred place of worship. The keywords make it evident that Jesus violently banished the merchants and money changers from the Temple.

- Jesus was angry at the defilement of the Temple.
- Jesus was angry at the mistreatment of the Gentiles who came to worship.

# SCRIPTURAL APPLICATION:

## PRECEPT:

Jesus is angered by the defilement of worship and the mistreatment of others.

## PRINCIPLE:

**Old Testament:** God is angry with Israel for defiling His laws and will judge them in His anger:

“Now I will soon pour out my wrath upon you, and spend my anger against you, and judge you according to your ways, and I will punish you for all your abominations.”

Ezekiel 7:3 ESV

**New Testament:** Jesus is angry with Peter for his lack of faith and banishes him temporarily from His presence.

“But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

Matthew 16:23 ESV

## PERSON:

The character of God is holy - He is a perfect, sinless Father. The character of Jesus is holy - He is a perfect, sinless Savior.

Man’s character is fallen - being angry and acting upon the anger can be sinful or not sinful, depending upon circumstances, motivations, and actions.

- It is a biblical principle that God can be angry without sin.
- The emotion of anger is not inherently a sin.
- Actions while angry are not inherently sinful.
- The cause of the anger is key to whether the actions are sinful.

## WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON:

- Human beings experience the emotion of anger
- Human beings act on their anger.
- We are made in God’s image.
- Jesus desires us to follow His earthly example.

- With His help, we can respond to anger and not sin.

## **FIVE WHATS**

What are the facts about the situation? Christ went into the Court of the Gentiles. He saw sales within the Temple walls. He was so angry that He flipped tables over and drove the money changers out of the Temple.

What was Christ angry about? The Jewish leaders excluded the Gentiles from worshipping in the same areas as the Jewish people. The Gentiles' only space to worship was the Court of the Gentiles. It was the only place where people outside the Jewish race were allowed to worship on Temple grounds.

The religious leaders considered Gentiles, and the Court of the Gentiles defiled. They used and abused the Gentiles and the Temple of God for profit in the name of worship. The Jewish leadership allowed the merchants to exchange currency so their offerings would be in Jewish coins (without idolatrous images). Money changers took doves, cattle, and sheep into the Temple Court to sell them while worship took place.

What does Scripture say? Christ said that the Temple was supposed to be a house of prayer. Instead, it turned into a den of thieves.

What did Christ do? He immediately stopped the wrongdoing and drove out the perpetrators.

What did Christ do in the future? Christ continued to take a stand against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, exposing the hypocritical system they used to hold the people in bondage.

# CHAPTER 1 CASE STUDY : ANGER

Your boss has been telling you what a great job you have been doing. He has also said he needs you to take over some additional responsibilities that your co-worker has not handled correctly. You are frustrated because your co-worker does not take her job very seriously. She comes in late daily, takes extended lunch breaks, and constantly flirts with other co-workers in the office.

You say yes, you will take the work because a position is opening soon, and you want the promotion. You work ten-hour days to handle your workload and your co-worker's neglected workload. Your boss is grateful, praises your work, and hints that you are in the running for the promotion because you are so reliable. You tell yourself that the sacrifice you are making now is worth it for your future.

A few weeks go by, and your workload from your co-worker is increasing, and she is absent more frequently from her work area. You observe her spending a lot of time with your boss behind closed doors, and you are growing increasingly suspicious and resentful of carrying her load. The next time your boss drops off a file of her work, you are outraged but say nothing.

Another week goes by, and it's time for the announcement about the office promotion. Your boss calls a staff meeting. The position goes to the co-worker whose slack you have been picking up. You stand up, throw your paperwork on the floor in front of everyone else, and stomp out.

You are outraged and don't know how to handle it. You have been lied to and used to cover your co-worker.

## APPLICATION

How do we process the emotion of anger to prevent ourselves from sinning? Let's go back to your case study and apply what you have learned to the topic of anger. Look up other Scriptures on anger to create a biblical roadmap for overcoming anger. Some Scriptures you could include are:

“Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil.”  
Psalm 37:8 ESV

“Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.”  
Ephesians 4:26-27

“Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”  
James 1:19-20 ESV

On the following two pages, you will find the Grid of Truth worksheet for anger. The Scriptural examination should be of John 2:13-16 ESV, and you should bring in other Scriptures to identify what Scripture says about anger.

Complete the worksheet with the FIVE WHATs and the Scripture you have just studied. In this instance, the “What happened,” “What did I do,” etc., should be answered by putting yourself in the case study situation. The questions “Triggers for Response?” and “Frequent Response?” are for you as you identify what “sets you off” and what your usual response is to something that triggers you to anger.

# FIVE WHATS

WHAT ARE  
THE FACTS?

WHAT DOES  
SCRIPTURE SAY?

WHAT IS THE  
EMOTION?

WHAT DID I DO?

WHAT SHOULD  
I DO NOW?

# WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT IT?

**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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How does Scripture direct us to manage the emotion of anger in a way that pleases Him?

Start your answer with "God's Word tells us that..."

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Do you struggle with handling anger in a righteous way? If so, what are your triggers?

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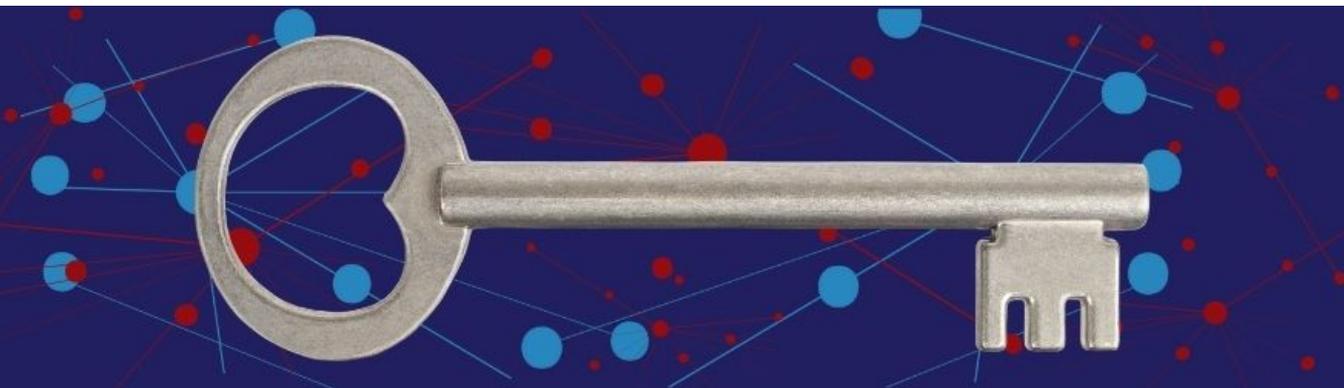
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“Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.

But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’ So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

Matthew 18:21-35 ESV

# CHAPTER 2: FORGIVENESS

Chapter one provided an overview of correctly studying Scripture to apply it to our lives accurately. Jesus promises us that His truth will set us free.

And you will know the truth,  
and the truth will set you free.”

John 8:32 ESV

We will take a deep biblical look at forgiveness to uncover the original, intended meaning of Jesus’ teaching. We will examine and apply Scripture using our Grid of Truth biblical process.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The most important control to understand what this Scripture about forgiveness means for our lives is to remember that Scripture cannot mean for you what the author did not intend when originally written. We will use Jesus’ teaching on forgiveness found in Matthew 18:21-35 as the basis for our study on this critical topic.

The historical context includes who is speaking and who is writing. Often, we can gain additional insight into the Scripture by understanding the historical context. Understanding the audience is also essential as it provides insights into the message’s purpose.

### **WHO AND WHERE - AUTHOR:**

Matthew is the author of the Book of Matthew. He was a former Jewish tax collector. As a tax collector for the Roman Empire, he was considered a traitor to his Jewish people, and the Jews despised him. Matthew, the tax collector, was called by the Messiah to become His disciple.

### **WHO AND WHERE - SPEAKER:**

Jesus is the speaker. He is in Capernaum.

### **WHO AND WHERE - AUDIENCE:**

The audience is the disciples who were gathered around Jesus. Matthew 18:1 refers to the disciples coming to Jesus to ask questions. Peter asked Jesus about forgiveness. Because Jesus called a little child over to illustrate a point, we can assume there was also a crowd around Him as He taught various topics. Scripture also tells us in Matthew 19:1 that after He finished teaching, He left, and a great crowd followed Him. This is likely the same crowd listening as Jesus taught about forgiveness.

### **WHAT AND WHEN:**

Most historians believe the Gospel of Matthew was written around 50-55 AD. The Temple and the city of Jerusalem were still intact, but many Jews were already dispersed throughout the Roman Empire. The content of the Gospel tells us that Matthew was providing proof to the Jewish people that Jesus is the Messiah by connecting the events of Jesus' life with the prophecies He fulfilled.

### **CULTURAL CONTEXT:**

The cultural context is crucial in grasping the original meaning of the passage. Understanding forgiveness through the Jewish lens of the Old Testament illustrates how revolutionary Jesus' teaching on forgiveness is. (Ex. 21:12-35). In the Old Testament, restoration was made "in kind." For example, in Genesis 21:23-25, "But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."

At the time of Jesus, rabbis recommended forgiveness for a repeated offense be given three times. When Peter asked the question "seven times," he thought he was very generous because of the "three times to forgive" rabbinical rule.

## **LITERARY CONTEXT**

Scripture was not initially written in the chapter and verse form as we read it today. Pulling one verse out of context from its' original writing can change the author's intended meaning.

### **GENRE:**

The Book of Matthew is a Gospel. The word Gospel means Good News! The Gospels are historical narratives of the life of Jesus.

### **KEYWORD MEANINGS:**

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and the New Testament authors wrote primarily in Greek. To truly understand the full impact of Scripture, it is essential to grasp the meaning of particular keywords. In Matthew 18:21-35, the critical concept is forgiveness. Let's examine the keyword "forgive."

**Keyword:** forgive - Greek: Aphiemi (Af-ee'-ay-mee)

#### **Definition:**

to send away, go away, or depart

to let go, let alone let be

to let go, give up a debt, forgive, to remit

to give up, keep no longer

to permit, allow, not to hinder, to give up a thing to a person

to leave, go away from one, to go to another place

to depart from one and leave him to himself so that all mutual claims are abandoned

to go away, leaving something behind

to leave so that what is left may remain, leave remaining

Additional keywords worth examining are talent and denarii. The word talent does not have the same meaning as we give it today. The talent was a Greek coin. Ten thousand talents equaled approximately twenty years of a day laborer's wages. If we estimated a year of wages for a day laborer in the U.S., it would be approximately \$30,655. Twenty years of wages would equal approximately \$613,100.

The denarii is another Greek coin. One hundred denarii are the equivalent of approximately one hundred days of a day laborer's wages or an estimated \$12,000 in U.S. currency.

In this parable on forgiveness, Jesus illustrates man's hardness of heart. He contrasts forgiveness of an enormous debt with the unwillingness to forgive a small debt. The illustration was stark. A day laborer was just forgiven twenty years of earnings (today's equivalent of \$613,100). He immediately turned around and shook down someone who owed him one hundred days of earnings (equalling approx. \$12,000). The unforgiving man had just received his life back as a gift, and he refused to give the gift of forgiveness in return.

Jesus tells the story to illustrate how petty we can be. God has so generously paid the debt for our sins, yet we often lack the generosity to forgive others' wrongs against us. Jesus forgives our entire lifetime of sin. We sometimes struggle to forgive one offense.

### **PASSAGE POINTS**

- Because of our sin debt, we need forgiveness.
- Jesus is illustrating the greatness of our transgression, the generosity of the King, and what happens when we don't offer forgiveness to others.

## **SCRIPTURAL APPLICATION**

### **PRECEPT:**

Single passages: What is the specific instruction?

Answer: Forgive others because we are forgiven a debt we can never repay.

### **PRINCIPLE:**

It is an overarching principle if we find the concept in other places in Scripture.

**Old Testament:** do we see the principles repeated in the Old Testament?

“He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.”

Psalm 103:10-12 ESV

**New Testament:** do we see the principles brought forward and repeated in the New Testament?

“For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

Matthew 6:14-15 ESV

“Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”  
And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.”

Luke 23:34 ESV

The word forgive (aphiemi) is used 133 times in the New Testament, including 119 times in the Gospels. In Matthew 6:12-15, the Lord’s prayer is a beautiful example of the word forgive.

**PERSON:**

The Character of God: What do we know about the character of God and forgiveness?

- God is merciful and does not treat us as our sins deserve.
- Jesus forgave even when forgiveness was not sought.

**WHAT WE SHARE IN COMMON:**

**MAN’S PROBLEM:** Sin and unforgiveness - Romans 3:11-12

**Principle:**

Man, apart from God, is sinful and needs forgiveness to be in a right relationship with God. We have all sinned and fallen short.

Old Testament: Isaiah 59:2, “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”

New Testament: Romans 3:22b-23, “For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

## **CHAPTER 2**

# **CASE STUDY: FORGIVENESS**

Your friend Tiffany has come to you really struggling with anger, resentment, and bitterness towards her ex-husband Ryan. She has spent countless hours figuring out how to “get back at him” for the pain he has caused her and her children.

