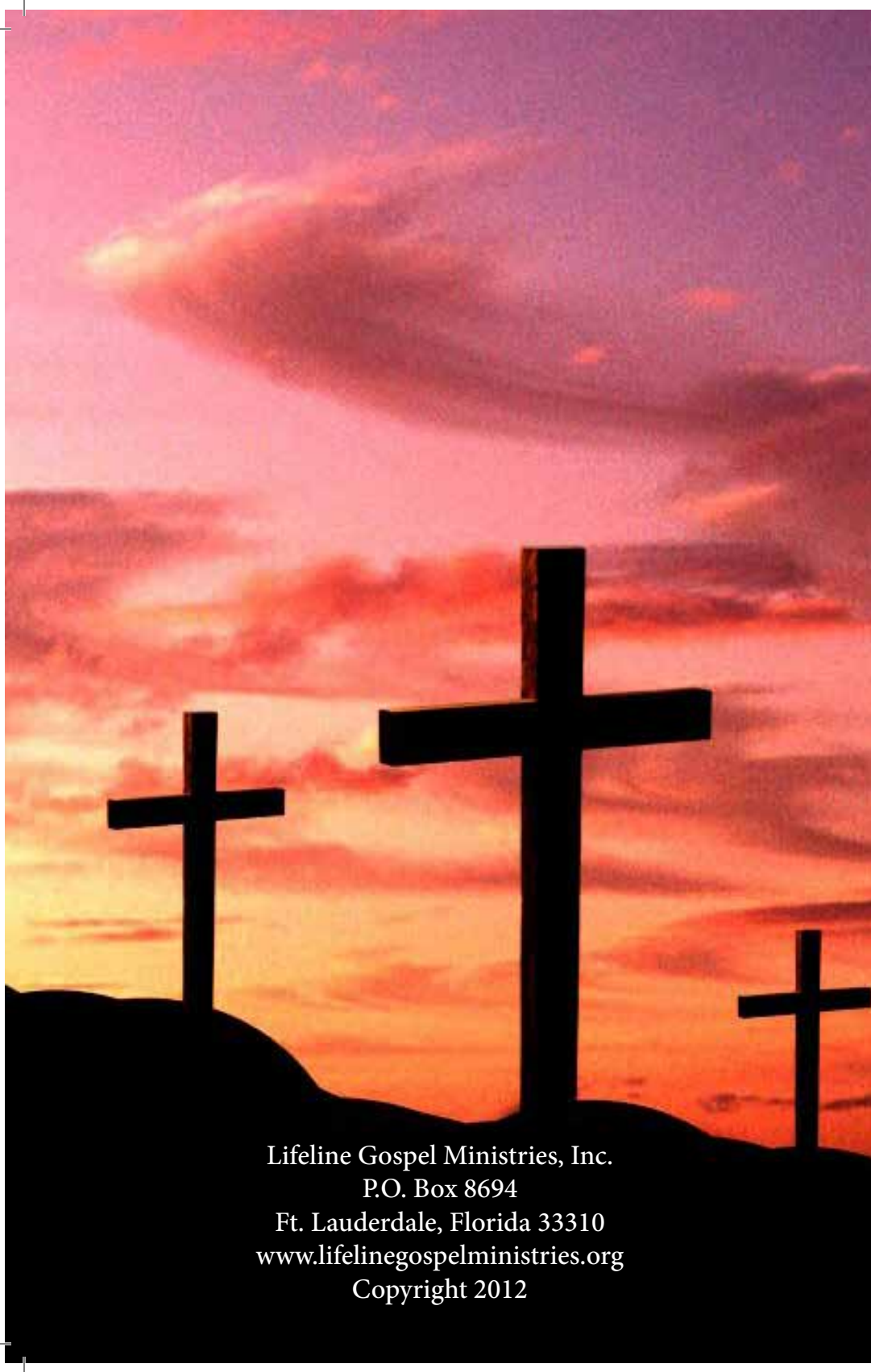


no worries!

by V. Pat Farquharson



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No Worries



Acceptance is the door, and contentment is the key that unlocks the door to walking in victory over all the negatives, put-downs, jeers, teases, bullying, name calling, and peer pressure that we experience in our lives. Never forget every person who talks down to you or causes you to feel less than a person is very uncomfortable with him or herself and this is his or her way to make him or herself feel important. People who feel good about themselves will always try to build you up and never to destroy you.

With God and His Word and the knowledge that He has a plan for our lives, we are going to see how by His grace we can stand tall, hold our heads up high, and walk in confidence.

This is possible for every person who will say, “Yes, I am going to accept what God says about me, and I am going to shut out all the other voices that are not speaking God’s truth into my life. I am going to accept what God says about all the things in my life that are unchangeable because that is part of who I am in Jesus Christ. I am also going to celebrate with you, all that you are and who God made you to be and will not compare myself with you. You are unique, and I am unique too.” We will celebrate our differences and not compete and not allow our differences to prevent us from fulfilling all that God has in store for us to be and do.

Had it been God’s plan for us all to be alike, He would not have made us all different in every way. But He did. No two individuals are alike.

My husband and I have two wonderful daughters, and we have two daughters-in-law who are not of the same race. We also have two wonderful sons, and our two sons-in-law are of different races as well. They are also both from different language backgrounds. We are all different.

Different is not a bad thing; different is just different. Welcoming diversity gives us all a chance to grow, learn, and appreciate.

