

## **Foreword**

The message contained in Face To Face is biblical, practical, and timely. It is biblical in that all of the ideas presented are deeply rooted in and flow from the Word of God. I was deeply impressed by the author's painstaking attempt to support her ideas with appropriate scriptures.

It is practical in that it gives clear guidelines to young people to enable them to conduct and live their lives in ways that are pleasing to God. The workbook section is particularly helpful in assisting readers to focus on the various topics, while being able to note their thoughts and ideas for future reference.

It is timely in that it provides the answers to many of the contemporary issues facing our young people today. The concept of family for many of our young people has all but disappeared, and so have many of the values that accompanied it. The vacuum created by the absence of these values has created a crisis among the young and has put many of them at risk. This book encourages young people to adopt a biblical value system and challenges them to embrace a biblical view of themselves as a means to overcome much of the despair they currently face.

My prayer is that the message of this book will reach and make a difference in the lives of many young people.

Dr. Nathan Charles



## FACE TO FACE

*... observing his natural face in a mirror (James 1:23).*

### **You Need Love and Acceptance**

We all have a strong desire for love and acceptance. Young people, in particular, work very hard to feel accepted among their peers. Some teens pursue love and acceptance above every other need. It is common for them to feel that something is wrong when they are not part of a group.

For some, the desire to be loved and accepted is greater than it is for others. Whether our desire for acceptance is little or great, most of us agree that this need must be met because it is vital for our well being. Think how delighted you feel when you are complimented. It satisfies your need for others to agree with you, and to affirm you.

You need the approval of your parents, peers, teachers, and significant others. There is the desire to be recognized and to be hugged and meaningfully touched. When these needs are not met satisfactorily, your total development is hindered. You are left with feelings of emptiness and many unanswered questions.



For many of us, the need for acceptance and love was never met adequately in childhood, adolescence, or even in adulthood.

What happens to us when we have been deprived of food for a long time? We get very hungry. We feel starved. Sometimes our bodies are starved and so thirsty that we are tempted to satisfy that hunger with any type of food or water. That is likely to happen when our need for love and acceptance has not been met for a long time. We are usually so starved that we are often willing to accept any type of phony love.

Of course, this false love lasts only for a moment, leaving us more hungry and thirsty for real love. We then go searching again, only to be disappointed. As a result of this, feelings of rejection and worthlessness begin to surface. When you experience feelings of rejection and worthlessness, the Devil seeks to strike at you. He always attacks you with negative feelings about yourself in your weakest moment.

It is common for you to believe that you are the cause of the rejection you feel. You may think that you cause others to not love or accept you. Perhaps you think that you caused your family problems. You may also think that something is “wrong” with you. When you allow that thought to fill your mind, you are headed for trouble. The Devil will show you many reasons to believe that something is wrong with you.

Do not forget that the Devil is your enemy. In everyday life, the last person you would ask to reveal your faults is your enemy. In much the same way then, you cannot believe the things the Devil tells you. God’s Word tells us that he is our enemy. “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

## **Who Am I?**

In your teen years you are experiencing important physical, physiological and emotional changes. You are also in the process of finding out who you really are and why you are here. This sometimes disturbing but always valuable life-changing process can trigger mixed feelings about who you are and about your true worth. Quite often these feelings are negative. Soon you tend to add these negative thoughts to the negative things that others say to you and about you. Eventually, you see yourself as useless, and you begin to hate yourself.

How different that negative self-image is from what God tells you in His Word. You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). God loves you (John 3:16). “The very hairs of your head are numbered” (Matthew 10:30). Before you were formed, God knew you. “Before you were born [God] set you apart” (Jeremiah 1:5).

These are exciting facts about you. If you accept those truths from God about yourself, never again do you have to feel rejected. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Greatest Person who has ever walked the earth has accepted you. He has set His love upon you (Psalm 91:14).

You are a very special person indeed. You are “crowned with glory and honor” (Psalm 8:5). There is not another person on earth with your features or fingerprints. God created you for the purpose of glorifying Him just as Jesus did. Like Jesus, you should be able to say: “I have brought you glory on earth” (John 17:4). You were made not to please yourself, but to please God by doing what He wants you to do.

You were created as an eternal being. Christ purchased you on Calvary when He died on the cross for your sins. “But God demonstrates His love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).



### **Why Am I Here?**

You are not here on earth by accident. Even if your parents have told you that you are an accident, or that they never wanted you, that is not the way God understands your beautiful presence. Guess what? You are here because the great and wonderful God in heaven, the Creator, designed your birth. He planned your being here. He has a plan for your life. "For I know the plans I

have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you; plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11).

God formed you. He fashioned you and has the best plan for your life. God will not force you to discover and follow His plan. The choice is yours to live within His purpose or to escape to a plan that is not in His will.