In Tiffany’s opinion, Ryan has dishonored his marriage vows due to infidelity, which led to divorce. From there, he proceeded to move in with his

girlfriend. In the meantime, joint custody was granted for their four and six-year-old girls. When the girls are with their father, they stay at his new girlfriend's apartment. The children are frequently neglected in the father's care because he is out partying with his girlfriend.

Tiffany's racing, angry thoughts and uncontrollable emotions are consuming her. She can't sleep and is eating very little. Tiffany spends a lot of time in bed with the door closed and the lights out. She cries frequently and has emotional outbursts of anger at the children when they refer to their father and his new "friend."

She does not know how to handle the intensity of these thoughts and emotions. They are crippling her and negatively impacting her children. Tiffany spoke to the pastor, who reminded her about the need to forgive her ex-husband. She does not believe she should grant forgiveness because her ex-husband has not admitted his wrongdoing nor apologized for his behaviors.

Complete the Grid of Truth worksheet. Put yourself in the case study situation.

# FIVE WHATS

WHAT ARE  
THE FACTS?

WHAT DOES  
SCRIPTURE SAY?

WHAT IS THE  
EMOTION?

WHAT DID I DO?

WHAT SHOULD  
I DO NOW?

# WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT IT?

**VERSE:**

**PRINCIPLE:**

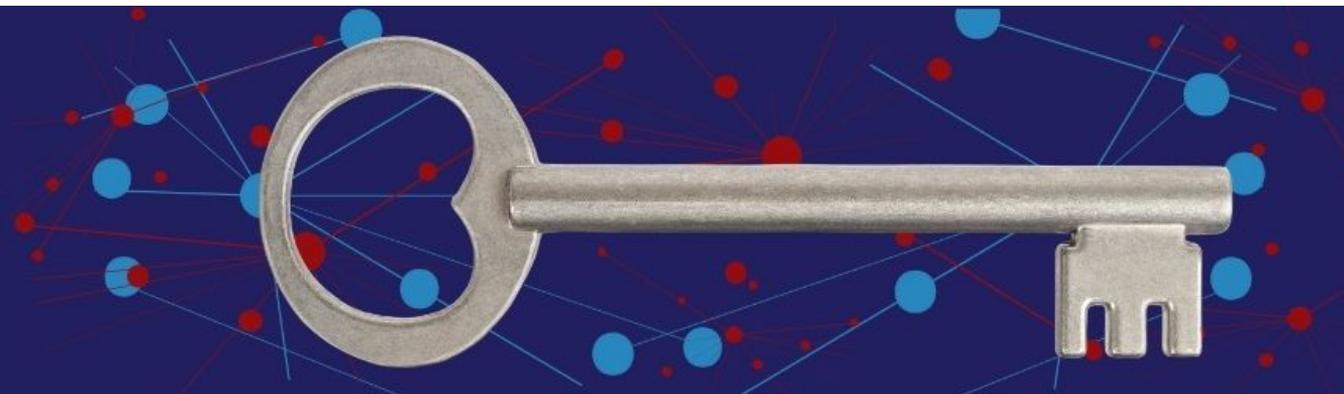
**VERSE:**

**PRINCIPLE:**









“So have no fear of them,  
for nothing is covered  
that will not be revealed,  
or hidden that will not be known.

What I tell you in the dark,  
say in the light,  
and what you hear whispered,  
proclaim on the housetops.

And do not fear those who kill the body  
but cannot kill the soul.  
Rather fear him who can destroy  
both soul and body in hell.

Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin?  
And not one of them falls to the ground  
apart from your Father’s will.

But the very hairs of your head  
are all numbered.  
Do not fear therefore;  
you are of more value  
than many sparrows.”

Matthew 10:26-30 ESV

# CHAPTER 3: FEAR

Fear comes in many forms. There is a right kind of fear and a wrong kind of fear. We are commanded to fear God and directed not to fear man. Fear manifests as anxiety, stress, control, and even depression. We can find ourselves afraid of illness, anxious about finances, fearful for our children, and depressed about the outlook for our future. Sometimes, the response is trying to control situations to prevent what we fear from happening.

Most of us are afraid of something. Freedom from fear enables us to step out in faith and trust God for outcomes. Let's look deeply at what Matthew 10:26-30 says about fear so we can move towards freedom.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### **WHO AND WHERE - AUTHOR:**

Matthew is the author of the Book of Matthew. He is a former Jewish tax collector. As a tax collector for the Roman Empire, he was considered a traitor to his Jewish people. The Jewish people despised him. Jesus called the despised Matthew to become His disciple. Most Bible historians believe Matthew was in the Syrian city of Antioch when he wrote the Gospel of Matthew.

### **WHO AND WHERE - SPEAKER:**

Jesus is the speaker. He is by the Sea of Galilee teaching.

### **WHO AND WHERE - AUDIENCE:**

Matthew's audience was primarily Jewish. Much of his Gospel focuses on fulfilling Old Testament prophecy as a treatise to prove that Jesus is Israel's Messiah. There is no explanation of Jewish culture in his writing, and he also uses Jewish expressions. At the time of Matthew's writing, the Temple was still intact, but many Jewish people were dispersed around the Roman Empire.

### **WHAT AND WHEN:**

At the time of Jesus' teaching, Israel was under the rule of the Roman Empire. Jewish people were eagerly awaiting the Messiah to free them from

Roman rule. Jesus did not come as a conquering hero. He wasn't what they wanted, so the Jewish rulers rejected Him. They also felt threatened by His miracles and the crowds He drew.

Jesus was preparing to send His disciples out to minister to the Jewish people. He equipped them for ministry with His teaching, including His teaching about fear.

## **CULTURAL CONTEXT**

Jesus and the disciples were welcomed by some and rejected by the majority of the Jewish people. Persecution was on the horizon. Jesus wanted to warn the disciples about dangers and teach them to trust God for their well-being. He equipped them to be courageous - to fear God instead of man.

## **LITERARY CONTEXT**

### **GENRE:**

The literary genre is called a Gospel, or the historical narrative of the life of Jesus. Matthew narrated this Gospel because he was an eyewitness to the life and teachings of Jesus.

### **KEYWORD MEANINGS:**

FEAR - Greek word used in this passage - "Phobeo."

Definitions:

to put to flight by terrifying (to scare away)

to put to flight, to flee

to fear, be afraid

to be struck with fear, to be seized with alarm

of those startled by strange sights or occurrences

of those struck with amazement

to fear, be afraid of one

to fear (i.e., hesitate) to do something (for fear of harm)

to reverence, venerate, to treat with deference or reverential obedience

### **PASSAGE POINTS - ORIGINAL MEANING**

- Believers are called to faithfulness, not fear.

- We must not shrink back despite obstacles and circumstances that frighten us.
- Nothing can happen to us that God does not allow.

# SCRIPTURAL APPLICATION

## PRECEPT:

The specific instruction to the disciples was to be bold in their message and not to fear being rejected and persecuted by men. They could be bold because God knew everything about them and under His watchful care.

## PRINCIPLE: FEAR OF GOD

**Old Testament:** Is the principle illustrated in Scripture in the Old Testament?

“You shall fear the Lord your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear.”

Deuteronomy 10:20 ESV

In Deuteronomy 10:20, the Hebrew word for fear is “yare.” It means to fear, be afraid, stand in awe of, be awed, reverence, honor, and respect.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;  
fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Proverbs 1:7 ESV

In Proverbs 1:7, the Hebrew word for fear is “yir’ah.” It means terror, fearing, fear (of God), respect, reverence, and piety.

In both Scriptural instances, the word fear relates to man’s attitude toward God. When one understands who God is, awe, reverence, respect, and fear are proper responses to a holy God.

**New Testament:** Does the concept of fearing God transfer from the Old Testament into the New Testament?

“Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.”

2 Corinthians 7:1 ESV

The Greek word for “in the fear” is “phobo,” meaning panic, flight, fear, causing fear, and terror.

The concept of fearing God does transfer into the New Testament. Living in grace and even Jesus calling us His friends does not change the holiness of God or the necessity of holding Him in awe, reverence, and godly fear.

## **PRINCIPLE: FEAR OF MAN**

**Old Testament:** Is the principle of not fearing man evident in the Old Testament?

“...fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”  
Isaiah 41:10 ESV

In Isaiah 41:10, the Hebrew word for fear is “qal .” Its definition is to fear, revere, be afraid, stand in awe of, and be awed.

**New Testament:** In addition to Jesus addressing fear of man in the Gospels, what other Scriptures in the New Testament address not fearing man?

“...for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”  
2 Timothy 1:7 ESV

In 2 Timothy 1:17, the Greek word for fear is “deilias .” The word “deilias” means cowardice or timidity.

“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.”  
1 John 4:18 ESV

In 1 John 4:18, the Greek word is “phobos .” It means fear, terror, alarm, or fright.

What do we know about the fear of man from the Old and New Testaments?

- Fear of God includes awe and reverence.

- Believers should have a holy fear of God and an understanding of His judgment of sin.
- God will strengthen us, help us, uphold us, give us courage, and free us from fear. Believers can be strong and courageous, despite the intents and actions of fallen mankind.

**PERSON:**

What do we know about the character of God that should cause righteous us to have a righteous fear of Him? Use Scripture to support why men should fear God.

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**ORIGINAL MEANING:**

Is it specific to the disciples' situation or generalized to believers? In this case, the teaching can apply to all believers everywhere who need to be bold about their faith and not fear outcomes.

There is a Scriptural principle of maintaining a holy fear of God. There is a Scriptural principle of not fearing man. A holy fear of God includes awe of His holiness and understanding of His judgment of sin. If we maintain a right relationship with God through obedience to His commands, we do not need to fear man. In the Old and New Testaments, Scripture illustrates that we are not to fear man or what man can do to us because God is sovereign. He will protect, strengthen, and free us from fear.

**WHAT WE SHARE IN COMMON:**

In both Testaments, what we learn about fear are biblical principles that apply to our lives. We have the same directive as the audiences that initially received the messages. Believers have the responsibility to fear God.

Righteous fear of God assists us in obeying Him. We share the directive not to fear man. Followers of Jesus should be godly people of courage and faith, free of fear of man.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CASE STUDY: FEAR**

You believe God has called you to serve the poor and live in the neighborhood you are serving. You have prayerfully decided to relocate your family to an inner-city neighborhood. Your wife and two children, Matthew, age nine, and Hannah, age 13, are less enthusiastic than you are. You have been talking and praying with them, explaining God's call on your life to serve less fortunate people. They are listening but not happy about your decision. Your wife and children are afraid to move to the neighborhood.

Your family has been settled in your new neighborhood for several weeks. The kids are starting to adjust, and you have been able to meet some of your neighbors. Together with your wife, you start a Bible study in your home. Word has been spreading in the neighborhood that "missionary people" have moved in, and folks are curious. In addition to the curious, some are resentful. The resentful believe that the "Jesus freaks" and "judgers" have already condemned them as sinners. These neighbors resent the "Bible thumpers" who want to "get in their business." You and your family receive mixed greetings when in your front yard, driving, at the store, etc. Some folks are friendly, and some are shouting rude messages. You are praying and asking God for wisdom.

Another week has passed. People are throwing eggs at your front windows. Kids at school are trying to trip and push Matthew and Hannah, who are really scared that someone will hurt them. You are concerned and listen, pray for them, and ask them to be patient. The next day, you notice graffiti sprayed on the front of the house "–You don't belong here – get out now!"

By now, your family is genuinely frightened. You are wrestling with mixed emotions about moving your family into the neighborhood. You remind yourself that you heard God's voice and ask God to be at work.

You're glad it's Friday - the kids won't have to face bullies tomorrow at school. That night, you wake up to a loud crash. Jumping up, you throw on a

robe and rush downstairs. Two masked, armed men confront you at gunpoint. They grab you. Before you can stop them, they grab your wife around the neck and throw her onto the couch, where she cowers. “Where’s those two kids of yours???” one of the men shouts. “What do you want from us?” you plead. “Shut up and tell me where those kids are!” he screams.

You believe the best response is an honest one. You tell the men, “They are upstairs asleep. Leave them out of this. What do you want from me???”

The men rough you and your wife up, tie you back to back, and secure you to the couch. The intruders rush upstairs, and you hear them shouting at your children. The screams of your children are haunting as the masked men beat and sexually assault them. You and your wife are helpless and can only cry....

The men finally come downstairs. After several brutal fists to your head, they warn you that your wife is next. They give her the same fist treatment and return to smash your nose, shouting, “This will teach you to move into our neighborhood! You better get the \*@\*@@\*@\*@ out before something worse happens!”

After what seems like hours, your son stumbles downstairs and shakily calls 911. Your entire family, still sobbing, is taken by ambulance to the emergency room. You all receive treatment for cuts and bruises, and your children for the sexual trauma they endured. Looking at your family, you are sick inside, devastated, and your wife is angry beyond words. She won’t make eye contact as her distraught voice accuses you, “First, you move us here, and then you tell those sexual predators where our children are! Aren’t you supposed to protect us?” Your bandaged children are still quietly weeping, suffering from shock.

You will find the Grid of Truth worksheet for fear on the following two pages. The Scriptural examination should be of Matthew 10:26-30. Include the other Scriptures listed to identify what Scripture says about God’s character regarding fear. In this instance, the “What happened,” “What did I do,” etc., should be answered by putting yourself in the case study situation.