You will find you actually have more in common with other people and very few differences. Remember, people who feel good about themselves will always try to build you up and never try to destroy you with words. We are all different, and this is exactly how God intended us to be. We were not created in a mold that shapes us all alike and fits us all the same. That is why we have different skin tones, different hair texture, different heights, different physical structure, and different features. That is why we are from different countries with different backgrounds, cultures, and foods. That is why we speak different languages and dialects even within the same country. We are different. We are all God's masterpiece—a unique design.

I Am Not the Right Fit...

In this life we get so caught up in what others think that we cannot live the life God wants us to live. It is time for us to stop worrying about others' opinions and start living. You are who you are and not someone else. You will never fit the mold others have for you because they did not create you and they are trying to fit you into a mold that God, your Creator, did not make for you. No worries! God has made you to be you. True—you are not perfect, and you can be sure you will never be perfect. This is also the story of everyone else you will meet. Why then do we worry about what another imperfect being thinks about us? We are all imperfect. We all have various areas of imperfection in our lives and our bodies. We all have areas of strengths and areas of weaknesses. However, we don't all have the same imperfections, and we don't all have the same weaknesses. We don't all have the same physical flaws, and we don't all have the same strengths. It is so wrong to measure your weakness against someone's strength or someone's strength against your weakness. Whenever we do that, we are truly making ourselves vulnerable to be discouraged and discontent with the person God has made us to be.

We are all flawed in various areas of our lives. We are all works in progress by almighty God, and we are all insufficient and inadequate. We all have areas of our lives that we will never be able to change, and we all have areas we can change. God would have each of us to fully accept the areas in our lives that we cannot change, and He would also have us to change areas in our lives by His

grace and mercy.

It is God's plan for us to accept ourselves, which means accepting our physical flaws and blemishes, including those from our past that we have no control over. And we must recognize that God can use everything we have gone through as we hand it over to Him and surrender ourselves to live a life of obedience to His word. God can use your every imperfection to build you into a person who will truly rely on Him so He can use you to transform the lives of others who will do the same. It's not your good life or your flawless life and upbringing that will bless others. It is always the work that God does, and what He does is totally irrespective of who we are, where we have been, and what we have done. God is the only perfect one. He is not looking for perfect people. He is looking for people who are imperfect and broken so He can mold and shape and empower them to accomplish His will.

Did you know that everything in your life and everything you have experienced is redeemable by God? God is willing and able to touch every area of our brokenness. The worst thing in our lives can also be the best thing that God uses to transform us and others.

God sees your past and the mistreatment of many. He sees the mistakes in your life, and He sees the imperfections of our bodies, the things that we have no control of, knowing that the physical flaws and imperfections were all given by God and He has a plan and a purpose for it all. God would also want us to extend mercy to those who are working on changing areas in their lives that need to be changed with the knowledge that we also have areas we are working on changing with God's help. We are all a work in progress and we are all completely dependent on God for every breath we take. As a result, we can be kind to others, knowing they cannot fit the mold others have for them. They also have inner struggles. It's just that no one knows about them. You are not alone. When you turn everything over to God, nothing in your past will ever be wasted. God will use it, and God will transform you.

Upper and Lower Body

Are you trying to look just right but you are struggling with your upper or lower body and can't get the right size clothes to fit? Do you struggle with certain areas of your body that just won't cooperate? A lot of people have that struggle. When it is not those areas, it is certainly another area that will not come into line. We all struggle to have the right body. But what is the right body? In our society, emphasis is placed on one's looks and the fitness of one's body. Hence, beauty care and health and fitness products are among the best sellers.

People are becoming more interested in developing the looks and body that meet the standard set by TV personalities and fashion models. In an effort to reach this goal, some people are using more health products. Also, some people exercise for long hours in order to acquire the physique that is acceptable to society and comparable to others.

Why should people try to look like TV personalities? Were we all born to become TV personalities, movie stars, models, or famous athletes? Obviously not, so if people are trying to become what they were not intended to be, what can they expect?

Some are not going to attain the ideal looks. Others will not attain their desired size or shape. Therefore, some people will feel frustrated and disappointed. Many people will feel like losers because their dream has not come true.

However, no one needs to be frustrated over what society considers to be dream physiques and looks. Why? The chief reason is that every person is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). Therefore, each person is endowed with the best looks and physique with which to bring glory to God. Everyone is made different, yet pleasing to God, his or her Maker (Exodus 4:10–12).

Since we have been given God's best, we must make the maximum use of the looks and physique we have. It would please God to see us being satisfied with what He has given us. Then we can begin to think like Paul who said, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation" (Philippians 4:11). Everyone will not have the same beauty and physical agility, but everyone is blessed with everything needed for the praise and glory of God. This is true equality, and this is all that matters. It is good that we are all equal in the things that matter to God. When we grasp this, it will end the strife and struggle. Many people have physical areas they can never change because they are in the bodies that God gave them. It is the body that He wants you to accept and use and be proud of regardless of what others may think. Accept God's gift of your body, and don't ever look down on yourself because of what others may think. Some have taken negative comments to the extreme. Many have felt that they cannot deal with themselves and the comments of others and have decided to take their own lives. Little Sam faced the pressure of being too small, and big John faced the pressure of being too big. Big John took it really hard, and one Sunday after going home from church, he said good-bye to the world and to the put-downs of others. Don't ever allow negative comments to get to you. Always remember that the God who made you accepts you just the way you are. Come in line and agree with God, and rise above the teasing of others. Big secret—they don't love you, and they don't care about you or anyone else. They are so unhappy that they try to make others unhappy. There is no perfect person.