The question of who you are, why you are here, and where you are going must be settled deep within you. When you understand your identity and purpose, you will never again be confused about the purpose of your existence. Were you born as a result of sexual abuse, such as rape? Were you born to unmarried parents? Were you born in the midst of a divorce situation? Were you born to godly, loving parents?

Regardless of the circumstances surrounding your birth, you are here on this earth because God chose to have you here. You are not a product of chance, but rather God’s choice. You are God’s perfect choice. You are a special human being, created in the image of God. “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image’ (Genesis 1:26). You still bear His image, even if you or others think differently.

“My life does not make much sense to me. The people who are around me do not even care that I exist. Why am I even here?” you question. The answer is simply, you are here to fulfill God’s plan for your life. You were created to have fellowship with God and to bring glory to His name. As God’s creatures, we constantly fight against His plan and choose our own. This gets us into much trouble. How much better it would be for us if we obeyed God with delight.

### **Where Am I Going?**

One day you will spend eternity with God in heaven, or you will be eternally separated from Him. It all depends on the choice you make during your lifetime. Now, do you understand that God started your life, and at its end you will have to stand before Him to give an account of yourself?

Satan’s plan is that you rebel against the God who made you. He achieves this as he shows you your faults and the difficulties you are experiencing. For some of you, Satan points out that you do not have enough money to buy the basic necessities. For others, he focuses on the neglect and lack of love you have experienced. For others, Satan may get you to reject God’s plan because of the verbal and physical abuse you experience daily.

## **God Understands You**

For some of you, it may be that one or both of your parents are on drugs. Your house may be a crack house, even though you live in a wealthy neighborhood. Guess what? None of these things can stand in your way! The Devil's plan is to use these problems to rob you of the pleasure of the fulfillment of God's plan for your life. It really cannot happen unless you give in to the Devil.

God's Word states that no one can thwart His plan (Job 42:2). Your life may have been affected by all unpleasant circumstances, but these cannot prevent you from coming to the Lord Jesus Christ. When you come to Jesus, He has the ability to work out everything for your good. Therefore, you can say with confidence "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him" (Romans 8:28).

## **God Knows Your Hurt**

Jesus understands your environment. He suffered rejection, even from his friends (Matthew 26:69-74). Some people whipped Him, while others spat on Him and kicked Him (Matthew 27:27-31). Then they crucified Jesus on a cross between two thieves. He suffered the worst kind of death. Why? So that you may have eternal life.

If there is ever anyone who understands your circumstances, it's Jesus. Satan would like to use your heartbreaking situations against you. However, God wants to use them for your benefit. You see, Jesus was battered and bruised more than you can imagine. The Bible describes Jesus' condition: "His appearance was marred." When people looked at Him, "He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him" (Isaiah 53:2).

There is no hurt or pain you can experience that Jesus does not know about. He suffered so that He could relate to those who are hurting. It is comforting to know that "because He himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted" (Hebrews 2:18). Jesus experienced rejection so that He could understand how outcasts feel (Hebrews 4:15). He, too, suffered separation from His Father. He knows what you feel when you are separated from your mother and father by divorce, death, or abandonment.

You are not alone, as the Devil would have you believe. His plan is to use negative situations in your life to cause you to doubt God's existence, His love, and His plan. Satan wants you to feel alone so that he can feed you negative thoughts more effectively. You are not alone. Jesus says that He will never

leave you or forsake you (Matthew 28:20). Therefore, God wants you to move on. He's coming with you! (Deuteronomy 31:6)

## **You Can Overcome**

Sometimes it is scary when you realize that things are not moving along in the way you desire. You may think that there are too many hindrances in your way. Do not be frightened by any situation you face. You do not have to fall under the weight of any circumstance. By God's grace and power, and with the help He sends, you will be able to move toward success. "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze" (Isaiah 43:2). "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

The person who does not move in the direction of hope is the one who says, "I can't." If your heart says to your obstacle, "I will go another direction," you will. God says that "nothing shall be impossible for you" (Matthew 17:20). Do not be afraid. Do not listen to the voice of the Devil, even if he uses your best friend to mislead you. Remember ... you have the choice to move on.

You cannot change your difficult circumstances. Nevertheless, as difficult as they are, God can use them for your good.

Young people, we will never know all that we should expect in life. Yet, psychics tell us that they know. They tell us, "Just call our hotline to receive all the information you want." This information is, of course, a lie from the Devil. Do not call that number. It takes just one call for you to be trapped into a life of disobedience. "When men tell you to consult mediums and spirits, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God?" (Isaiah 8:19) The wisdom and direction God has for you are found only in His Word.

God gives us wisdom to know what to expect from the Devil. His Word shows us how to defend ourselves from this devious enemy. "They overcame [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12:11). We defend ourselves as we put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18).