# FIVE WHATS

WHAT ARE  
THE FACTS?

WHAT DOES  
SCRIPTURE SAY?

WHAT IS THE  
EMOTION?

WHAT DID I DO?

WHAT SHOULD  
I DO NOW?

# WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT IT?

**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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# CASE STUDY QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions:

Should you have moved your family into the neighborhood? Why or why not? Start your answer with "God's Word tells us that...."

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Does the fact that something terrible has occurred mean that you did NOT hear God's voice? Use a biblical example to support your position.

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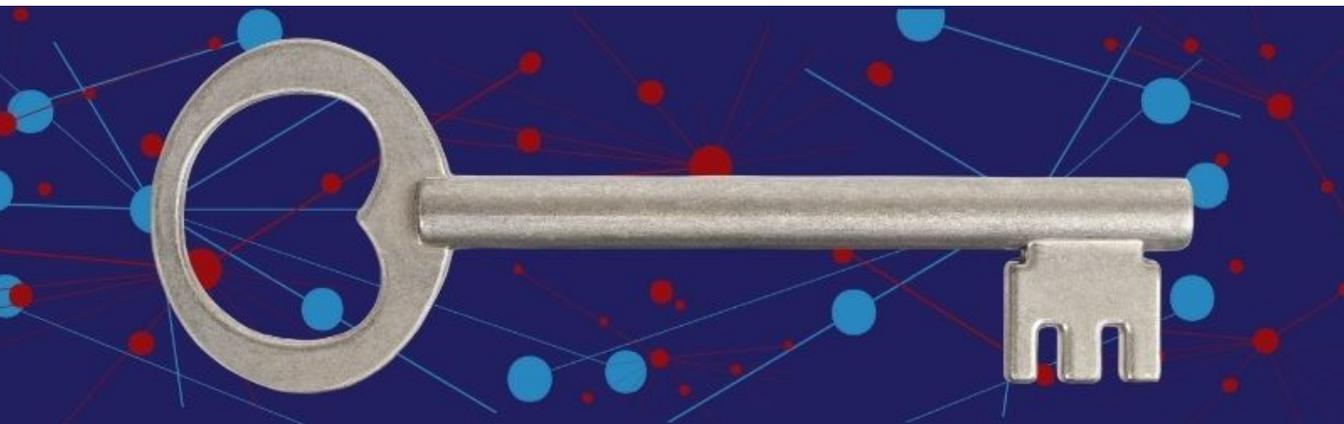












“And one of them, a lawyer,  
asked him a question to test him.  
"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment  
in the Law?"

And He said to him,  
"You shall love the Lord your God  
with all your heart and with all your soul  
and with all your mind.

This is the great and first commandment.

And a second is like it:  
You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Matthew 22:35-39

# CHAPTER 4: LOVE

In the Gospels, Jesus describes love as the greatest of all commandments. He says we fulfill all of the Law and the Prophets by loving God and our neighbor.

If these are the two most important commandments, then followers of Christ need to understand and apply them diligently to our faith journey. Let's dive in, taking a deep look at this verse.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### **WHO AND WHERE - AUTHOR:**

Matthew is the author of the Book of Matthew. He is a former Jewish tax collector. As a tax collector for the Roman Empire, he was considered a traitor to his Jewish people. The Jewish people despised him. Matthew, the tax collector, was called by the Messiah to become His disciple. Most Bible historians believe Matthew was in the Syrian city of Antioch when he wrote the Gospel of Matthew.

### **WHO AND WHERE - SPEAKER:**

Jesus is in Jerusalem for the Passover. He is teaching at the Temple.

### **WHO AND WHERE - AUDIENCE:**

Matthew's audience was primarily Jewish. Much of his Gospel focuses on fulfilling Old Testament prophecy as a treatise to prove that Jesus is Israel's Messiah. There is no explanation of Jewish culture in his writing, and he also uses Jewish expressions.

### **WHAT AND WHEN:**

The city is bursting at the seams with pilgrims who journeyed to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. While in Jerusalem, Jesus regularly taught at the Temple, drawing large crowds. The jealous Sanhedrin listened in, trying intently to catch Him teaching in error.

On this day, when Jesus came into the Temple, the chief priests and elders confronted Him, attempting to discredit Him before the crowds. They

kept pounding Him with questions, trying to trip Him up. Jesus answered each question with the wisdom and authority God gave Him. His answers already silenced the Sadducees (the Sanhedrin group that did not believe in the resurrection of the dead). The Pharisees (the group that believed in resurrection) had a lawyer, a ruler of Jewish law. They used him, attempting to get the best of Jesus by asking tricky questions about the commandments.

### **CULTURAL CONTEXT:**

The Pharisees and Sadducees were two branches of the Sanhedrin (religious rulers of Israel). The Romans permitted the Sanhedrin to remain the religious rulers of Israel even though Israel was under the secular government of the Roman Empire. The Sanhedrin had limited power to rule only on religious matters. They hoarded the little power they had and used it for their own benefit. The Sanhedrin did not have the authority to enforce the death penalty, which is what they ultimately wanted for Jesus.

The Sanhedrin's thin hold on religious power made Jesus seem a severe threat. They were jealous of the miracles Jesus performed and His growing following. They also worried that the growing belief that He was the promised Messiah could draw Roman concern about a Jewish rebellion.

## **LITERARY CONTEXT**

### **GENRE:**

The literary genre is called a Gospel. It is a historical narrative of the life of Jesus.

### **KEYWORD MEANINGS:**

We will examine the word love. The Greek word for love in this verse about loving God is "agapēseis." "Agapeseis" means to love, wish well, take pleasure in, long for, and esteem.

### **PASSAGE POINTS:**

- Love is the most important law.
- All of the Commandments are fulfilled in loving God wholeheartedly and loving our neighbor as we love ourselves.

- Our love for God and our neighbor should be rooted in esteem or respect.
- We should desire a loving relationship with both God and our neighbor.
- We should want the best for our neighbors.

# SCRIPTURAL APPLICATION

## PRECEPT:

The specific instruction to the Sanhedrin and the listening crowd was that the love of God and the love of man must come before any other priorities.

## PRINCIPLE:

Do we see the mandate to love God wholeheartedly and our neighbor in both the Old and New Testaments?

**Old Testament:** Is the principle evident?

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

Deuteronomy 6:5 ESV

In Deuteronomy 6:5, the Hebrew word “ahab” means human love for one another and God, mercy, kindness, and compassion.

“You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.”

Leviticus 19:18 ESV

In Leviticus, the Hebrew word for love is “adad,” which means “I shall move softly, I shall love.”

**New Testament:** Do the principles of loving God and one’s neighbor repeat in the New Testament?

**Love of God:**

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

John 14:15 ESV

In John 14:15, the Greek word for love is “agapate,” which means to love, wish well to, take pleasure in, and long for. State why or why not the principles of loving God and one’s neighbor repeat from the Old to the New Testaments.

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**Love of Neighbor:**

“Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”

Romans 13:10 ESV

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**PERSON:**

Is the character of God consistent with the commandment to love? What do we know about the character of God and love? Look up the Scriptures listed below and the Hebrew and Greek meanings of the word love used in

the passages. Remember that the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and the New Testament was written in Greek. What is God's character?

The love of God in the Old Testament:

“The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.”  
Exodus 34:6-7 ESV

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The love of God in the New Testament - what is God's character?:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”  
John 3:16 ESV

“This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”  
1 John 4:9-10 ESV

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## **THE OVERARCHING BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES:**

What do we know about the love of God from the Old and New Testaments?

- God's love is merciful, compassionate, and faithful.
- God loves us even when we do not love Him. He loves us regardless of our love for Him.

**Original Meaning:** Is it specific to the audience Jesus was addressing, or does it apply to all believers at all times?

The Scriptures and word meanings are very similar between the Old and New Testaments. Loving God with all of our being is the most important thing we can do to please Him. The definitions of the words used to love God are also very similar to those used to love our neighbor. When we love God, His love enables us to love our neighbor.

## **WHAT WE SHARE IN COMMON:**

Believers in the Old and New Testaments were taught that loving God is the most important commandment, followed by loving our neighbor. The audience in the Old Testament was primarily Jewish. In the New Testament, the audience included both Jews and Gentiles. These love commandments apply to us just as they did to Old and New Testament saints.

In our old nature, there are numerous times when we are called to love and simply don't want to. Loving is costly. Jesus demonstrated just how costly love can be. We don't want to recognize who our neighbor is, so we do not bear responsibility for their burdens. When we recognize our responsibility, we can find ourselves rationalizing just how much we are required to give to love our neighbor.

# CHAPTER 4

## CASE STUDY: LOVE

A married couple, Nathan and Heather, had small children, attended church regularly, and were very serious about loving God and seeking His will. They were at the church every time the doors opened with Bibles in hand. They soaked up God's Word like sponges and grew in their knowledge of His Word. As a result, their personal lives and home life began to transform, becoming more peaceful and full of joy.

At church, their children made friends with two small children the same age. Their new church friends were poorly behaved, poorly dressed, and often sick at church. They disrupted the teaching and gobbled more than their fair share of the snacks, sometimes even taking snacks away from other children. Their parents dropped the children off and never attended church themselves.

Nathan and Heather became concerned about the growing friendship, afraid that the poor behavior and germs would infect their own children. They spoke with the Bible school teacher and asked that their children be kept separated from the poorly behaved children. The Children's Church teacher looked puzzled, took a moment, and then replied that she could not keep the children separate in her class. Nathan and Heather were angry, took their children out of class, and went home.

The next day, Nathan called the pastor to express his frustration. They absolutely did not appreciate their children being put at risk while at church. Nathan told the pastor they intended to leave the church if their request was not granted. He emphasized that they regularly attended classes and services and were substantial tithers who invested heavily in the new church building project.

The Grid of Truth worksheet for love will be found on the following two pages.

# FIVE WHATS

WHAT ARE  
THE FACTS?

WHAT DOES  
SCRIPTURE SAY?

WHAT IS THE  
EMOTION?

WHAT DID I DO?

WHAT SHOULD  
I DO NOW?

# WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT IT?

**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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What should they do now? Start your answer with "God's Word tells us..."

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## **YOUR PERSONAL APPLICATION**

In what ways do you love God wholeheartedly?

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In what ways do you need to grow in loving God wholeheartedly?

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In what ways do you love your neighbor as yourself?

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In what ways do you need to grow in loving your neighbor as yourself?

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In what ways will you commit to growing in your love for God and your love for your neighbor?

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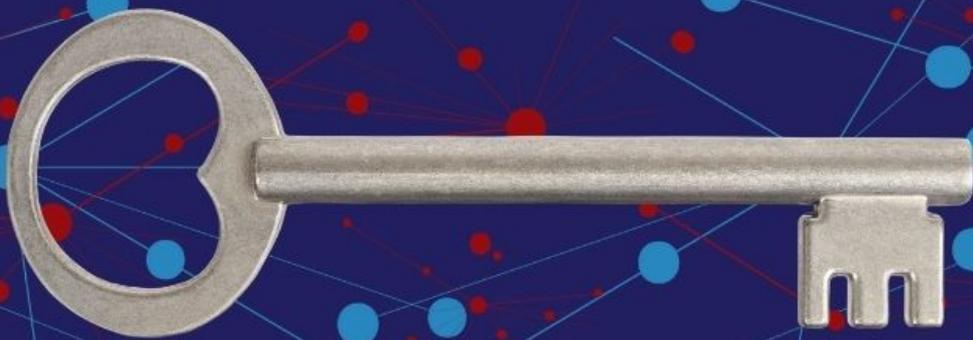
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Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.

Let your gentleness be evident to all.

The Lord is near.

Do not be anxious about anything,  
but in every situation, by prayer and petition,  
with thanksgiving,

present your requests to God.

And the peace of God,  
which transcends all understanding,  
will guard your hearts and your minds  
in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters,  
whatever is true, whatever is noble,  
whatever is right, whatever is pure,  
whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable  
—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—  
think about such things.

Whatever you have learned or received  
or heard from me, or seen in me  
—put it into practice.

And the God of peace will be with you.”

Philippians 4:4-9 ESV

# CHAPTER 5: ANXIETY

Anxiety is a common emotion for many people, particularly those with no margins. By a margin, I mean a buffer. Buffers can come in many forms. For example, a fast-paced urban lifestyle for a working mother can mean no downtime to rest or regroup before the next week's onslaught of responsibilities. This lifestyle contributes to constant low-grade stress levels that manifest in exhaustion, depression, or a short temper.

Another common cause of anxiety is financial stress. There is no financial buffer should an emergency arise, or perhaps income simply does not stretch far enough to meet all needs.

Relationships can create anxiety. Conflict in relationships at home, on the job, or even in a church can create anxiety.

In other settings, even weather can cause anxiety. A severe storm, tornado, and draught have serious consequences. The lack of safety in our environment is another cause of anxiety, as we wonder if we are safe walking the streets, going to bed at night, or allowing our children to play outside.

Living in a fallen world has many hazards. The Apostle Paul had a multitude of reasons to be anxious. He was stoned and left for dead. He was ostracized, imprisoned, shipwrecked, bitten by a viper, had two jobs, multiple churches he provided oversight to, and the list goes on.