Facing the Foe

Since God is very pleased with the people He created, how is it that we have grown to be so dissatisfied with ourselves and others? Why do we struggle so intensely to remake ourselves and others? The key answer is found in the nature of our adversary, the Devil. The Bible says, "Your adversary the devil goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

This adversary, Satan, who is the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4), is working to cause us to feel discontented with how we view ourselves. He destroys the beauty that God has given to us by replacing it with a warped image of ourselves, and that is done with our agreement, acceptance, and help.

We help Satan when we believe his lies about ourselves. Sometimes he lies or deceives us by causing us to feel inferior. He lets some of us feel that we are not physically attractive. He deceives others by causing them to feel superior to others who do not have their looks and shape.

This feeling is rebellion against the Word of God, which commands us "not to think more highly about ourselves than we ought" (Romans 12:3). If we follow Satan's deception, he will destroy us because we are blind to our real inside problem, which God wants to work with us to change. Can you imagine that we spend so much money and time working against ourselves as we cooperate with our greatest enemy?

The Attack of the Mind

Our enemy, the Devil, has a plan to destroy us by capturing and attacking our minds. Did you know that whoever captures the mind always has great control over the body? The Bible says, "Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one to whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?" (Romans 6:16).

Rightly speaking, God made us to have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5). According to God's plan, we should be thinking right thoughts and doing right actions. Instead, we submit our minds to Satan, who controls us. Because he dominates us, he continues to weave harmful thought patterns into our minds. The result is we give in to the practice of destructive behaviors. The Bible records that "as a man thinks in his heart so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

The link between what you think and what you do is so strong that there is absolutely no escape unless you change your thinking by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2). Right thoughts produce right feelings, which produce right



actions. That is why it is so important that you reject negative messages (wrong thoughts) and feed your mind with that which will build you up. Philippians 4:8 says, “Think on that which is noble and of good report.”

Our thoughts do not only affect our actions. They strongly influence how significant and secure we feel. When we think negatively, we feel insignificant and insecure. This usually results in feelings of anger, hate, bitterness and depression. Those of us who harbor these destructive emotions usually end up with suicidal thoughts.

On the other hand, when we think positively, we will experience feelings of significance and security. Thus, we will experience the emotions of love, joy, and peace (Galatians 5:22). With these emotions, we will have wholesome, happy feelings about ourselves and others.

If you have stored up negative information about yourself and you are in the habit of bringing it to mind whenever things seem to be going wrong, you should delete that data. Debug your mind of any negative and damaging thoughts by replacing them with positive thoughts. As often as negative thoughts surface in your mind, immediately replace them with a positive thought such as, “God loves me and has a purpose for me.”

Perhaps you know the little chorus, “Be careful little eyes what you see.” How important it is that you take this advice? If there is ever a time that we need to “watch our eyes,” it is now. There is so much to engage our eyes and attack our minds. The Word of God tells us “to think on the things that are lovely, pure, beautiful and virtuous” (Philippians 4:8). Listen up! This command is in direct opposition to the menu most young persons are served through the TV, books,

movies, and social media.

To keep your mind pure, you must decide not to view X-rated and violent programs, pornography, or anything the Devil would use to change your thinking and to reprogram your mind. If you continue to do so, you will be setting yourself up to experience feelings and desires with which you will not be able to deal with. These are strong desires and feelings that were not intended for you. Stimulated sensual desires call for gratification. That is why any mental or physical actions that are used to gratify these desires usually lead to the progression of evil thoughts and deeds. Anyone who follows this practice is likened to a man who “scoops fire into his lap, or one who walks on hot coals” (Proverbs 6:27–28).

How can you keep from thinking evil? You must protect your mind by deciding from now on you will not allow yourself to do things like viewing X-rated material, violent programs, pornography, or any other sensual material that will destroy you. Many acts of rape, incest, prostitution, abusive sexual acts, and murder were all first committed in the mind.

You should also think about the clothes you wear and guard against indecent exposure. Realize that if you continually view people who expose their bodies, you will likely learn to expose your body. In addition, you too will become bait.

Before all acts, good and bad, are done, they were first thought of and agreed upon in the mind. As a young person, regardless of your environment, be it good or bad, you are capable of thinking and committing any act of sin known to man (Jeremiah 17:9). There is absolutely nothing that you would not do if you do not learn to screen the forces that influence your mind.

If an individual who appears to be a fine young person were to commit a crime, the questions may be asked, “Who would ever have thought that such a fine young person from such a wonderful family would have committed such a gruesome act?” The fact is that he did not control the forces that influenced his mind. You, too, could commit similar acts if you do not control the forces that control your mind.

Hence, you must say no before that pornographic material comes around. When it comes for the first time, you may think you are taking an innocent look. The next time you may look a little more intently. Very soon, you will be going to the adult stores and adult sites on your own. Recruiters are always looking for new recruits.

The first time that pornography was passed around in high school or college, it was done to create a thirst for porn. Once the appetite has been opened in that direction, the desire for other evil ideas and actions will be aroused. The mind will always have to go a little further to satisfy that stronger evil desire.

Once you get on this destructive highway, it is difficult to see an exit. The Bible tells us that “no one who goes that way comes back alive” (Proverbs 8:25–27). We are also encouraged to “gird up the loins of our minds” (1 Peter 1:13). You cannot gird up your mind while you are watching porn.

The things you allow to enter your mind will possess you. There is a very strong relationship between what people view and what they do. That is why commercials are always such winners for the sale of products. Your mind may not have been on food, but once you see that commercial, you begin thinking of food. In the same way, innocent minds can be trapped into unhealthy thoughts and practices.