When you know what to expect from the Devil, you will not be faced with emergencies. An emergency is when you do not know where the source of your trouble lies. Therefore, you are not able to avoid it. As a result, you will freely give in to the feelings of doom and hopelessness that Satan hurls at you.

However, when you know and truly believe that you are a person of value and purpose, you will overcome Satan's strongest attacks. Your firm belief in



God, and in His purpose for your life, will make you steadfast and unmoved by the negative weapons of Satan. You will not be robbed of the joy that comes from your involvement in, and your surrender to, God's design for you.

## **God Knows the Answer**

Most of us seek an explanation for the hurt we feel and the suffering we see others endure. Why is it that a beautiful, innocent baby is born into our world but will never be able to walk? How is it that a young man in the peak of his career has been diagnosed with terminal cancer? Why are innocent students and teachers shot and killed in our schools? Why are boys and girls raped? Who is to be blamed for the multitudes of people who have AIDS?

Our search for helpful answers to our common hurts takes us back to Eden (Genesis 1). Perhaps you can quickly read this passage in the Bible. If you do, you will find out that there was a time when God called our world very good (Genesis 1:31).

So when did things start to turn bad for humans? The answer to this question lies in the attitudes and actions of the first human beings. Read to find out the part that Adam and Eve played in the breakout of suffering in the human family (Genesis 3). Why did hardships and pain start in our world?

The fall of man, as recorded in the Bible, helps us to know how hurt and pain seeped into the human family. Are you angry with Adam and Eve for bringing this trouble on us? How did they get into that mess? What painkillers did they take to fix their problem? How did God change the situation for our first parents, Adam and Eve?

Anyone who feels hurt tries to get some type of healing. Just check the pharmacies and see the large number of painkillers on the market. Read the labels, and you will see the many illnesses they are supposed to cure. Some are for internal use while others are for external use only. Are these medicines able to wipe out suffering?

Physical pain and suffering affect people in every social class. There is suffering in the palace. It is experienced in the ghetto. White people suffer. Black people feel hurt. Pain and suffering cause grief in every race and class.

Do you know anyone who is not living with pain of some kind? Quite likely, you are now hurting, along with others in your age group. Even babies feel hurt. They cannot talk about their pain. Most of them fuss and scream. Old people hurt as well, sometimes moaning and groaning to ease their suffering.

If you are alive, you will suffer. No one in the world is free from some type of pain. The Bible tells us that all creation groans (Romans 8:22). All creation suffers. We are a part of creation, so we can expect to suffer.

We experience many situations that cause us to groan. Many of us get sick. Some experience disappointment. Others are robbed of someone or something they hold very dear. Still others of us cringe under oppression. Job's friend was right when he confessed that man is born to trouble (Job 5:7).

Do you know what hurts you now? What troubles do you face? Like David, the Psalmist, you can ask yourself what is causing your pain (Psalm 42:5). Can you recall one hurt you feel now or have felt recently?

Many of us hurt because we are from broken homes. We've been tossed from one place to another, and that is sad. But, by God's grace, one day we will rise above that pain, and His favor will bring about a positive change in our lives.

You may struggle because you feel unloved. You wish it were not so. Perhaps you are distressed about the use of alcohol in your home. Many of you are sad because it causes drunkenness and it wastes your family finances. Maybe you hurt because you found out your parents are unfaithful to each other. Could it be that you are distressed over some abuse that you have experienced at home? Is your pain physical? Is it mental? Perhaps it is emotional. Perhaps you just cannot tell what type of pain or hurt you feel.

Some of you have been compared unfairly to other people. It is not pleasant when you are told that you will never succeed. Who likes to be told daily that he is dumb or stupid? Do you like to be compared to some bright person in an area in which you know you are weak?

Perhaps you have been badly offended by comments or actions that other people considered only trivial, harmless teasing. Such is the very common practice among children and young people in school where they call each other degrading names. Peers also tease and jeer one another. When you are teased constantly, you are likely to believe the harmful expressions others use towards you.

There was a man who had two daughters. One he loved, the other he cared about very little. He always praised the one he loved. He told her that she would become a teacher. He never encouraged the other daughter. He told her that she would never succeed, that she was dumb, and that she was a failure. Unfortunately, this young lady accepted her father's negative messages and wasted her life. On the other hand, the cherished daughter became a teacher.

Negative statements and attitudes are usually expressed more often than positive ones. Although positive messages can have positive effects, these are rarely given. How do you usually respond to negative comments? Have you heard and accepted more positive than negative messages?

If someone refers to you as “a sorry loser,” face that lie with positive statements. Tell yourself: “I am not a loser. I am a winner.” When you state that truth immediately, that offensive comment is less likely to have a harmful effect on you. Should someone say that you will not succeed, tell yourself, “I will succeed.” You must believe the best, no matter what you face.

## **God Cares**

The Lord Jesus does not want you to fill your mind with harmful ideas. That is why He told us: “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2).