Paul wrote explicitly about anxiety in his letter to the church at Philippi. We are going to look intently at his message.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### WHO AND WHERE - AUTHOR:

The Apostle Paul wrote the letter. Paul was a very well-educated Jewish man who also had Roman citizenship. He was educated in Jerusalem and spent his early adult years persecuting Christians. After Jesus' ascension to Heaven, He got Saul's attention (he was named Paul after conversion) by knocking him off his horse. He blinded Paul and told him to stop persecuting

believers. Jesus called the Apostle Paul specifically to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles (non-Jewish nations).

### **WHO AND WHERE - AUDIENCE:**

The Christians in Philippi were primarily poor and were a mix of races, cultures, and social classes. Jewish believers were also a part of this church and, although smaller in number, exerted a great deal of influence. The first converts were upper-class women.

### **WHERE AND WHEN:**

Most scholars believe that Paul wrote the letter to the church in Philippi around 60-62 AD while imprisoned in Rome. The letter to the church would have been received in Philippi and circulated among other Asian churches.

## **CULTURAL CONTEXT**

The literary genre is called an epistle. It is a letter of specific instructions inspired by the Holy Spirit and penned by the Apostle Paul.

### **KEYWORD MEANINGS:**

**We will look at several keywords in this passage about freedom from anxiety.**

**Rejoice** - The Greek word used in this passage for rejoice is “chairō,” pronounced (hah’ ro). It means to rejoice, be glad, and thrive.

**Moderation** - The Greek word is “epieikes,” pronounced (ep-p-a-kase’). It means to be equitable, fair, and gentle.

**Anxious** - The Greek word for anxious is “merimnaō,” pronounced (mer-im-nah’-o). It means anxious or troubled by cares.

**Prayer** - The Greek word used in this passage for prayer is “proseuche,” pronounced (pros-yoo-khay’). It means prayer addressed to God.

**Thanksgiving** - The Greek word Paul used here for thanksgiving is “eucharistia,” pronounced (yoo-khar-is-tee’-ah). It means the giving of thanks.

**Peace** - “Eirene” is the Greek word pronounced (a-ray’-nay). It is a beautiful description of a tranquil soul assured of salvation that fears nothing

from God. This soul is content with an earthly lot of whatever sort. It also means security, safety, prosperity, and felicity.

**Keep** - “Phroureo,” pronounced (froo-reh’-o), is the Greek word Paul chose, which means to guard, protect, watch, and preserve.

**Think** - The Greek word is “logizomai,” pronounced (log-id’zom-ahee). It means to reckon inward, count up or weigh reasons, consider, weigh, mediate, judge, determine, purpose, decide.

**Practice** - Practice is the final keyword we will look at in this passage. The Greek word is “prasso,” pronounced (pras’-so). It means to exercise, practice, be busy with, carry on, perform, and act.

**PASSAGE POINTS:**

- When we give our concerns to God, He will give us His peace that is not dependent upon our circumstances.
- God is sovereign, knows our needs in every situation, and will provide as we move forward with His Kingdom work.
- When we think the right thoughts and act in obedience to God’s Word, we enjoy God’s presence and peace.

## **SCRIPTURAL APPLICATION:**

**ORIGINAL MEANING:** Is it specific to the audience Paul was addressing, or does it apply to all believers everywhere at all times? Why or why not?

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**PRECEPT:** The specific instruction of this passage to the church in Philippi was:

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**PRINCIPLE:** It becomes a principle if we see the same instruction in the Old and New Testaments and multiple places in Scripture. (Example: not just one verse in the Old Testament used to address one situation).

**Old Testament:** is the principle evident? Write down Old Testament Scriptures that address this topic and the Hebrew keyword definitions.

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**New Testament:** Do the principles of not being anxious and trusting God apply elsewhere in the New Testament? Write down other New Testament Scriptures that address this topic and the Greek keyword definitions.

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**PERSON:**

**The Character of God:** What do we know about the character of God regarding why we don't have to be anxious?

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**WHAT WE SHARE IN COMMON**

Believers in both the Old and New Testaments wrestled with anxious thoughts. In each passage of Scripture, we learn that God already knows everything about us. Every circumstance, need, and concern. He promises that if we bring our concerns to Him, He will give us His peace and provision as we faithfully serve Him.

**The Overarching Biblical Principle:** What do we know about God's instruction regarding anxiety from the Old and New Testaments?

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# CHAPTER 5

## CASE STUDY: ANXIETY

You and your spouse have three kids, all in school. You both work full-time jobs. You have been working three jobs - one during the weekday, one in the evenings. You also drive for Uber on the weekends to make sure ends meet. Now, the gas prices are so high that it hardly makes sense to drive for Uber, and the prices of groceries are also increasing. You know you can't handle a fourth job but don't know what else to do.

The kids have been out of school all summer. Luckily, your spouse has been working remotely, which also saved on gas. Your spouse had to return to work at the company office, but it worked out because in-person school just started up again.

This week, you received a call from the school. They are going back to remote learning due to a new COVID variant. There is no flexibility with your schedule or your spouse's, and definitely no money for a tutor or childcare. The kids are extremely upset about losing another year of being at school, and the oldest one is really acting out. Everyone is stressed out.

It's midnight, and even though you are exhausted, you can't sleep. Your mind keeps turning over scenarios like a deck of playing cards, trying to figure out solutions. None seem to present themselves. One of the kids is rustling, and you go to check. It's the youngest, your first-grader. Her cheeks are flushed, so you take her temperature. It is 104°! She needs to go to the emergency room, but the checking account is empty, and the credit cards are maxed out.

The stress levels are so high that your mind feels like a ticking time bomb with no way to stop the explosion. In this lose-lose scenario, how do you keep your heart and mind in perfect peace?

On the following two pages, you will find the Grid of Truth worksheet for anxiety. The Scriptural examination should be of Philippians 4:4-9. Bring in the other Scriptures listed to identify what Scripture says about the examples of God's character regarding anxiety and His specific instruction about not being anxious.

# FIVE WHATS

WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT IS THE  
EMOTION?

WHAT TRIGGERED  
MY RESPONSE?

WHAT SHOULD  
I DO NOW?

WHAT SCRIPTURE  
TO MEMORIZE?

WHAT IS MY  
ROADMAP?

# WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT IT?

**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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# CASE STUDY QUESTIONS:

Can you change your circumstances?

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Can you change the way you think about your circumstances?

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Outline the steps to align your emotions, thoughts, and actions with Scripture.

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# PERSONAL APPLICATION

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What makes you anxious, stressed, lose your peace, etc.?

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What triggers the emotion?

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What does Scripture say about the emotions?

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What Scriptures can you memorize to help you move forward to freedom from anxiety?

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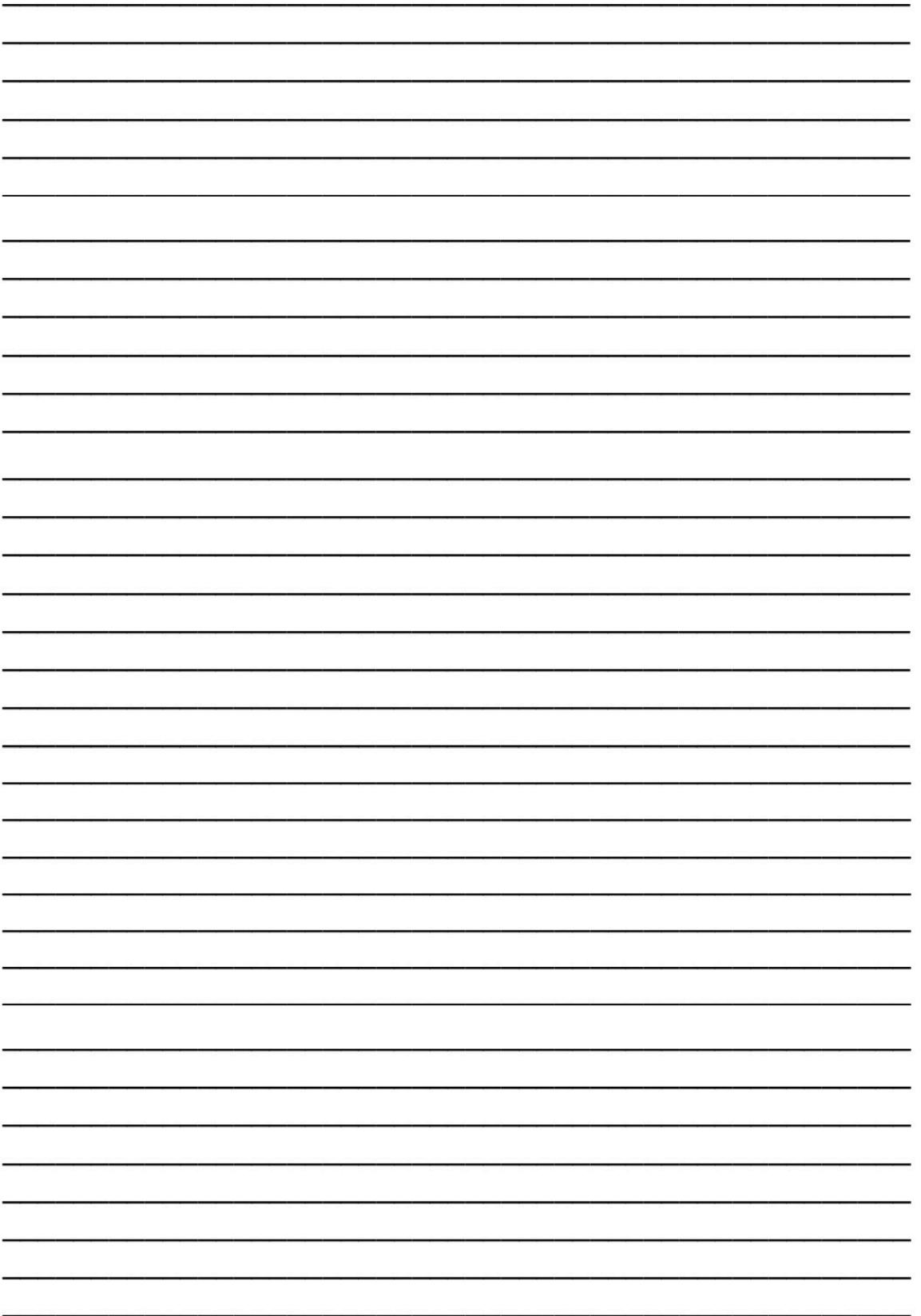
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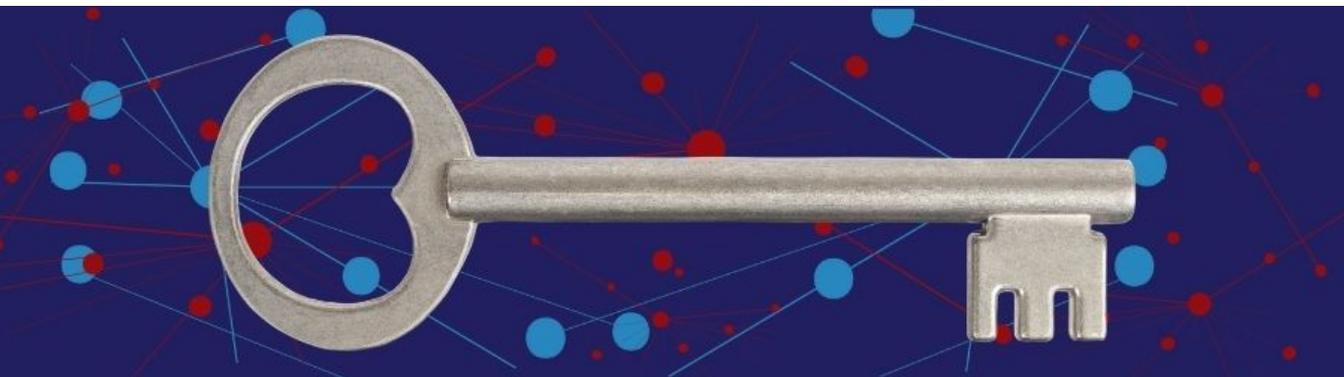
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“Do not love the world  
or the things in the world.  
If anyone loves the world,  
the love of the Father is not in him.  
For all that is in the world  
-the desires of the flesh  
and the desires of the eyes  
and pride in possessions  
--is not from the Father  
but is from the world.”  
And the world is passing away,  
and the lust of it;  
but he who does the will  
of God abides forever.

1 John 2:15-17 ESV

# CHAPTER 6: LUST

A modern-day understanding of the topic of lust would most likely revolve around sexual issues. Sexual lust has unfortunately poisoned present-day society. There are also many efforts to poison our children with the same plague.

While church-going, Bible-believing Christians might be hesitant to admit a struggle with lust, it is woven into the fabric of most cultures. The Apostle John expands the understanding of lust in his letter to the churches in Asia.

In 1 John 2:16, John specifically identifies sexual lust, coveting material possessions, and an ungodly longing for power or position in the world. John challenges the believers to stop loving the things of the temporal world. God's people are to focus on loving and serving the risen Savior. He stressed the urgency of the hour and the nearness of the rise of the Antichrist. Followers of Christ must be about His business during each person's fleeting time on earth.