Make a list of harmful thoughts you don't need to have.

The Attack on the Body

The attack on your mind is aimed at the destruction of your body. Your body is a gift from God. The Bible says, “God wants your body to be His temple” (1 Corinthians 6:19). Your body was created in God's image. Therefore, it is pleasing to Him and should be acceptable to you. The attack on your body is to get you to dislike yourself. Some of us dislike ourselves so much that we refuse to view ourselves in a mirror.

If you do not like your body, your life has little or no value to you. You can find any number of people who do not really like themselves. Most of us can point out things about our features that we do not like.

If you were to get an honest opinion from someone that you consider very handsome or very beautiful, that person would quickly tell you about his or her flaws. Perhaps the flaw that person will point out is with his or her ears, eyes, or nose or even his or her neck.

Not only are people dissatisfied with themselves, but they make sure to communicate to others that they should dislike themselves also. This practice is very common among teenagers who are experiencing physical changes.

For your contentment, which brings peace of mind, you have to accept the body

with which God has blessed you. Your body is special. It is precious. No one else has your looks and fingerprint. There is no other person like you. Therefore, accept yourself and do not expect to look like someone else.

People who do not accept themselves will eventually try anything with the hope that others will accept them. If you do not accept your body, you will find it difficult to believe that you are accepted by others. You will then believe the lie that you are not good enough. And soon you will want to destroy your body. You must accept your body in order to have a positive self-concept. This will add meaning to your life.

Peer Pressure

Meaning and significance are so important, especially when we are dealing with our peers. Young people feel that they are unable to meet the pressures that are placed upon them. They experience the pressure to look a certain way. It is believed that everybody must have the same haircut to be “cool.” It is also common for young people to believe that everybody must have the same type of clothing in order to be accepted.

Remember, we should not all try to look alike. Even if you were to wear the same things that others are wearing, you would still look different and rightly so. For example: if two people have the same amount of money, they would use it differently because they have different values. Our Designer is a God of such vast variety that He would not squeeze us all into a few molds.

This effort of trying to look like others, or trying to be like others could go on until death. As soon as you accept that you are different and special, you can reject every source that will pressure you into being like others.

The pressures start as early as preschool. They continue throughout life. As one gets older, more pressures are added. One may think it is necessary to keep up with the Joneses, who are trying to keep up with someone else. All this is geared to make you feel discontented with yourself and with God, your Maker.

The problem is that people who are empty are searching for something they think they lack. They are always trying to acquire more and do more, hoping to fill the void they feel. They want you to do the same. This game will never end. Nobody will ever win. God did not intend for us to play this game. You do not have to put yourself down because you do not meet the expectations of your peers. Do not feel timid and unhappy and develop a low self-concept.

When you have low self-worth, you become very easy prey for your peers. They tend to see you as weak and vulnerable. People with low self-worth usually do



a lot of negative self-talk. They store up and replay negative messages that their peers constantly send. For example: your peers may suggest that you are quiet and tend to be all to yourself. They may entice you to take the “wonderful pill” that will make you happy and popular. They may tell you that you will become a part of a large group of persons who are taking the pill.

Do not believe it! Do not give in! If you do, you will be dragged farther into a web of evil practices. Once you get on this track, you will find it very difficult to get off.

Young people who do not accept themselves will find their peers offering them a great idea to make them “cool” by giving them a gun. They want you to feel macho. You will be told that you can acquire whatever you want with the use of your gun. They will encourage you not to be afraid because you will not be caught.

You may not have reached the point where you have been pressured into receiving satanic advice. Perhaps you would not feel confident in following your peers. Good! But you may know someone from your school or your friend’s school who is already on that track. It may even be your relative who is experiencing this level of pressure.

The pressure young people experience affects every family. It may be that you and your family experienced the devastating result of peer pressure by way of premarital sex, sexually transmitted disease, and even murder.

You definitely can cut this cycle short by accepting yourself and reshaping your thinking. Listen up! The pill, the gun, sex, and crime are all a part of Satan’s plot to destroy you. Reject the pressures of your peers and destroy Satan’s plan.

Managing Peer Pressure

Did you know that peer pressure does not end the day you leave high school? No, peer pressure goes on to college, it goes on to the workplace, it goes on to the place where you live, where you shop, and it also goes on to where you eat and where you die and your body is buried. Peer pressure is wicked. It is evil, and it follows one to the grave. The only way to stop such a beast from following you is to go against the tide. What does that mean? Let’s suppose you were going for a walk at the park and it is your custom to go for a walk every evening at 6:00 p.m., but unfortunately every evening as you go for a walk you discover that at that time of the evening they put on the sprinklers to water the grass. You can do one of two things—you can continue to walk at 6:00 p.m. and allow yourself to get wet, and not just wet, but soaked, or you can be sure to time yourself in such a way that you are not out at the park at 6:00 p.m. to get wet or even soaked. So it is with peer pressure. You too will have to work against the tide so you will not be trapped by this awful scheme of the evil one. We work against the plot of the enemy by recognizing that no matter what you do in life, it will never be acceptable to man. There will always be areas in your life where you do not measure up. Not one who goes on this roller coaster of life will ever measure up to one’s expectation. It was not meant for you to feel accepted. The good news is that you are accepted by the one who you have invited to accept you as His child. This is the common ground of acceptance for everyone.