If you want to avoid some pain and suffering, it is best that you reject the negative messages you hear. Accepting negative messages is like eating garbage. Have you heard the expression, “Garbage in, garbage out”? You will be destroyed if you receive the various kinds of abuse people hurl at you.

Like the story of the unloved daughter, many of our relatives hurt us deeply. In the Bible, Joseph, one of Jacob’s sons, is a good example of this. Joseph’s brothers treated him badly (Genesis 37:19-26). What did they do?

The suffering Joseph experienced was for only a season. God never gives a person more than he or she can bear. Genesis 39:2-7 explains that Joseph prospered in Egypt. Many years after, when Governor Joseph met his brothers, he treated them kindly. He encouraged them with the truth that God had brought good out of the wrong they had done to him (Genesis 45:3-14).

## **God Heals**

Like Joseph, you can count your hurt as joy (James 1:2-4). The Lord wants to work with you while you are young, to change your situation for your good. In this way, He will make you strong. You will then be both young and strong. What a wonderful thought God has towards you! This positive view of yourself — that is, God’s view — is what you should accept for yourself.

Yes, you have pain. However, you are not alone. The good news is that there is healing for your hurt and pain. The Healer is Jesus Christ. God says that by Jesus’ stripes you are healed (Isaiah 53:5).

Jesus heals those who are brokenhearted. Are your eyes blinded by sin and hopelessness? He gives sight to the blind (Luke 18:42-43).

Are you bruised by all your pain? Jesus sets free those who are bruised (Luke 4:18). Take a few minutes and read that passage. Remember, no matter what your situation, God can turn it around for your good. Jesus said that nothing is impossible with God (Luke 18:27).

## **God Uses Our Memories**

Sometimes you review your life and remember some events with pain and hatred. Strange but true, God permitted all your past situations. He allowed you to experience them for a reason. God, as Ruler of your life, made it possible for you to recall the memories that are good or bad. Why? One reason is that in all these events, God works for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28).

Your ability to recall your past is one of God's gifts to you. Think of your memories as a photo album. Each picture serves as a reminder of what the Lord did for you. Read Exodus 13:9-14. Note that God used the Passover feast as a reminder of how He freed the Israelites from the wicked Pharaoh.

All of us would like to erase our unpleasant memories. But that is not God's plan. God's Spirit stirs our memories so that God can work with us to make some good come out of what we thought was so bad. Also, when God brings us forth as gold (Job 23:10), we can look back and be encouraged to face new situations.

Every time we remember an event, good or bad, we can give God thanks for how He has matured us through that situation. If we had no memory, God would get very little praise and thanks from us. When God allows us to share our memories, we can bring hope and help to other people who feel worthless and distressed.

Therefore, you should boldly face the situations you encounter. This will help you to know where you are. You will also have a better idea of where God's grace may take you. No one can stop you from becoming all that God intended for you. This is part of what it means to accept yourself.

When you accept yourself, you are made ready for God's help and direction. Then, you can move the mountains that lie in your way. You can truly become the person God wants you to be. Remember, God says that He has a great plan for you to succeed (Jeremiah 29:11). God only needs your willing heart and mind to work with Him.

Will you give God your heart? Will you allow Him to guide you? Remember: When you commit your life to Jesus Christ, you become a winner. If Jesus lives in you, you are walking with the **WORLD'S GREATEST WINNER**.



## **Now You Know**

“As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance” (1 Peter 1:14).

Whenever we fail to submit to God’s Word, we will always suffer as a result. The path of least resistance is always very easy, but comes with disastrous consequences.

## **You Can Change**

The best time to make changes in our lives is while we are young. The longer we wait, the more set in our ways we become and the harder it is to change. Many people are afraid to change because it is much easier to remain in the old thought patterns, routines, and actions. However, the moment you set out to obey God, you will discover that it was not quite as hard as you thought, and the rewards far outweigh the negatives.

As the Spirit of God opens your eyes, you will see that the attacks of the Enemy on your life are meant for you to discredit God your Maker. The Enemy constantly tries to fill your mind with doubts concerning your circumstances and your life. His efforts are designed to cause you to blame God — to ultimately turn away from Him and choose your own path.

Before you knew the truth, the Enemy took you captive. You became prey to his devices. You listened to his lies and you obeyed his dictates. Perhaps life has not been easy for you. However, the struggling start you may have had does not determine your future.

Now that you have been exposed to the truth of God’s Word, you have the opportunity to make positive changes in your life that will literally take you on a different level of experience. You have the opportunity to make one of two choices.

You can say, “I have seen where I went wrong by listening to the lies of the Enemy. I will now decide to turn my back on those lies and receive God’s Word. I will take the necessary steps to make positive changes in my life.” On the other hand, you can turn away and say, “Why bother? I will just continue with my life as it is. After all, it is much easier to operate and live the way I have always lived.”