The call for Christians to be in the world but not of it is one that serious followers of Jesus need to heed. Governments and societies are growing increasingly antagonistic toward the Christian faith. Believers must be willing to cling to and stand up for the truth of God's Word despite the consequences. In the darkening, deceptive times we find ourselves in, Christians must be equipped with God's Word in the same way the Apostle Paul encouraged Timothy:

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15 ESV

As we address the struggle with lust, using the biblical process of rightly handling the Word of Truth will be of utmost priority. Every follower of Jesus is a worker in His kingdom. As workers, we strive diligently to handle His Word with great care. Applying it correctly to our lives allows us to share its freeing power with those around us.

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

## WHO AND WHERE - AUTHOR

Author of the Epistle - the Apostle John wrote 1 John. He is the author of the Gospel of John, 1, 2, 3 Epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation. John most likely wrote the first epistle of John from Ephesus before his exile to the island of Patmos.

## WHO AND WHERE - AUDIENCE

The Apostle John wrote his letter to believers. He writes with the authority of an Apostle and embraces his fatherly role, writing to “my little children.” John does not mention any names of church leaders, people serving, or specific locations. Because it does not include specifics, John likely wrote the letter to circulate to numerous churches. John would have been familiar with the churches in Asia that he writes to in the Book of Revelation from the many years he spent living in Ephesus after the fall of Jerusalem. 1 John was likely written to the churches in Asia.

## WHAT AND WHEN:

The letter was likely around AD 90, after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, and before the writing of Revelation.

# CULTURAL CONTEXT

John’s readers were vulnerable to new, deceptive teaching. Gnosticism combined Eastern mysticism with Greek dualism (believing that the body was bad and the mind was good). Consequently, John recognized the dangers. Gnosticism in full bloom would mean that people could do whatever they pleased with their bodies and keep their minds pure. With this concern, he addresses the love for this world and the topic of lust in 1 John 2:15-17.

# LITERARY CONTEXT

## GENRE:

The literary genre is called an epistle. It is a letter of specific instructions inspired by the Holy Spirit and penned by the Apostle John.

### **KEYWORD MEANINGS:**

**Lust:** The Greek word in this passage is “epithumia,” pronounced (ep-ee-thoo-mee’-ah). It means a desire, craving, longing, and desire for what is forbidden.

**World:** The Greek word used in this passage is “kos’-mos,” and it means the ungodly multitude, the whole mass of men alienated from God and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ, world affairs, the aggregate of things earthly, the whole circle of earthly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, etc., which although hollow and frail and fleeting, stir desire, seduce from God and are obstacles to the cause of Christ.

**Flesh** - The Greek word used in this passage is “sarx.” It means the sensual nature of man, “the animal nature,” with cravings that incite sin. It refers to the flesh, denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God.

**Eyes** -The Greek word in this passage is “ophthalmos,” pronounced (of-thal-mos’). It is a metaphor referencing the eyes of the mind or the faculty of knowing.

**Pride:** The Greek word used in this passage is “a,” pronounced (al-ad-zon-aye (A)’ -a). Its definition is empty, braggart talk, an insolent and empty assurance that trusts its own power and resources. It shamefully despises and violates divine laws and human rights. It is an impious and empty presumption that trusts in the stability of earthy things.

**Life:** The Greek word used in this passage is “bee’-os .”It means life - life extensively, the period or course of life, that by which life is sustained, resources, wealth, goods.

### **PASSAGE POINTS**

- Believers should not live according to the flesh, separating belief and faith from day-to-day living and actions.
- A believer is not of this world and cannot live according to the desires of the world and the fallen nature.



one verse in the Old Testament used to address one situation).

**Old Testament:** - is the principle evident? Write down Old Testament Scriptures that address this topic and the Hebrew keyword definitions.

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**New Testament:** Do the principles of refusing to lust apply elsewhere in the New Testament? Write down other New Testament Scriptures that address this topic and the Greek keyword definitions.

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**WHAT WE SHARE IN COMMON:**

Believers in both the Old and New Testaments wrestled with lust. As a result of our fallen human nature, we are all tempted in many ways. In each passage of Scripture, we learn that God calls us to obedience. He calls us to love Him and prioritize His eternal kingdom values above all this broken world can offer.

“But the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.”

Mark 4:19 ESV

**The Character of God** – What do we know about the character of God regarding lust? Was our fully God, fully man Savior tempted? How did He respond? (Matthew 4:1-11)

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**The Overarching Biblical Principle:** Knowing how Jesus responded to the temptations of lust, how should we respond?

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# CHAPTER 6

## CASE STUDY: LUST

Justin has been a Christian for five years. He is married, his wife is a believer, and they have two children, one nine months old and the other three years old. Justin grew up in a single-parent household, raised by his mother. They struggled financially, and Justin had to start working young. He struggled financially and got tired of minimum-wage jobs that kept his family scraping by.

Despite the financial struggles, he and his wife attended church, were involved in Bible study groups, tithed faithfully, and maintained close friendships within the church. Justin launched his own construction business three years ago, and his income skyrocketed. They built a custom home, bought luxury cars, a second home by the ocean, and even a private plane. Life was good, and they enjoyed what they believed to be God's blessing for their financial faithfulness. In year four, inflation hit hard, and the new home build market tanked. Justin lost over two-thirds of his clients, and once again, they struggled to pay the bills. This time, however, the bills were much larger than before. He worked longer hours than ever, often late into the evening and all weekend long.

He cut out church and Bible study to keep his business afloat. He quit tithing because they needed the money to pay the bills. He and his wife frequently argued about his long work hours, time away from the family, and lack of church involvement. Justin was extremely stressed out but didn't want to worry his wife, so he hid the information from her. For the next year, they lived on credit.

In year five, he had maxed out the equity in their home and the credit on their cards. At night, he couldn't sleep. After his wife went to bed, he began drinking heavily. His mind wouldn't calm down until he had more than a few shots of whiskey. With his mind finally dulled, he began watching pornography late into the night as a distraction, he told himself. He loved his wife, and this had nothing to do with her.

However, the tension mounted between them as he began to unravel emotionally and physically. He finally asked his wife to cut back on spending on the children but didn't tell her the whole story. They argued heavily over

finances, and the coldness between them grew.

Justin's personal assistant was a young, attractive college graduate. Unknown to Justin, when not at work, she partied hard, using drugs to take her mind off the stress at work. One Friday, after working later in the evening, Justin and his assistant decided to go for drinks before Justin went home. Three hours later, Justin was at her apartment and in her bed. He stumbled home at 1 am to find his wife waiting for him. All hell broke loose. The truth came out, and Justin was kicked out. His wife filed divorce papers immediately. Ultimately, he found himself divorced, lost his business, and declared bankruptcy.

The Grid of Truth worksheet for lust is on the following two pages. The Scriptural examination should be of 1 John 2:15-17. Bring in the other Scriptures listed to identify what Scripture says about the examples of God's character regarding lust and His specific instruction about the topic. Use what you have learned to complete the worksheet. In this instance, the "What happened," "What did I do," etc., should be answered by putting yourself in the case study situation.

# FIVE WHATS

WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT IS THE  
EMOTION?

WHAT TRIGGERED  
MY RESPONSE?

WHAT SHOULD  
I DO NOW?

WHAT SCRIPTURE  
TO MEMORIZE?

WHAT IS MY  
ROADMAP?

# WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT IT?

**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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# CASE STUDY QUESTIONS:

Identify Justin's temptations from a spiritual perspective.

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Describe the sequence of Justin's mistakes and their relationship to each other.

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Describe the decision points where he should have turned back.  
Identify the steps Justin needs to take now.

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# PERSONAL APPLICATION

What are your areas of weakness regarding lust?

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What are your triggers in this struggle?

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What potential situations could lead to poor decision-making regarding lust?

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What does Scripture say about this struggle? Write out the Scriptures.

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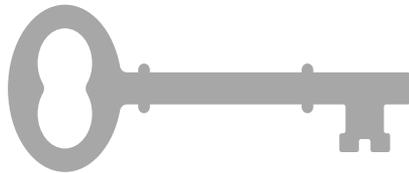
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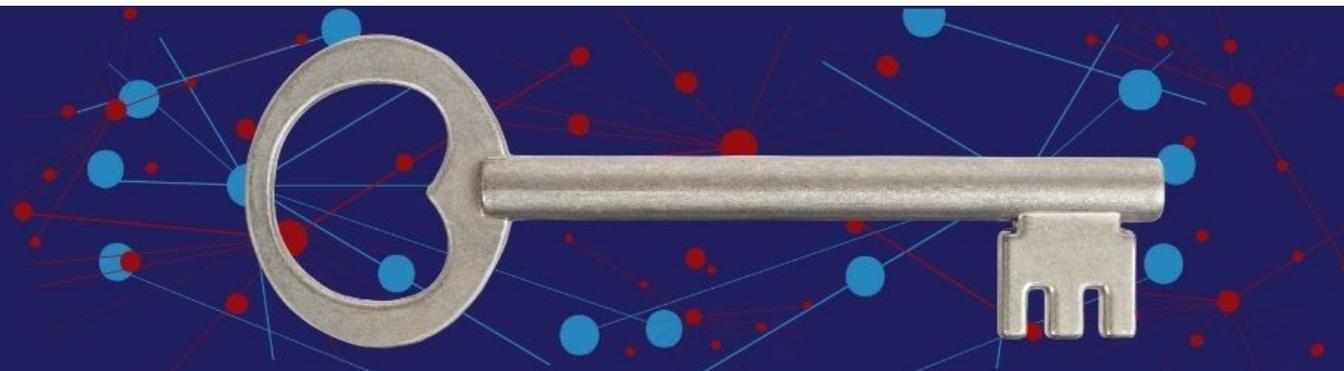
## **YOUR BIBLICAL ROADMAP TO FREEDOM**

What is your biblical action plan to to victoriously overcome lust? Include Scripture and practical steps. Write out the practical steps of your biblical roadmap to freedom from lust. It could include something like this:

- 1) Ask the Holy Spirit to make me aware of when I am beginning to struggle.
- 2) When I become aware of the emotion, I will stop and pray, reciting the Scripture I have memorized about God's plan to meet my needs.
- 3) I will examine the situation to see if there are practical steps I should take.
- 4) I will take the lustful thoughts and replace them with God's Truth.







“So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.

And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.”

Genesis 1:27-31 ESV

# CHAPTER 7: GENDER IDENTITY

Gender identity, or gender fluidity, is a hot topic in many modern-day societies. It has people in the workplace, places of worship, schools, and kitchen tables discussing the movement towards gender fluidity. It is a heated topic because it has touched so many lives in some way or another.

In many countries, the definition of gender identity has come to mean an individual's personal sense of their gender and the social identity a person creates around that perception. Regardless of biological characteristics, people choose their gender identity from numerous options based on their feelings. Many corporations now require employees to include gender identity in their signature line.

In other countries, any variation of gender identity from one's biological sex or any sexual behavior outside of one's biological sex is a crime met with legal punishment. In some countries, capital punishment is the sentence for criminal sexual behavior.

Sex education curriculum in some countries' public school systems includes teaching children to explore their gender identity to choose their gender preference. Parental rights regarding gender reassignment surgery are now a legal battle in various states in the U.S., with some states even permitting gender reassignment surgery for minors without parental permission.

Numerous church denominations have updated their bylaws to permit same-sex marriages. The premise for broadening the definition of marriage between a man and a woman includes love, inclusivity, and a liberal interpretation of Scripture. Ordination of transgender clergy is now permitted as well in various denominations.

Regardless of one's position on gender identity, processing gender identity through the Grid of Truth will equip us with God's perspective. We will examine our personal beliefs, those of people we love and those we need to love, in some depth to respond biblically and lovingly to this challenging social issue. Followers of Jesus must equip themselves with an understanding of God's Word in context and then faithfully move it forward with the heart of Jesus into modern-day challenges.

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

## **WHO AND WHERE - AUTHOR:**

Author of Genesis - Moses is the author of Genesis. He wrote the first five books of the Bible (called the Pentateuch). Moses wrote the book while in the wilderness of the Sinai desert.

## **WHO AND WHERE - AUDIENCE:**

Moses wrote the book for the Israelites that he led out of captivity in Egypt and the Israelites who survived the Exodus to enter the Promised Land.

## **WHAT AND WHEN:**

Moses wrote Genesis sometime in the fifteenth century, between 1450 and 1500 BC. Moses wrote the book in preparation for the children of Israel to enter the land God promised them. Idolatrous cultures and people occupied the land. The children of Israel needed to understand their God-given identity and heritage as His chosen people.

# CULTURAL CONTEXT

God had called Moses to lead the Israelites from captivity. The Book of Exodus tells us that 600,000 men plus women and children followed Moses out of Egypt. The Egyptians had enslaved these people for over four centuries. They suffered brutal treatment and endured harsh physical labor. To prevent Hebrew children from being born, the male slaves were not permitted to return home to their wives at the end of their workdays. They were beaten down and hopeless. The Hebrew wives knew their husbands needed them, so they snuck into the fields where they were laboring. They fed them, loved them, and conceived their children there amid hopeless conditions, breathing new life back into their husbands.<sup>1</sup>

By the time Moses led the children of Israel out of captivity, their impoverished minds and hearts needed restoration and to remember that God had not forgotten them. God's plans for the children of Israel had not changed - they were for their good. Following His order for their lives would

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved April 11, 2022 from: <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/the-women-of-egypt-in-those-days-and-in-our-times-624743>

keep them safe and blessed. Moses reminds the Israelites in the chronicling of Creation that everything God made is good!