Omit the Middle Man

In the marketing industry, there is the manufacturer, the store, and the consumer. Unfortunately, the goods don’t go directly from the manufacturer to the consumer. If they did, they would cost a lot less because there would be no middle man. In our lives we are directly accountable to God in all we do and in all that we say. God made us, and He has a plan for each life. There is an enemy who is always trying to keep us away from what the Lord has in store for us. He always uses other people to distract us and to keep us away from knowing and understanding that we are only accountable to God and not man. We are exactly who God wants us to be. Our home is in heaven, no matter where your address is on earth. Your body will be perfect when you get to heaven. He accepts you just the way you are. The pressure of man is not because they love you and want you to look a certain way or shop at certain places. The pressure of

man is always to let you know that you are not measuring up to their standard, which really is no standard. God's standard for you is for you to be in Him. That means you will see your lack and your need for Him and for you to surrender your life to Him. All other standards have to measure up to that standard, and that makes the ground level for all of us. It goes back to Jesus and how He sees us. We are either in Christ Jesus because we gave our lives to Him and He has come to dwell in us or we are outside of Christ based on the decision we have made. In the end nothing will matter except the place where Jesus is or is not in our lives. Our time on earth is passing, and the day we leave this life all that will matter is the place where Jesus is in our lives—not what we have acquired, the car we drove, the neighborhood we lived in, the friends we had, and the places we shopped.

Accepting the Things I Cannot Change

There are things in all of our lives, both in the physical and the emotional realms that we will never be able to change. Why is this so? Sometimes we have to deal with and accept that which was done to us. We are simply not able to go back in time and erase the scars that our particular experience left us. Nevertheless, take courage in the fact that although you cannot undo that which was done to you, you can get the help you need to experience healing and restoration. This will help you to move on and live the productive life that God intended for you.

Seek help for situations of physical and sexual abuse to ensure that this does not become an ongoing experience. Call a local Bible-believing church, and see what help is available for you. Do not stop trying until you have found the help you need.

We all have features about ourselves that we just cannot change. These are some of the features and circumstances that God permitted us to experience. Society may not accept your features, and you may think that you need to do something about them in order to be accepted. That is not true.

In the space below, list the things that you cannot change:

Your Race

One of the features that you may feel inferior or superior about is your race. What race are you? Are you white, black, Hispanic, or Asian? The race in which you were born is certainly the race that God so wisely chose for you.

Every race is special. Because your race was chosen for you by God, you must be proud of your race. Also, God expects you to be proud of every other race that He has created. Accept the racial differences that God has made.

God made each person for His glory. He made all men and women. When God looks at us, He does not necessarily see our race. What He sees is our hearts (1 Samuel 16:7). He is looking for “those whose hearts are right toward Him.”

Some people tend to place strong emphasis on race. Those who do seek to exalt themselves as if they belong to the superior race. By so doing, they look down on others who belong to different races. God's Word tells us “he that glories, let him glory in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:31). We are also told in God's Word “we should not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think” (Romans 12:6).

If we do not treat a person of a different race with respect, we are living in darkness and folly. We are also setting ourselves above God, the Creator. If you are practicing racial prejudice, you need to ask God's forgiveness and stop doing so. If you continue, this prejudice will overshadow your life. It will also stifle your emotional and spiritual growth. Racial prejudice will rob you of the blessings God has promised.

If, on the other hand, prejudice is practiced toward you, you know it is not right. You know also that you do not have the power to change people's hearts, but God can. Do not take matters in your own hands. God says, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay” (Romans 12:19).

Love those who show prejudice toward you and forgive them. Remember that you have a higher authority to deal with—God. People may try to use your race to oppress you or hinder your progress, but they really cannot. Indeed, they may appear to be succeeding, but they are not, because real success only comes from God (Psalm 75:6–7).

When you accept your race as God ordained, you will have compassion on those who practice racial prejudice. You will understand that their prejudice is a result of their lack of confidence in themselves. You will also realize that they are trying to use their prejudice to compensate for the lack they are experiencing.

The Bible tells us, “In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek” (Galatians 3:28–29). You cannot change your race, so accept it as God-given. Be happy about the

racial choice that was made for you and for others.

Your Nationality

Be proud of your origin. You cannot change it. Allow no one to put you down because you are from another country. You may be an American who is living in Spain; therefore, your accent is different. People who are from Spain would prefer if Americans spoke Spanish the way they do. Americans would like people from other countries to speak the way they do.

It does not matter what country you are from. Even though you may be a resident or citizen of a new country, your native tongue will remain with you to a great extent. Accept your native tongue, and allow no one to try to change the diversity that God intended for you. Use your original accent with dignity. It is part of the uniqueness God gave you.

If people can influence you to feel inferior because of your accent, they would have accomplished their goal. Do not allow them to. Accept the high value that God has placed on you, your country, and your accent. God's Word tells us, "Every tribe and every nation will bring Him glory" (Revelation 5:9).

If, under God, you do not accept yourself and your place in the world, you will in no way be able to see those things that can be changed. The Bible speaks of Esther's acceptance of her place in the world while she was hated as a foreigner. She proudly identified with her people of origin and declared "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16). She was confident that God had chosen her to positively influence the fate of her people. Like Esther, your place in your world is purposed by God.

Physical Features

Are you dissatisfied with your physical features? Some of us are made to feel badly about our head, nose, lips, or even ears. We could be dissatisfied with any part of our body that cannot be changed.

In our dissatisfaction, we sometimes focus our attention on the physical feature with which God has permitted us to be born. Because we do not accept ourselves as God's handiwork (Ephesians 2:10), we blame God for the flaws we think we have. We complain to ourselves and others that God does not love us. We think we are not as beautiful as others, and we refuse to see anything that is good about ourselves. But is our thinking really right? No, absolutely not!