It takes courage to change. It takes strength to begin a new journey. Are you willing to take the journey? Together we will take the journey as we look to God for solutions from His Word. We will take it one step at a time.

## Listen Up!

The remaining pages are intended to assist you in identifying the negative influences that cause you to struggle deeply. We are going to discover that man's view of you is different from God's. Your worth in Christ Jesus is at an all-time high! It cannot be added to or subtracted from. Your worth is secure in Him. It has nothing to do with your ability to perform. Your worth is not based on your performance or lack of it. No one is worth more than you, and no one is worth less than you. Every person that God has created has equal value. You don't have to strive for personhood. You are of great value in the eyes of God your Maker, for you are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27).

Man has always tried to undo what God has said and done. God says you are of great value. Man will try to tell you that you are worthless. Many people, both young and old, have taken their own lives because they believed the Devil's lie. Don't ever listen to those lies. Submit to the teachings from God's Word.

Maybe for you, like many others, negative words have so crowded your life that you have begun to believe them. Possibly, your family or friends used these words around you. But because you have not carefully examined what was said and have focused on who said them, you assume that the words must be truth.

When dealing with negative words and comments, ask yourself if the statements are based on God's truth or Satan's lies. Take a moment to recall some of the negative things you were told, and let's try to see the basis of those words. As you discover the basis, you will be better able to deal with them.

Were those comments and actions made to you based on God's Word?  
Yes  No

Did those words or actions reflect God's view of you? Yes  No   
(Genesis 1:27; Psalm 139:14).

Whose words should I really accept concerning my personhood? God's   
man's  Satan's

Your aim in life should always be to please God. When you make pleasing God your aim, you can pull off the highway of struggling to please man and be at peace with God. As you seek to live a life of love and obedience to Him, you allow God to love others through you.

## Let's Be Real

Truth begins with God. Truth is what God says about you. Well-meaning people are sometimes misinformed. Without realizing it, they simply pass on to others that which was passed on to them. Unless you are willing to compare lies against truth, you will be deceived.

We cannot avoid the problems we have encountered, but we are given the opportunity to apply God's truth — the solution to our problems. What counts is the approval of God, not the approval of man. We can be assured of God's approval when we listen to Him, obey, Him and submit to His authority in our lives.

Life is a mixture of all types of experiences from the day we were born until today. The Word of God teaches us to forget what is behind and reach toward what lies ahead. We are to "press toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called [us] heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14). What a beautiful hope for each of us!

The experiences we have had contribute to the way we think, feel and act. Your experiences bear heavily on the way you feel about yourself. Maybe you did not have parents who loved each other and tried to raise you in a loving environment. There is nothing you could have done about that. And yet, as painful as it may be, many of us would mope and mourn instead of turning that hurt over to God.

It was not your fault, and you will never be held accountable to God for something that was totally out of your control. In God's Word, we read about godly men who did not have the perfect home environment with their parents. They too, must have felt the pain of separation from both their mother and father. Yet, some of the greatest men who were mightily used by God endured that pain. Samuel was brought up in the temple away from his family (1 Samuel 1:24), and Moses, at an early age, was separated from his family and raised in the home of Pharaoh (Exodus 2:10). What about Joseph, who was sold into slavery as a teenager? (Genesis 37:27). These young people did not have the privilege of the comfort from both parents. However, God made them great leaders and mighty men. Your circumstances are no different. God can and will use yours, too.

Many of us come from homes in which we were told many hurtful things. Others have had harmful things done to them. Unfortunately, these negative experiences may have been intended to motivate us; however, for the vast majority of us, they accomplished just the opposite. We interpret negative messages personally. They hurt deep down and have the capacity to alter our moods and feelings. That is why the Psalmist said, "O LORD my God, I take refuge in you; save and deliver me from all who pursue me" (Psalm 7:1).



What are some of the negative things you were told? Write them down. With God's help you should not have to look at them much longer. No longer do you have to accept destructive words and actions that have been cast at you.

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Did the messages that were cast at you motivate you to do better or did they kill the ambition and motivation you had? \_\_\_\_\_

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The things we are told, whether good or bad, have a tremendous effect on our lives. Often this effect is so subtle, it is only as we look back, that we are able to see the effect of the things that were said to us.

We have the choice to accept or reject negative words and influences. God's truth allows us to reject the lies of the Enemy that come through family and friends.

Below are some of the negative statements that people often hear.

**Nobody Loves You!**

Were you ever told this lie by others? As a result, have you felt unloved? When you are told this lie over a period of time you begin to believe it. The Devil would like to use this lie to make you feel alone and unloved. His aim is to make you vulnerable and encourage you to hang out with the others he has deceived. They want you in their company to do things that are wrong. You see, when you are repeatedly told that you are unloved, you begin to believe it and eventually begin telling yourself the same lie. People who feel unloved do

not care about themselves or others. Lack of the assurance of love leads to self-destructive patterns and behavior.