## LITERARY CONTEXT

### GENRE:

The literary genre of Genesis is called a historical narrative. Moses compiled the history of the Jewish people from ancient sources. With the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Genesis was written to give God's chosen people an understanding of God the Creator and their calling as His creation. Remember, God Himself gave the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written by His own hand directly to Moses!

### KEYWORD MEANINGS:

**God:** The Hebrew word used in this passage is "Elohim," and it is the first word used in the Bible as the name of God. In this context, Elohim is the God of Creation.

**Man:** The Hebrew word used in this passage is "man," pronounced (hā-ā'-dām), and it means man or mankind.

**Image -** The Hebrew word used in this passage is "tselem." It means likeness or resemblance.

**Female:** The Hebrew word in this passage is "neqebah," pronounced (nek-ay-baw'). The definition is female.

**Blessed:** The Hebrew word in this passage is "barak," pronounced (baw-rak'). Its definition is to kneel, to bless, abundantly bless.

**Fruitful:** The Hebrew word is "parah," pronounced (paw-raw'). It means to bear fruit, be fruitful, and flourish.

**Multiply:** The Hebrew word in this passage is "rabah," pronounced (raw-baw'). It means to be or become much, many, or great.

### PASSAGE POINTS

- God created mankind in His likeness - what a priceless gift!

- He created two distinct types of humans - male and female as His natural order for the world He created.
- Both the male and female were blessed by God, indicating His intention for them to flourish.
- The male and female God created (Adam and Eve) were given the responsibility to flourish and become many.
- Adam and Eve were to be stewards of the earth God created and multiply by having children.

## **SCRIPTURAL APPLICATION:**

### **ORIGINAL MEANING:**

Is the creation of two distinct types of humans applicable only to Israelite history? Why or why not?

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### **PRECEPT:**

Why is the history of God creating both male and female with responsibilities essential to the Israelites at this time in history?

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**PRINCIPLE:**

**Old Testament:** is the principle of God’s creation being distinctly male and female evident? Write down Old Testament Scriptures that address the topic and the Hebrew keyword definitions. Example below:

Genesis 2:22, “And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.”

Keyword: the man. Hebrew word: “ha-adam.”

Definition: man, mankind, Adam, the first man

Keyword: a woman. Hebrew word: “leissah.” Definition: woman, wife, female

Scripture:

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Keyword:

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Definition:

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**New Testament:** Is God’s natural order of creation of distinctly male and female humans evident in the New Testament? Write down other New Testament Scriptures that address this topic and the Greek keyword definitions. Example below:

“For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.”

Romans 1:26-27 ESV

Keyword: dishonorable. Greek word: “atimias”  
Definition: Disgrace, dishonor; a dishonorable use.

Keyword: passions. Greek word: “pathē.”  
Definition: Suffering, emotion, depraved passion, lust.

Keyword: natural. Greek word: “physikēn.”  
Definition: Natural, (a) according to nature.

Scripture:

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Keyword:

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**PERSON:**

**The Character of God:** What do we know about who, how, and why God created mankind?

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**WHAT WE SHARE IN COMMON:**

God created the world, and all that is in it. When He created mankind, two specific types of humans - male and female, were formed. God blessed each type of human with unique characteristics to complement the other type of human. God blessed His creation, declared it good, and intended for males and females to flourish as they ruled over His good creation together. His Creation was not just for the Jewish people. Add your thoughts to what we share in common with the audiences of the Scriptures identified to examine sexuality and gender identity.

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**The Overarching Biblical Principle** - Knowing God’s original intent for His creation of mankind, how do we biblically respond to the issue of gender identity?

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# CHAPTER 7

## CASE STUDY: GENDER IDENTITY

Your recently divorced friend from Bible study asked to have coffee with you. While visiting, the conversation turned to children. Your friend's seven-year-old boy is struggling at school. He is small for his age and gets picked on a lot by bigger boys in his class. He now prefers to play with the girls, where he feels safer and more welcome. Recently, he returned from school and asked for different clothes to be more like his friends. When asked what new clothes he wanted, he requested dresses instead of pants. He also asked if he could grow his hair long.

Your friend reassured him that he was terrific just the way he was and that, for right now, his clothes still fit and were just fine for school. After the clothing change request, your friend started finding hair bows stuffed in backpack pockets and then a little love note written to one of the boys in the class. Alarmed, your friend met with the school counselor, who provided brochures about gender identity. The counselor stressed the need for children to identify their genders based on personal feelings and the necessity of parents to support their children's own gender choices.

Your friend is troubled and does not know how to best provide the love and support needed in the situation. Before you answer the specific case study questions, complete The Grid of Truth Worksheet.

On the following two pages, you will find the Grid of Truth worksheet for gender identity. The Scriptural examination should be of Genesis 1:27-31. Include the other Scriptures listed to identify what Scripture says about gender identity. Use what you have learned to complete the worksheet. In this instance, the "What happened," "What did I do," etc., should be answered by putting yourself in the case study situation.

# FIVE WHATS

WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT IS THE  
EMOTION?

WHAT TRIGGERED  
MY RESPONSE?

WHAT SHOULD  
I DO NOW?

WHAT SCRIPTURE  
TO MEMORIZE?

WHAT IS MY  
ROADMAP?

# WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT IT?

**VERSE:**

**PRINCIPLE:**

**VERSE:**

**PRINCIPLE:**

# CASE STUDY QUESTIONS:

You are asked to provide your input. What would you say, and how would you say it? Provide biblical support for the framework of how you should respond. Answer the questions below to help you develop a biblical, loving, and wise response.

Describe the sequence of circumstances and events that have led to the seven-year-old boy's identity struggles.

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Do the circumstances and events change the counsel you are providing to your friend about gender identity? Why or why not?

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Are there circumstances that can change to provide loving, biblical support?

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Identify the steps you recommend your friend take to provide the love and support needed in this challenging circumstance.

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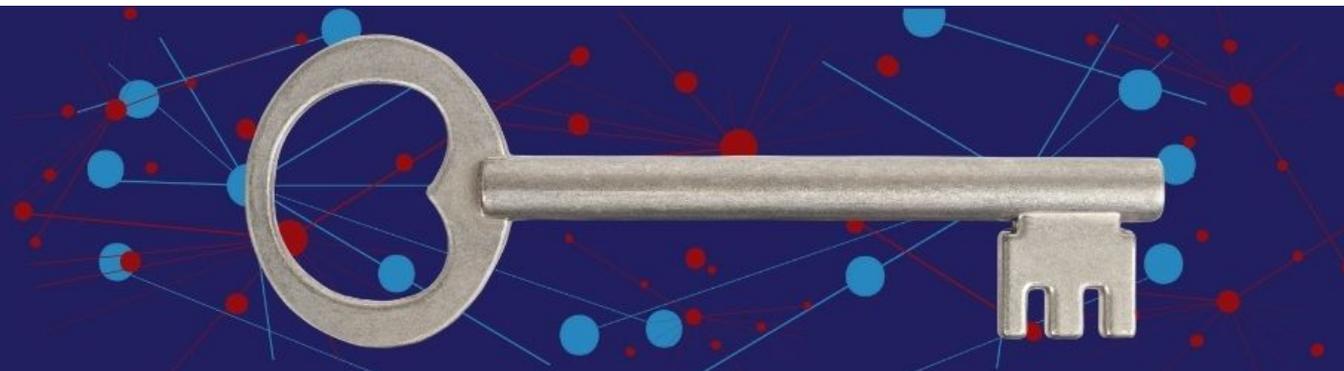
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“When the righteous cry for help,  
the Lord hears and delivers them  
out of all their troubles.

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted  
and saves the crushed in spirit.”

Psalm 34:17-18 ESV

# CHAPTER 8: GRIEF

Grief can suck the oxygen right out of your lungs and collapse your body at the knees. Some days, it feels like your legs are swept out from underneath you by vast waves of grief and that the undertow is carrying you out to sea. Finding solid footing is impossible, and there is no way to stand up underneath the weight.

There are many reasons for grief - death, divorce, addiction, serious illness or injury, and even the loss of long-held dreams or aspirations cause grief. The list goes on and on. We live in a fallen world where sin and sickness take a toll, and grief is unavoidable.

The emotion of grief can be further complicated by feelings of blame, guilt, and anger, keeping you trapped in a cycle of self-accusation. In other instances, you might endlessly rehearse the circumstances that caused the loss over and over, leaving you trapped in a cycle of pain.

While grief is an unavoidable experience in this life and a normal, appropriate response to loss, we do not have to be destroyed by it. The third chapter of Ecclesiastes speaks of the seasons and times for every matter under Heaven. King Solomon, the wisest man who has ever lived, tells us that there is a time to be born and a time to die. He also tells us that there is a time to weep and a time to laugh, as well as a time to mourn and a time to dance.

King David reminds us in Psalm 34:17-18 that when we cry out to God for help, He will be near to us when our hearts are broken and save us when our spirits are crushed. Have you ever gone through an incredibly difficult season and looked back wondering, "How did I ever get through that?". In these times, our gracious Heavenly Father picks us up in His strong arms, holds us close in comfort, and carries us through the storm of grief.

Let's tackle the topic of grief to build a biblical roadmap to healing. Grieving, or mourning, as King Solomon refers to it, is a part of the healing process. Still, as the wisest man that ever lived told us, there is a time for it, and then there is a time for laughing and dancing. Our Lord's plan is to heal our hearts and restore our joy.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### WHO AND WHERE - AUTHOR:

Author of Psalm 34 - David, son of Jesse, is the author of Psalm 34

## **WHO AND WHERE - AUDIENCE:**

David was fleeing from King Saul, who was jealous and wanted to kill him. He left his home, family, friends, and nation to find refuge in dangerous Philistine territory. He lost everything. The beautiful future of becoming the next king of Israel became a distant dream.

Unfortunately, the servants of King Achish (Abimilech) of Gath recognized him. It was life-threatening because David had killed their hero - Goliath (of Gath). It probably didn't help that he was walking around with Goliath's giant sword! Instead of trusting the prophecy and promises of God, David lied about his identity to save his life. He pretended to be insane before King Abimilech to avoid being recognized or harmed. After escaping, he hid out in the cave of Adullam. It was here that Israel's distressed, indebted, and discontent came to him, and David became their commander. David penned this psalm in thankfulness for God hearing his cry, despite his lack of faith, and for rescuing him for the sake of his new followers. Read more about the circumstances in 1 Samuel 21-22.

## **WHAT AND WHEN:**

David was a young man when the prophet Samuel anointed him to succeed Saul as King of Israel. This did not take place immediately. David was called into King Saul's service, where he served for approximately eight years. King Saul became jealous of David's popularity. He viewed David as a threat to the throne and the successive reign of his son, Ishbaal. David fled after Saul tried to skewer him to the wall with a spear (1 Samuel 19). He spent the next year and a half hiding in dangerous Philistine territory because Saul's men were hunting to kill him. Psalm 34 was written by the broken-hearted man called to be the king of Israel. Instead, he lost his family, home, employment, and ascension to the throne of Israel. Historians estimate that this took place approximately 1018 - 1011 BC.

## **CULTURAL CONTEXT**

God intended the nation of Israel to be a theocracy - governed by the priesthood that God Himself instructed. The people of Israel clamored for a

king as they feared the Philistines and had forgotten their history of God's faithful provision and protection. Samuel rebuked the Israelites for rejecting God as their King and protector, but the Israelites would not listen to Samuel. The Lord gave them what they wanted. He directed Samuel to appoint Saul - a tall, handsome, wealthy young man. The people rejoiced with their new king, who had some temporary victories over surrounding armies.

At the next Philistine attack, Saul brazenly assumed the role of a priest. He presented an offering to keep the people's loyalty. The Israelites' disobedience and Saul's disobedience caused suffering, and the Lord removed Saul's kingdom. The culture of disobedience and unfaithfulness sets the stage for God's choice of David and Saul's jealousy. The Israelites had forgotten that God was their King, deliverer, protector, and provider. When the Israelites abandoned their trusting relationship, all manner of calamities descended upon the nation. David, the shepherd king, wrote Psalm 34 during a chaotic time of war to people who had lost their way.

## LITERARY CONTEXT

### GENRE:

The literary genre of Psalm 34 is a psalm. This psalm was written as a praise song to celebrate the God who shelters and comforts the lowly and broken-hearted.