We worry that we are too tall or too short. Stop worrying! Once we have attained our maximum height, there is nothing we can do to alter it. We will always be

tall or short, depending on the family from which we come. If we do not accept this feature about ourselves, our wrong attitude can remain and gnaw at us for the rest of our lives. This will prevent us from being all we can be. Be wise, then, and accept your height.

God made us all different, and that is His perfect plan. You are beautiful as you are, and so is everyone else. Don't be blind. See the beauty that is in you. Those of us who do not understand God's design are blind to His purpose for whatever He allows in our lives and in the lives of others.

Here is a secret. Listen carefully. Look at yourself in the mirror. Yes, clothes off. Decide in your heart and before God that it is all right for you to have whatever features you do not like since those are the features God gave you. Once you have accepted this fact, and really mean it, no longer will it bother you when you are teased. The acceptance of your features is the key to you feeling good about yourself. And guess what? You hold the key.

Birth Parents

Regardless of how you feel about your parents, God, in His wisdom, chose your parents for you. You may never understand why. However, you must accept them.

Maybe your parents have never been there for you, and it is hard for you to acknowledge them as your parents. But God, who knows your difficulty, will make it possible for you to honor your parents as you allow Him to work with you (Exodus 20:12).

It is sometimes difficult to honor your parents if they never met your basic needs. Have you ever thought of the basic needs your parents may have lacked at the different stages of their lives? It is impossible for them to give you anything they did not receive from their parents and society. How could they, if they did not recognize God as their source of all things?

Do you know the pain your parents are still experiencing? They need healing from their hurts too. Maybe you are a step ahead of them because you are now receiving this information. Perhaps you may be the one that God will use to help them on the road to recovery.

Do you want to experience release from all the hurts you feel your parents caused? You must stop focusing on their mistakes. Transfer your focus, and look to the forgiving God who alone will heal and deliver you from your past. Do you know that God could use you to break that cycle of parental neglect (Isaiah 61:1)? He can even use you to begin a Godly heritage in your family.

Perhaps your parents were unable to meet some of the basic needs that you think you lacked. God knows all about this. He will abundantly provide for and satisfy the needs you feel. God promises to be there for you. God's Word says, "When my mother and my father forsake me, then the Lord will take me up" (Psalm 27:10).

Perhaps our parents may have failed us and God. We can, however, be assured that God in His mercy will make adequate provision for us. When our first parents, Adam and Eve, rejected God's plan in the garden of Eden, God made provision for us. God became man and provided a way for man to be in fellowship with Him when He offered Himself as the second Adam. The Bible tells us, "As in Adam all died even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (Romans 5:15).

Your parents cannot pay for what they did. Jesus Christ paid! So stop trying to let them pay. For your release from the feelings of hurt and anger toward your parents, you must accept them. By not doing so, you will remain in bondage. If you are to ever experience peace in your heart, you must get rid of those feelings that are weighing you down.

For some of you, acceptance may begin with your writing a letter or even making a phone call. Even if your parents are dead, you can still settle this parent-child relationship on your knees as you express all your deep-seated feelings before the Lord.

And guess what? When you take these feeling to Him, you have to decide to leave them with Him. If not, the hurt and disappointment will always come back. Each time these hurts come back to your mind, take them to God again. One day you will discover that these hurts are all gone. God tells us in His Word, "He will be a Father to the fatherless and will care for us when we cast all our cares upon Him" (Psalm 55:22).

As we accept the unchangeable things in our lives, our eyes will be opened to see the changeable features we need to work on. These are the things that are now a part of our lives that God would have us change by His grace and power.

Changing the Things I Can

God wants us to take a good, hard look at the things in our lives that can be changed and then change them. Change is never easy. We know that too well. Change takes time. It has been said by experts in behavior modification that it takes about ninety days for one to break a habit.

Some of us have difficulty changing certain areas in our lives, but we will agree that when we desire and value change, it will take place. The desired change will

come as we renew our minds (Romans 12:2). The Bible teaches that unless we change and "become as a little child, we cannot enter God's kingdom" (Matthew 18:3).

In the space below, list the things that you can change:

The right time to start any change in your life is now. It is never tomorrow. It is never sometime in the future.

Ideas on Areas of Change



Attitude: You can replace a bad attitude with a good one. In so doing, you can make dramatic changes in your life. As you sense the need for a proper attitude, you will place more value on the new attitude you desire to develop.

Appearance: People sometimes tend to be sloppy in the way they dress. You can change the way you dress and the type of clothes you wear. The way you choose your clothes and blend the colors will make you more attractive. You can groom your hair to enhance your appearance. The use of cologne, deodorant,

and toothpaste will also make a difference whether you are by yourself or in the company of others.

Skin Condition: Your skin is badly affected from the harshness of the weather. In order to replenish the luster of the skin, you can apply lotion and other skin care products regularly.

Language: Do you use foul language? You can surely replace foul words with clean, appropriate words. In communicating, you must make an effort to use words that uplift others. Your words must be aptly spoken. Use words that are like “apples of gold on tablets of silver” (Proverbs 25:11).

Weight: You should try to reduce your weight if you tend to have a problem in that area. If you try to eat properly and exercise regularly, you can see dramatic changes in your physical appearance regardless of your size.

Manners: Some of us have poor manners both at the table and in our interpersonal relationships. We can replace poor manners with appropriate behaviors. These changes will make us feel more confident and more sociable.