Were you ever told this lie, and did you believe it? Yes  No

Write down some of the negative things that you believe have happened in your life as a result of negative thoughts.

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The Word of God teaches that God so loved you. Fill your name in the blank spaces below. For God so loved \_\_\_\_\_ that He gave His only begotten Son that if \_\_\_\_\_ believes on Him \_\_\_\_\_ should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16). There is not one that is unloved! When you are loved by a great and mighty God, you are loved by the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

**You are Worthless!**

Sometimes parents and older family members, in an effort to motivate their children to duty and a good work ethic, will tell them that they are “worthless,” or “no good.” Worthless means: without use or value, of no earthly good. No one who is able to breathe can ever be truly characterized as “worthless.” Yet, millions of young people are called “worthless” every day. If you do not look at the meaning of the word and don’t recognize that those words directed at you are lies from the pit of hell, you will believe them. Your belief in those words will destroy you.

Replace this lie with the truth from God’s Word. First, we have to recognize the lie. There is no human being who is without worth or value. Yet many young people and adults constantly battle with feelings of worthlessness. The Word of God teaches us that God has placed an extremely high value on you. You are worth the price that Jesus paid to redeem you. It was not with silver and gold, but rather with the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19).

There is such a high value on you! God has placed on you the same value that He places on the wealthiest person that you have known. He has

placed on you the same value that He places on kings, queens, lawyers, doctors, teachers, and prisoners. The value of every human life is the same ... Priceless! Your value has nothing to do with what you have or do not have. It has nothing to do with your education or lack of it. Your worth is always settled because it is not based on your performance. Nor is it based on anyone else's opinion of you. You cannot add or take away from your worth; it is based on what God has said about you. He said in His Word that every hair on your head has been numbered (Matthew 10:30). All your tears have been bottled (Psalm 56:8-10).

Read the following verses: John 3:16, Jeremiah 1:5, Genesis 1:27, and Psalm 23:6

Select, and write in the space below, the verse you will use to replace the harmful words you once believed regarding your value.

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Ask God to forgive you for believing lies about your value. Say God's truth aloud.

**You are Dumb!**

Have you ever been called "dumb" or "stupid"? If you heard it often enough maybe you even thought you were that way. Many people are not aware that God never made any two people alike. God's plan and purpose for each life is always unique. Some parents believe that all their children should be able to fly a plane or become doctors. That does not fit God's scheme of things. He has a plan for each person to succeed in a different way (Jeremiah 29:11).

If you're a doctor, then be the best doctor because God gave you the ability. If you are a farmer, then be the best farmer, because God gave you the ability. If you are a pilot, then be the best pilot because God gave you the ability. This shows us the equal value that God places on every life. Every life is valuable. Every vocation is meaningful. You simply need to do what God wants you to do.

People are unfairly compared with others. For example, an uninformed father may want his son to be a pilot instead of a farmer. He does not realize that God has blessed his son differently. Therefore, when his son comes home with grades that do not compare with those of other kids, he is considered not very smart. What an unfair comparison!

No two persons are alike; no two persons have the same calling. God always expects the best from everyone. Your best may be an “A” while your cousin’s best in a certain class may be a “D.” God is not concerned about the “A” or the “D.” He is looking for the best. He will always use your best regardless of what grade it is. He requires your honest best — nothing more, and nothing less.

“The fool says in his heart there is no God”(Psalm 14:1). The word “fool” has been used in the Bible to speak of one’s ignorance regarding God. “Fools despise wisdom and discipline” (Proverbs 1:7). A stupid or a foolish person is one who leaves God out of his life.

According to the Word of God, is a person dumb or stupid based on grades? Yes  No

Would a person be considered dumb or stupid based on the career or vocation that best suits his abilities? Yes  No

Who does God regard as a “fool”? \_\_\_\_\_

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Based on the Word of God, have you been a fool? There is good news for you! You can be changed as you correctly respond to God.

You may not fully realize it, but what other people say to us can shape our lives in a negative or a positive way. The negative words of others become self-fulfilling prophecies in our lives, many times without our ever realizing what is taking place.

You may recall the story about the man and his two daughters. Neither daughter actually realized what was taking place in her life over the years. However, a prophecy was being fulfilled in both lives. The prophecy that one daughter would succeed and become a teacher actually happened. She

subconsciously worked towards the image of the person she was told she would become. What about her sister? She, too, subconsciously fulfilled the image of the person she was told she would become.

Many people are behind bars today because they were told that they would end up there one day. Others are serving life sentences because they, too, were told that they would murder someone and go to prison.