### KEYWORD MEANINGS:

**Cry:** The Hebrew word used in this passage is "tsa'aq". In this context, it means to cry for help, to cry out in distress or need, to cry aloud in grief.<sup>[1]</sup>

**Hears:** The Hebrew word in this passage is "shama'," pronounced (shaw-mah'). In this context, it means to hear with attention and perception, to understand.<sup>[2]</sup>

**Delivers:** The Hebrew word in this passage is "natsal," pronounced (naw-tsal'). In this context, it means to rescue, recover, deliver from enemies, troubles, or death, and deliver from sin and guilt.<sup>[3]</sup>

**All:** The Hebrew word in this passage is "kol," pronounced (kole). Its definition in this context is each, anything, everything.<sup>[4]</sup>

**Troubles:** The Hebrew word is “tsarah,” pronounced (tsaw-raw’). In this context, it means distress, trouble, anguish, and affliction.<sup>[5]</sup>

**Near:** The Hebrew word in this passage is “qarowb” pronounced (kaw-robe’).

In this context, it means a personal relationship, a kinship relationship.<sup>[6]</sup>

**Brokenhearted:** The Hebrew word used in this passage is “shabar,” pronounced “shaw-bar’.” In this context, it means to be wrecked, crushed, broken, shattered, crippled, maimed.<sup>[7]</sup>

**Saves:** The Hebrew word in this passage is “yashah,” pronounced “yaw-shah’.” In context, it means to be liberated, be victorious, and to save from moral troubles.<sup>[8]</sup>

**Crushed:** The Hebrew word used in this passage is “Dakka’,” pronounced “dak-kaw’.” In context, it means contrite (expressing remorse or guilt), pressed on with such force that it is broken.<sup>[9]</sup>

**PASSAGE POINTS:**

- When we cry out in grief, God pays attention and understands.
- He will rescue and deliver us from our deep distress and anguish.
- God is in a relationship with us and cares for us as our Father.
- Although grief has crushed and shattered us, God promises to bring us freedom and victory from its’ affliction.

# SCRIPTURAL APPLICATION:

## ORIGINAL MEANING:

Does David’s testimony of God personally drawing near to rescue him, and the specific Hebrew words he chose to write this psalm, impact your understanding of God’s response to our grief? In what ways?

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**PRECEPT:**

Was God’s response to David a one-time answer to a distressed man crying out for help? Why did he write the psalm for his soldiers?

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**PRINCIPLE:**

**Old Testament:** Is the principle of God’s loving, personal response to grief evident elsewhere in the Old Testament? Identify a Scripture and the keywords of the passage and their associated definitions.

**Scripture:**

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**Keywords:**

**New Testament:** Is the principle of God responding to us personally in our grief evident in the New Testament? Identify a Scripture, the keywords of the passage, and their associated definitions.

**Scripture:**

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**Keywords:**

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**PERSON:**

**The Character of God:**

What do we know about the character of God that would cause Him to respond the way He does to our grief?

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**WHAT WE SHARE IN COMMON:**

In the Old and New Testaments, God has a tender, loving, and compassionate response when His children cry out to Him in pain. What do you share in common with the people that God delivered from their anguish?

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**THE OVERARCHING BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE:**

Describe the overarching biblical principle of how we can expect God to respond to His children when we cry out to Him with broken hearts.

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# CHAPTER 8

## CASE STUDY: GRIEF

Matthew and Brittany had a fairy tale relationship. They grew up in loving Christian homes, regularly attended church, and were educated in Christian schools. After high school, both were blessed with scholarships to an excellent Christian university where their paths first crossed.

They got to know one another in many of the same classes, and both were involved in college athletics. They found themselves in the same groups of friends, spending a great deal of time together. Over the course of four years at school, they fell in love and got engaged.

Matthew and Brittany were married a year after college graduation. It was a beautiful wedding celebration with family and friends. Matthew and Brittany didn't see how life could contain any more joy for them! After a dream honeymoon in St. Lucia, they returned to the cozy apartment they had rented and began settling into married life.

It was a busy time. Matthew and Brittany worked as teachers, served at church, and stayed close to family and friends. Both loved teaching, but Brittany's class had several significantly troubled teenagers who were consistently disruptive and verbally abusive to the other students and Brittany. Her methods to help the students modify their behavior were inadequate, and outreach to their parents was unhelpful.

Over time, Brittany began developing severe migraines, which she attributed to the stressful teaching environment. The migraines were debilitating, forcing her to stay in bed in the dark for days on end. Over-the-counter medications were not working, and the pain continued to grow. It was impacting her behavior and relationship with Matthew.

Tempers began to flare in their household as Brittany spent more and more time alone in bed. After several months, Matthew insisted Brittany go to the doctor, which she did. She came home with migraine medication and an appointment to see a neurologist the following month. In the meantime, the fighting continued. On far too many occasions, Matthew stormed out of the house and spent the evening at the local bar.

On the day of Brittany's neurology appointment, Matthew and Brittany were not speaking, so Matthew opted out of going. Brittany went from a consultation with the doctor to an immediate MRI. She was concerned by the doctor's response to the consultation. Her mind raced while a whirring machine examined her brain. After the MRI, she dressed and nervously waited for almost two hours while the neurology team viewed her MRI results.

Finally, Brittany was called back into the neurologist's office. She sat on the edge of her chair and picked at the pattern in her dress. The neurologist came in and sat down. Looking into Brittany's eyes, he compassionately shared her diagnosis. Brittany had a glioblastoma, an aggressive, inoperable brain tumor. Upon hearing the news, Brittany began uncontrollably trembling all over. With a shaky voice, Brittany asked the neurologist how long she had left. She absolutely was not prepared to hear the "nine months to a year" answer. Brittany's head dropped into her hands, and she sobbed helplessly.

Somehow, in a blur, Brittany managed to make it home before collapsing into her bed, weeping until there were no more tears to weep. When Matthew came home, the news took him to his knees. They stayed there, crying in one another's arms, and spent the entire night that way. They were holding each other, praying, and crying out to God from the depths of their agony.

The next morning, Matthew gently untangled himself from Brittany to take a shower and try to compose himself. He made coffee and some toast for Brittany. Taking it to the side of the bed, he gently brushed her hair back, leaned in, and kissed her. Her beautiful skin was cold to the touch, and his lovely bride was home with Jesus. Matthew threw himself to the floor, weeping uncontrollably.

Over the following days and weeks, he could hardly eat, didn't shower, and didn't go to work. His thoughts were harshly, relentlessly accusing - why didn't he make Brittany go to the doctor sooner? Why did he always respond in anger to her pain? He blamed himself for Brittany's death. In his mind, God shared the blame. How could God let this happen to such a wonderful person?

On the following two pages, you will find the Grid of Truth worksheet for grief. The Scriptural examination should be of Psalm 34:17-18. Bring in the other Scriptures listed to identify what Scripture says about grief. Use what you have learned to complete the worksheet. In this instance, the "What happened," "What did I do," etc., should be answered by putting yourself in Matthew's situation.

# FIVE WHATS

WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT IS THE  
EMOTION?

WHAT TRIGGERED  
MY RESPONSE?

WHAT SHOULD  
I DO NOW?

WHAT SCRIPTURE  
TO MEMORIZE?

WHAT IS MY  
ROADMAP?

# WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT IT?

**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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**VERSE:**

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**PRINCIPLE:**

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# CASE STUDY QUESTIONS:

It has been three months since Brittany's passing, and Matthew continues to stay isolated in his apartment. He no longer goes to work and refuses to interact with others. You are asked to minister to Matthew. What would you say, and how would you say it? Provide biblical support for the framework of how you should respond. Answer the questions below to help develop a biblical, loving, and wise response.

- 1) Matthew tells you that if he had listened better to Brittany about her pain and made her go to the doctor sooner, she would still be alive.

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- 2) Matthew tells you that because of how he treated Brittany, he can no longer expect God to listen to him.

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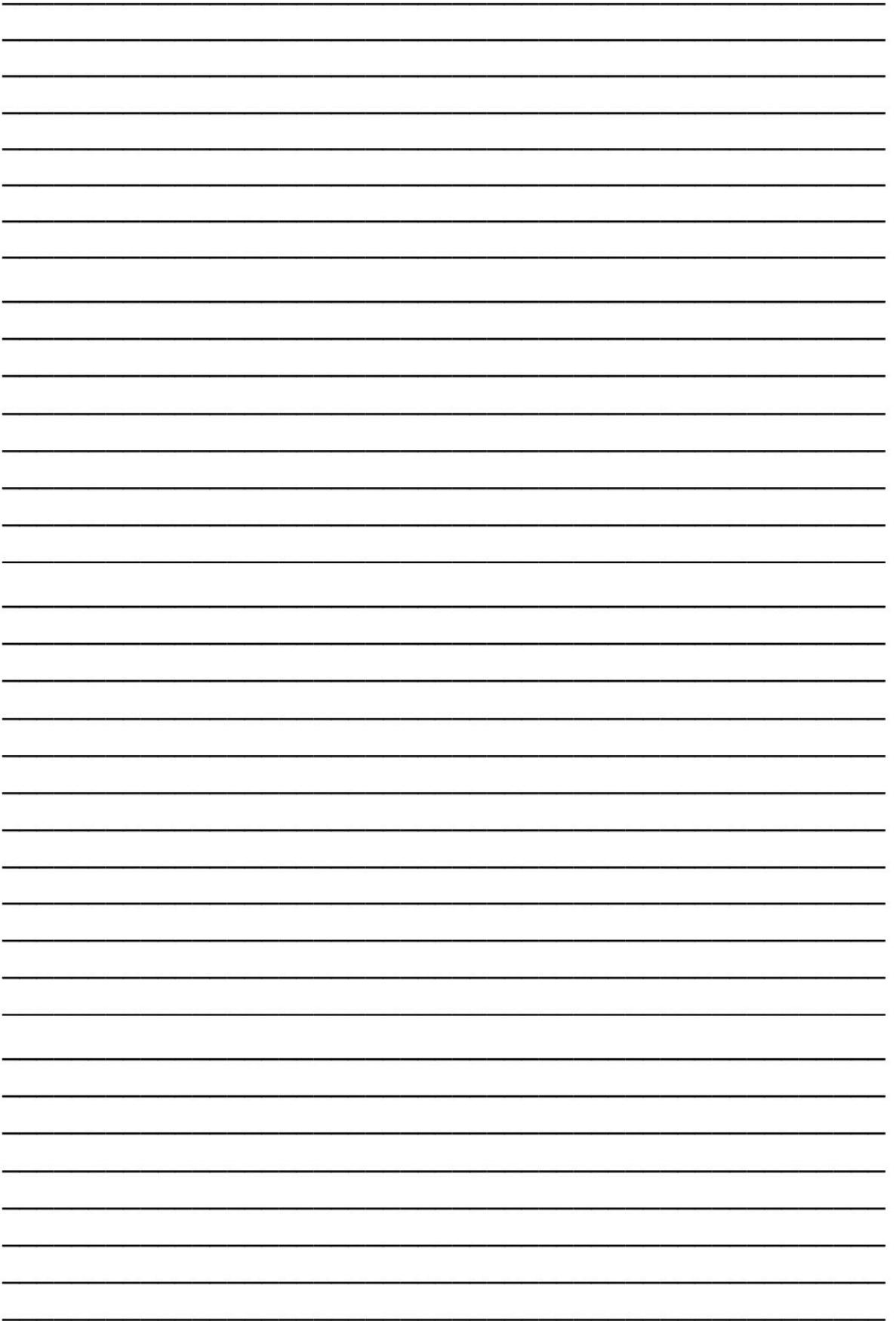
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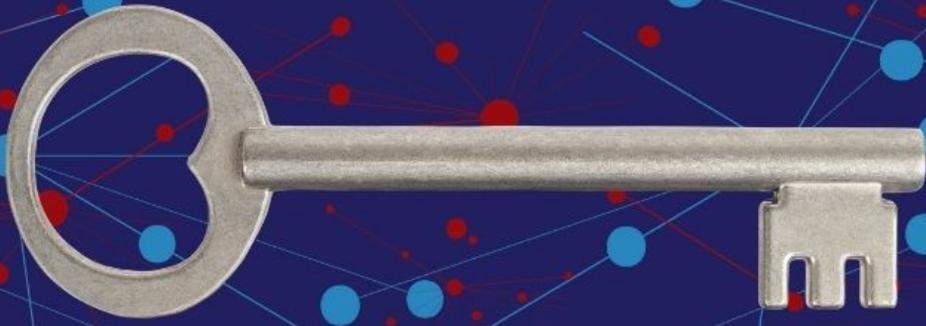












“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”