Conduct: The way we conduct ourselves reflects our character. Are you tardy most of time? You can become punctual by scheduling your time properly. Do you sometimes leave things lying around with the expectation that someone will pick up after you? You can change that pattern by putting things in their right place after each use.

Agreeing with God

When we consider all the unchangeable and the changeable features in our lives, we must come to the point where we agree with God. Unless we do, we cannot experience a meaningful life. We must agree with what God says about us and others.

Before we were even born, God had established forever all the facts concerning us. In His Word, God tells us, “We are fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14). This includes every person. That is how God perceives us all.

People’s thoughts and feelings toward us are usually directly opposite to what God says. God says, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways” (Isaiah 55:8). We tend to see each other from our own viewpoint. So we see some people as beautiful and therefore acceptable, while we see others as unattractive and therefore unacceptable (1 Samuel 16:7).

However, as God’s creation, we must cooperate with God by believing what He has said about each person. The Bible says that God “has crowned him with glory and honor” (Psalm 8:5).



If God says that each person is His masterpiece—“His workmanship” (Ephesians 2:10)—we must then correct our wrong thoughts by replacing them with the facts from God’s Word.

Every person is God’s perfect work, although he or she may not appear perfect in our eyes. This applies to every person you may consider different, even those who are physically and mentally challenged. Every person we encounter is God’s perfect creation.

An artist, when he is painting, may put in some extra strokes with his brush. Later, he may look at them and consider them to have spoiled his painting, and quite likely, he may discard it. Not so with God. Every creation is His masterpiece. Each person is valuable to God. Each person is “very good” (Genesis 1:31).

God, according to His plans, eternally takes care of those masterpieces whose minds were not developed according to our standards. Those masterpieces whose bodies have been marred because of sin and disease still bear the image of God. His Word says, “Nothing can thwart His plan” (Isaiah 14:27).

All the seeming mental and physical flaws that we see in the human family serve the same godly purpose as the physically and mentally whole. All are intended to point us to God, who alone can use these things to bring us to Himself. In so doing, He gives us His very best. Then we can agree with Him as we see His purpose unfold in our lives and in the lives of others.

Is it not through pain and suffering that we learn to depend on the Lord? For example, how else could a person learn to show compassion if the suffering

of others did not require his practical involvement in bringing relief? As he empathizes with someone, he is likely to feel grateful and humbled as he realizes that even though he is presently being spared, such suffering could very well happen to him or to one of his descendants.

As we have seen in the situation above, God has been glorified in the lives of both individuals. We do not always tend to see these situations as being perfect. Not so with God. “In our weakness He is made strong” (1 Corinthians 1:25).

When we agree with God that we are weak, we will then seek Him who is our strength. God promises that He is our strength and our salvation (Isaiah 12:2). We must agree that God is our strength and our personal Savior in every situation and in every type of need.

There is no need that you will ever have that Jesus the Savior will not supply according to His will (Philippians 4:6–7). When you invite Jesus into the boat of your heart and life, He will gladly save you and calm the storms of your life (Matthew 14:30–31).

Have you agreed with God and received the Savior, Jesus?

Learning to be Content

To ever be content with life and the place where you are in life is a decision you have to make. You will never be content comparing what you have and what you are able to accomplish in life if you are always seeking to match up with someone else. We can never match our lives with another person’s life because



God has made each of us as individuals, and we are all different. We were never intended to duplicate another person’s life. Individuals were made differently, and we were made to be different in style in manner and in accomplishments.

Many people want to have more in life and to accomplish more in life only to satisfy someone else and to prove to them that they are able to do what they have done and to go where they have gone to satisfy the craving of the old saying, “Anything you can do I can do better.” Is that what life is all about? Is that really important?

God has blessed my precious husband and me with four beautiful children, two precious daughters-in-law, and two special sons-in-law. We have also been blessed with five remarkable grandchildren. Every member of our family is a different individual with various gifts and abilities, likes and dislikes. All our grandchildren have outstanding abilities, but they cannot be compared against one another. Their abilities were certainly not given to them by God for that purpose. We were all intended to shine with the gifts and abilities we have been blessed with for the glory, praise, and honor of almighty God.

Everything we do in this life is in vain unless it has been laid at the feet of our Creator for Him to bless, use, and direct it in the way He has chosen to use it. I had the sad opportunity of sitting with patients many years ago when my husband and I and our family moved from the Caribbean to the United States. During the brief years I served in that capacity, I had the opportunity of sitting with patients who were coming to the end of their time here on earth. It was most unfortunate to see people leave this life having all that money can buy, having traveled to literally every country of the world and tasted food from the world’s finest restaurants and seen everything that their eyes could behold, and knowing as they come to the end, they have no future to look forward to. The Word of God says, “What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and lose his soul?” The greatest gift in all of life and eternity is to know Jesus.

A New Pursuit

The greatest joy a person can experience is the joy of knowing Jesus as 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 was 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 he cannot save himself. In considering the question of sin, we are faced with the 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 we receive this 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 that 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 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 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.

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 _____

Myth versus Truth

Myth: *I am not as physically attractive as Jessica or James, so God does not like me as much.*

Truth: God made you, Jessica and James, in His image (Genesis 1:27). That is why Jesus died on the cross for those who think they are physically attractive as well as for those who believe the Devil's lie and compare their physical features with that of someone else.

Myth: *If only I had enough money and lived in a different neighborhood, I would surely feel better about myself.*

Truth: Our worth to God is not based on bank accounts, flashy cars, or swanky neighborhoods. God does not see us as worthwhile by any of these standards. The Bible teaches, "A man's life does not abound in the amount of things which he possesses" (Luke 12:15).