### **You are a Failure!**

People often make prophecies on the lives of others with messages of doom and hopelessness, or hope and promise. How many times have young people been told by others that they are “failures” and that they will “never succeed”? This message rings out in many lives in the wee hours of the night as they lie in bed. This thought has been mulled over by others night after night. Therefore, they absorb that message of doom and hopelessness. Finally, things may not be productive in a life, and the Enemy strikes at that opportune time. Maybe a family member messed up, and it has affected you. At that vulnerable moment, the lie that you have been told, and believed, suddenly makes sense and you are sucked in by it.

Failure or success is not based on man’s standards. The person that man regards as successful, God regards as a fool. See the account of the rich man and his plans for the future (Luke 12:19-20). On the other hand, Lazarus did not have much going for him according to man’s standard. Yet, he was acceptable in God’s eyes (Luke 16:20-22). One’s success is determined by God.

The world considers successful the man who dies and leaves a mansion that one day may serve as a museum. The assessment is based on what he has attained or earned. On the other hand, the world determines that a man who dies and does not have enough money to cover funeral expenses is a pauper and a failure. Think about the cases of these two men. It is obvious whom most people would consider a failure or a success. But in God’s eyes, both could have been considered failures (John 3:16-18). True success or failure cannot be determined by earthly investments and achievement.

If you were to come to the end of your life and had rejected the One and Only Person who loved you and had given Himself for you, that would make you a failure! You certainly would never succeed beyond that point.

You will never fail in God’s eyes if you give Him your life. He will guide you to do your best. When you give your very best, you are fulfilling God’s will for you.

## Looking Back

Let us look back in time and visualize the many negative things that may have occurred in the lives of those who often try to shape our lives negatively. They also were told negative things. They, too, have been badly hurt. Unfortunately, they may never have been challenged, as you are right now, to face the things that were thrown at them. They may never have dealt with their negative thoughts and actions. Can you now begin to understand why they are passing their negative messages on to you?

What would you do if a dear friend or family member came to you with a sore on his leg? You can see that the bandage is all wet and bloody, and the wound is infected. He is limping on a crutch because of the pain. He begins to remove the bandage to share it with you. He cuts up his crutch to share it with you. What would you say? Of course, you would say, "I don't need your bandage or crutch. I don't have your wound."

Others are trying to do, with words, exactly what that person was doing with that bloody sore, bandage, and crutch. You do not need that bandage. You don't need that crutch. You certainly do not need destructive words and actions. Recognize the lack of wisdom, and reject harmful words. People pass on to others the hurtful experiences they have had and that may still be affecting them. Do not accept negative messages. They do not belong to you. Do not agree with them or take those negative words to be your own. They will destroy you.

God has blessed each of us with abilities. Each one of us has the ability to excel; however, we do not excel in the same areas. At times, we tend to seek excellence in the areas in which others excel. We do not realize that God may never have intended for us the areas we crave.

Did you receive the prophecy that was made on you? (We receive a prophecy when we allow it to mold us consciously or subconsciously.) \_\_\_\_\_

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How has that prophecy molded your life so far? \_\_\_\_\_

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The prophecy that most people make on the life of another is usually done through ignorance — ignorance of who God is and what His plan is for a life. As they make their prophecy, which is not of faith but of the Enemy, the innocent person receives it as a gospel truth. He surrenders, unknowingly, to the doom that has been predicted. On the other hand, others have yielded themselves to the hope and promise that was predicted. That shows us how powerful the words are that we speak.

Consider this story. A mother tells her 10-year-old son that one day he is going to end up in jail because he gets on her nerves. She may say the same thing to him again when he does something wrong. In her heart, she is not thinking that her words are a prophecy that may someday be fulfilled. Instead, she hopes to use her words to curb his naughtiness and keep him from the possibility of going to prison.

However, if that son is imprisoned, which many times is the case of a fatal prophecy, he could spend 15 years. He could come out at probably age 35 or even 40. After being released, that son could visit his ailing mother, who could now be about 60 or 70 years old. At this point in her life, she may be battling cancer or diabetes in a hospital bed. Her son might go to her and say, “Mom, I am here to see you before you die. I just came out of prison.

“Do you remember, when I was growing up, you told me on many occasions that I will end up in prison one day? Mom, is that really what you wished for me?” “No,” his mother would reply. “No, my son, I only told you that to keep you from doing wrong.” “But, Mom, you told my brother that he would one day become a doctor and today he is!”

“Son, your brother was different than you. He did not give me as much trouble as you did. So I told him that with the hope that he would become a doctor one day, and to make you feel jealous so that you would do better. You see, I told you the worst with the hope of scaring you away from your naughtiness. Had I known that you would have taken all the words I said so seriously, I would never have said them to you.”

“So really, Mom, you meant what you told my brother, but you did not mean what you told me? How was I to know? I did not feel jealous, I only hated him and did not care anymore about what I did.”