Hebrews 4:12-13 ESV

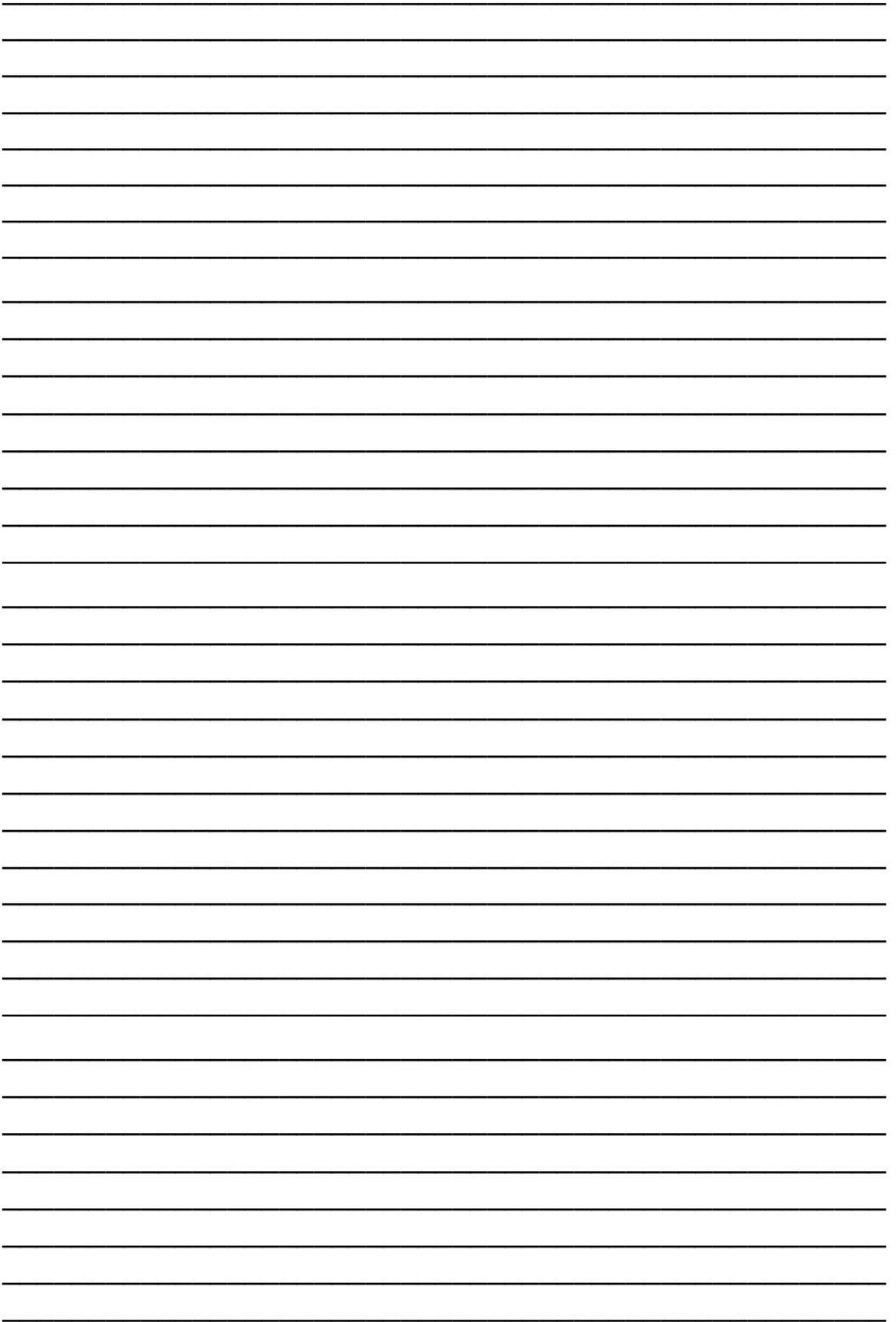
# GRID OF TRUTH TAKEAWAYS

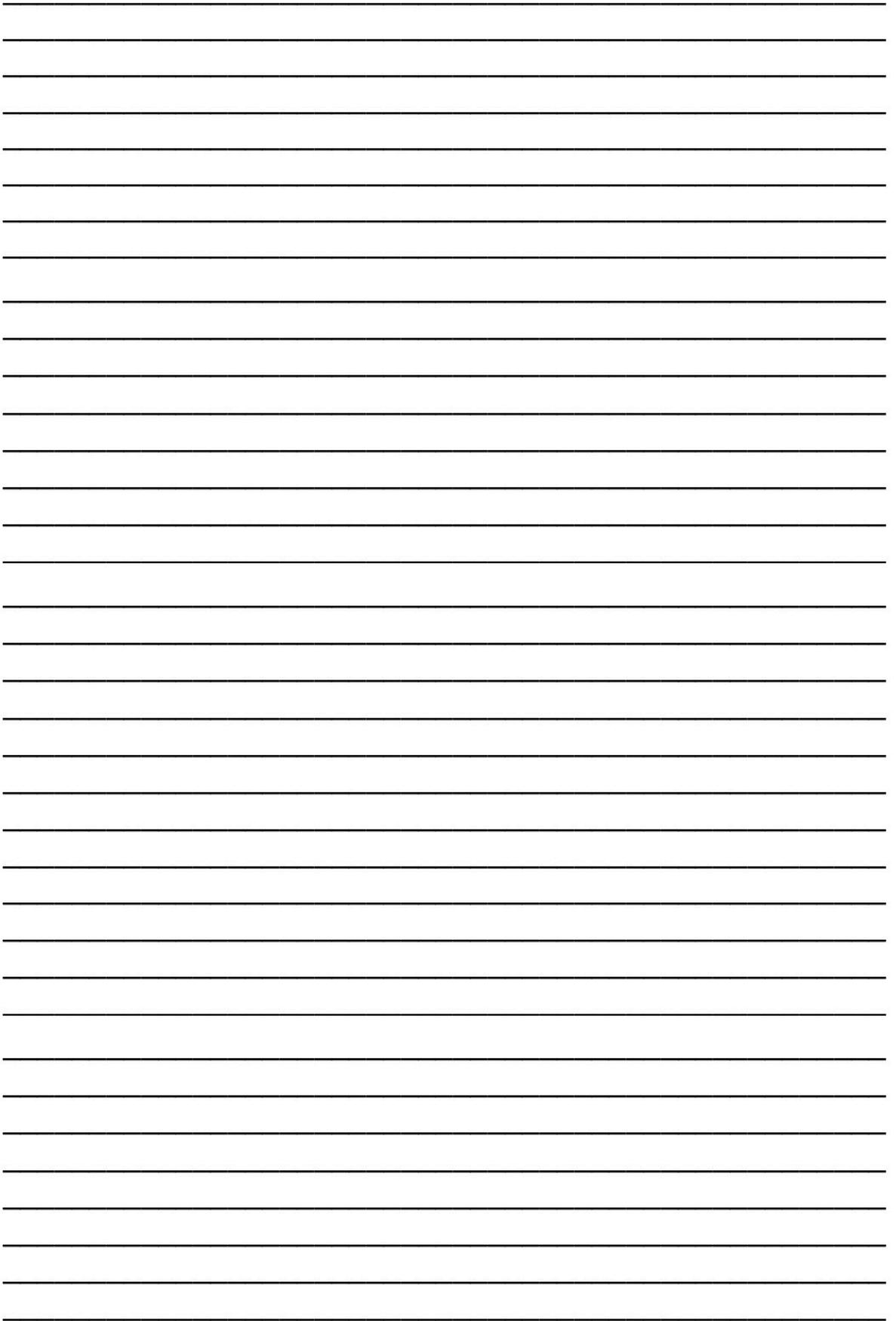
As followers of Jesus and stewards of His Word, we become responsible for the truth we know. The first responsibility is to hide God's Word in our hearts so that we will not sin against Him. We are called to be like Jesus, to take up our cross and follow after Him. We become more like our precious Savior as we follow Him, listen to His teachings, and pattern our lives after how He lived His.

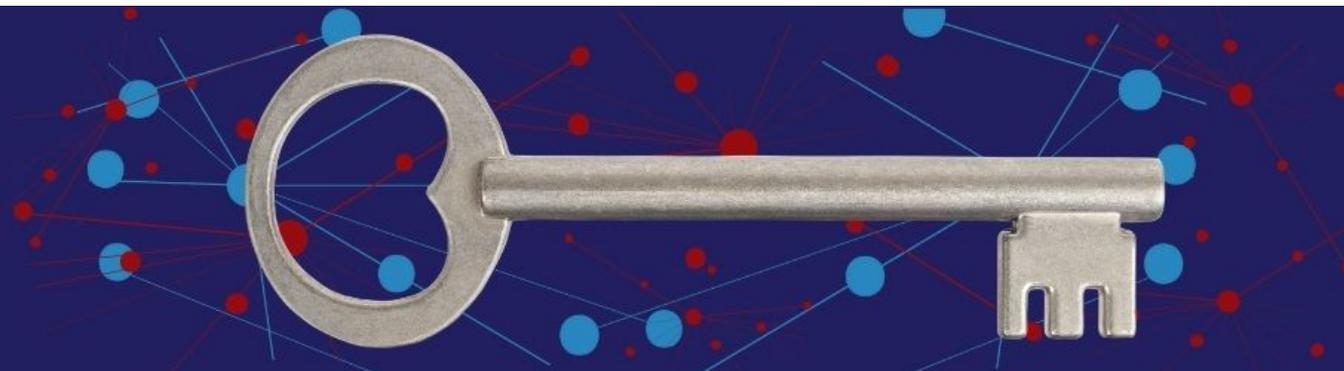
The second responsibility, which is a calling for every believer, is called The Great Commission. Jesus calls all His disciples to go out into the world and make disciples. The word disciple refers to being a student, someone who sits at the feet of the Teacher to learn and become like Him.

Going out in the world is precisely what Jesus equipped His disciples to do. He warned them that they would be rejected, that people would not want to hear their message, and they would be persecuted. Jesus taught His disciples to be courageous, not to fear man, but to fear God. We must do the same. There is no room for watering down God's Word in an effort to make it more appealing. Drawing men to God is what the Holy Spirit does. Our job is to faithfully share the whole truth of the Gospel. We can trust God to guide and protect us, just like He promised the disciples.

Write down your Grid of Truth "takeaways." What will you apply from this book/course to your life? Be specific about personal challenges. How will you make The Grid of Truth process a life habit?







“For you formed my inward parts;  
you knitted me together  
in my mother’s womb.  
I praise you, for I am fearfully  
and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
my soul knows it very well.  
My frame was not hidden from you,  
when I was being made in secret,  
intricately woven in the  
depths of the earth.  
Your eyes saw my unformed substance;  
in your book were written,  
every one of them,  
the days that were formed for me,  
when as yet there was none of them.”  
Psalm 139: 13-16 ESV

# CONCLUSION

The Grid of Truth biblical process is a lifetime journey for lifelong students of God's Word. God's Word is living and active. As wisdom, life, peace, strength, hope, and comfort leap off your Bible's pages, it is a daily miracle. God's Word will minister to your heart and mind and then equip you to share living water with the thirsty around you.

I pray that this short course has sparked something far more significant - a quest for the Truth found in God's Word and a desire to conform your life to it. His plans and purposes are more wonderful than anything you can possibly contrive on your own. He made you on purpose for His purpose!

I encourage you to move forward in freedom, confident that God knows everything about you. Knowing all, He intentionally chose you! God knit you together purposely, equipping you to fulfill the mission He has given you for this short time on earth. Grasp His Word and His calling. Step out courageously in faith. Be all and do all He has lovingly created you for. Be the hands and feet of Jesus and the light in the darkness! May our Lord strengthen, call, equip, and set you apart for His service. The God of the universe promises to be faithful to you on this journey towards Heaven!



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Victoria Isaac is called to Christian education and is passionate about Christian discipleship training. She is the President of the Fully Equipped Bible Institute. It is a non-profit ministry dedicated to equipping and discipling Christian leaders around the globe regardless of geographic or financial hurdles. She has been an adjunct professor at numerous Christian universities, teaching and writing course curricula.



From serving the homeless in inner cities, advocating for orphans, and ministering in Africa, her heart is drawn to the downtrodden and broken. Victoria's missions background deeply impacted her mindset for equipping the Church to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the "least of these."

Victoria loves God's Word deeply. She has spent the last fifteen years teaching the Bible from Genesis through Revelation in a chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse format. She draws on this extensive study of Scripture as a foundation for equipping Christian leaders with strong biblical foundations and practical discipleship training tools.

Immensely blessed as a wife, mother, and grandmother, Victoria's family is a source of deep joy and great inspiration. Her husband, Dr. Stephen Isaac, serves as the senior pastor of Reunion Church, a wonderful community of believers who are passionate about following Jesus. Dr. Stephen Isaac also serves as Provost of the Fully Equipped Bible Institute. By God's grace, Stephen and Victoria are both deeply committed to serving the local church and the global church through loving, serving, and teaching God's Word.





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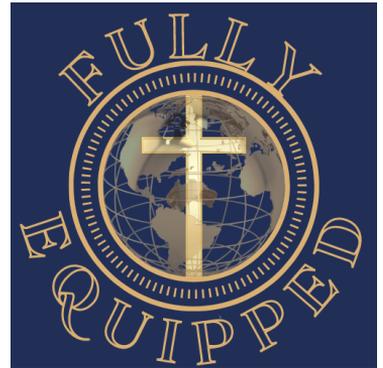
"...that the man of God may  
be complete, equipped  
for every good work..."

2 Timothy  
3:16-17

## **THE FULLY EQUIPPED BIBLE INSTITUTE**

The Grid of Truth - How to Think Biblically in a Deceptive World is available as an online course. Other online courses, including an intensive Christian Leadership training program, equip believers with the biblical tools necessary to navigate this fallen world.

The Fully Equipped Bible Institute is dedicated to providing training for Christian leaders. We equip believers with the biblical foundations and practical ministry tools they need to be "equipped for every good work." Our online Bible classes include Bible courses for pastors, Bible college courses, adult Bible study lessons for leadership, and Bible study classes for church/small group curriculum use.



Go to [www.fullyequippedbibleinstitute.org](http://www.fullyequippedbibleinstitute.org) to find out more.



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By Dr. Victoria Isaac

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