The Word of God also tells us, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches and loving kindness rather than silver and gold" (Proverbs 22:1). Remember the rich fool who spent all his time acquiring wealth? The Bible teaches that we must be rich toward God (Luke 12:21).

Myth: *I will never be successful because no matter how I try, I just can't make it.*

Truth: God does not see people as A or B students. He does not judge by what He sees or by what He hears (Isaiah 11:3). Real success comes from God (Genesis 39:23).

The Bible teaches that God has a plan for you to succeed (Jeremiah 29:11). The Word of God clearly states that a person who "delights in the law of the LORD will succeed in whatever he does" (Psalm 1:3).

Myth: *Due to racial injustices, I will never be accepted by persons of other races. I will never be treated equal.*

Truth: God sees all men as equal: lost and without hope. God's Word says, "All, Jews and Gentiles alike, have turned away and have together become worthless" (Romans 3:9–11). The Bible teaches that through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God has brought all Jews and Gentiles into one family. When a person accepts Jesus as his or her personal Savior, that person is immediately "accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6).

The Bible says, "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, but Christ is all and in all" (Colossians 3:11). Thus, God

commands us to "accept one another just as Christ accepted us in order to bring praise to God" (Romans 15:7).

Myth: *I have always been a kind person. I find it difficult to say no.*

Truth: By not saying no to drugs or to sex, you are showing a very unkind attitude to yourself. God's Word tells us to plan to say no when no is appropriate (Matthew 5:37). To be afraid to say no when you should is to be false to God (Isaiah 57:11). It is also to make God a liar because He says, "That no temptation has taken you but that which is common to man" (1 Corinthians 10:13). Not to say no is also to refuse the "way of escape" that God in His love has provided. God's Word tells us that we "were bought with a great price," and therefore we must glorify God in our bodies. Since God says that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, when we practice sinful sexual acts, we disobey God's command and "grieve the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:13, 19). Again the Word of God tells us to "flee youthful lusts" (2 Timothy 2:22). The way to escape is to "resist the devil" (James 4:7).

Myth: *I have never been attracted to the opposite sex. Therefore I must be gay. There is no hope for me.*

Truth: There is hope in God's Word. No one needs to accept the suggestions that the enemy throws into our minds. Our feelings are programmed by what we hear and see. We do not live by feelings; we live by the truth. God is our authority, and God's Word is truth.

Truth: Our friends and acquaintances can negatively influence our attitudes and lifestyles. We should therefore carefully choose those friends and acquaintances who can influence us to practice behavior that pleases God, since God's Word declares, "They perish because they refused to love the truth and be saved" (2 Thessalonians 2:11). As a result, God sends "deluding spirits" because they have delighted in wickedness (verse 12). Again, the Bible tells that "their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened" (Romans 1:21).

The Bible also states, "God gave them over to the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another" (verse 24). Such persons have "exchanged the truth of God for a lie." The result is that "even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones ... Men commit indecent acts with other men" (Romans 1:26–27).

We are commanded to stay away from sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 6:18). God promises that if you will repent, He will forgive you and deliver you. "You shall call his name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Jesus promises salvation and deliverance.

Myth: *I would like to believe all that God has said, but I just can't. I am so young, but I have committed every sin in the book. If I could only have a second chance to do things all over, I would, but it is too late for me.*

Truth: God's Word says: "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:17). The Word also tells us that "though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18).

God says that He has placed your sins "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12). God has promised that "He will not treat us as we deserve" (verse 10). "Neither does God repay us for our iniquities."

So great is God's love for sinners, you and me. Can you believe that when Jesus died, "He took all our sins [past, present, and future] on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24)? "All of our sins were placed on Him" (Isaiah 53:6). "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves" (1 John 1:8).

The great fact is: "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just. He will forgive our sins. He will cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9). Take comfort in the fact that "[God] will not remember our sins" (Isaiah 43:45). He calls us to "Come and reason with Him" (Isaiah 1:18). He has placed "our sins into the depths of forgetfulness" (Micah 7:19). "He has turned His back on our sins" (Isaiah 38:17). Have you turned your heart to Jesus so He can keep you away from sin?

Yes, there is hope for you. If you will forsake your sinful lifestyle and turn to the Lord Jesus in true repentance, He will deliver you and set you free. "And they shall call His name Jesus for He shall save them from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). You will need the encouragement and help of Christians. Contact your local church for help.

A New Start

By His grace and mercy, God sends someone a message of hope and truth. For the first time, that individual realizes 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 expectations 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?

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.

No Worries Group Discussion

Group Study and Homework - Week 1 - Self Acceptance

How can I accept who I am along with my physical features? Make a list of the physical features in your body that you are now going to accept. These are not areas you can change.

Group Study Homework - Week 2 - Accepting Others

When we accept ourselves we will also learn to accept others knowing that we all have areas that we are dealing with in our lives. Make a list of how you are now going to accept others and not criticize them for the way they look.

Group Study Homework - Week 3 – Contentment

I must be content with who I am and how God has blessed me. Do you want to be happy? Be content with who you are and with what God has blessed you. Always seek to be the best person you can be and never compare yourself with anyone.

List areas in which you need to be content.

Group Study Homework - Week 4 – Walking in Contentment

Your leader will help you to capture the things you have learned in the other sessions and help you to come up with a plan to walk these principles out in your life. God made you and He will help you walk in wisdom. James 1:5 – If anyone lacks wisdom let him ask of God...