Whose negative prophecy are you living out today? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you have a better understanding of the basis of the prophecies that people make on your life? \_\_\_\_\_

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Can you put into words your new understanding of what happened to you? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you see that you have taken as gospel truth another person’s bad mood, negative feelings, negative thoughts, dislike for you, lack of knowledge, or lack of knowing God’s Word and God’s will?

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Prophecies that others make on our lives can be altered. The prophecies do not reflect the plan of Almighty God. They reflect a direction of choice, even though it does not appear that way. That is why when the eyes of your mind are opened, a new direction is immediately taken. This new direction brings with it tremendous outcome.

By His grace and mercy, God sends someone a message of hope and truth. For the first time, that individual realizes that he had believed a lie. He turns around, embraces the truth, and rises up to the fact that he has abilities that have never been touched. Immediately, he begins to succeed and rises far beyond the expectation of others. The only difference is the fact that he pursued a different dream. Whose dream are you pursuing? You have a choice!

The greatest dream a person can ever fulfill in this life is the will of God. We fulfill God's will for our lives when we daily seek to live in obedience to Him and do what He wants us to do each day. God's will for us is to believe His Word and live in obedience to Him. The only way to follow the truth of God's Word is to hear it, accept it, and act on it. By surrendering yourself to Jesus Christ, it becomes easier. All our earthly success will one day come to an end. All our earthly dreams will end. All our earthly possessions will one day be in someone else's name. But the Word of God will never end.

The blessings and plans God has for you are all designed to bring you to Him. He made you, and your life belongs to Him. Your value is all because of Him. When He is left out of your life nothing else really makes sense, now or for eternity.

What does it mean to surrender to Jesus Christ?

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To surrender to Jesus Christ is to give over the complete control of your life to Him. No one else has earned that right. No one else deserves that privilege.

The greatest joy a person can experience is the joy of knowing Jesus as his Savior. The greatest sorrow in all of life and eternity is to not know Jesus.

“What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26).

It is very important that we have a clear understanding of what Jesus did for us when He died on the cross. The Bible teaches us that His death is the highest expression of God’s love for us. He gave His life to prevent us from spending eternity away from the presence of God. “For God so loved the world, that he gave His only Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16). Now, that’s love!

Salvation is a free gift. We cannot earn it, nor do we deserve it. The Bible repeatedly states that man is a sinner and that he cannot save himself. In considering the question of sin, we are faced with two frightening facts. The first fact is that man makes so little of sin. It is joked about, laughed at and denied. At the same time, God makes so much of sin. He said, “The soul who sins is the one who will die” (Ezekiel 18:20). The Word of God also declares, “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ” (Romans 6:23).

Because of His mercy, God sent His Son to die to pay for our sins and purchase a place in heaven for us. This He offers as a free gift. “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

How do you receive this free gift? You receive it when you trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, ask His forgiveness for your sins and invite Him into your heart. The Bible says, “Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

If you believe you have sinned against a loving and just God and would like to receive the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, we encourage you to pray the following prayer:

**Dear God, I realize I have sinned and that I deserve Your judgment. I now acknowledge that Christ died in my place and took the judgment I deserve. I now place my faith in Jesus Christ and receive Him as my Savior and Lord. Upon the authority of Your Word, I now repent and accept Your forgiveness and cleansing for my sins and receive the gift of eternal life.**

**Thank you, Lord, for saving me.**

If you have prayed to receive Jesus as your Savior, we encourage you to complete and return the form on the next page to the address on the back of this booklet. Or you may send us a letter stating that you have prayed to receive Christ. It will give us the opportunity to follow up with you. We look forward to hearing from you.

## What next?

Asking Jesus Christ to be your Savior and Lord is the beginning of a brand new life for you. It certainly does not mean that, from here on, all your problems are going to be solved. However, it does mean that you now have a Savior who will walk with you for the rest of your life here on earth, as long as you are willing to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

There are a few things that I would like to encourage you to do. First, tell someone that you have given your life to Jesus Christ. "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven" (Matthew 10:32).

Second, try each day to read a portion from the Word of God, and pray. A good place to start reading is the Gospel of John. When praying, remember that you have found a new friend who is interested in you and wants to listen to your problems. He wants to guide and direct your life.

Third, there are churches that are true to God's Word, preaching it without compromise. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to such a church. Becoming a part of a local church is God's will for you (Hebrews 10:25). Be very careful of churches that tell you they are the "right" church because of what "they" do. Rather than focus on the efforts of man, the "right" church will always emphasize what Jesus Christ did for us when He died to save us from our sins. A biblically sound church will always seek to teach you to live by God's instruction. Such a church will encourage you to use your spiritual gifts.

Finally, be sure to return the response slip to us. We would love to follow up with you and send you a Bible Correspondence Course that will help you in your walk with Jesus Christ.

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 I have prayed the sinner's prayer, inviting Jesus to be my Savior.

I have read the material and would like you to pray for me.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

