

Discussing How To Restore The Early Church

Returning Intimacy and Power to the Father's Children

*"I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for,
it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.
For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."*
(Matthew 18:19,20)



SECTION 5 - LESSON 32

THE HOME

The Basic Building Block For Spiritual Growth:

- *Removing Presumption and False Expectation*
- *Applying God's Word To Train Yourself Not to give in to Presumption and False Expectation*



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THE HOME

The Basic Building Block For Spiritual Growth: *Removing Presumption and False Expectation*

“[Satan] was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies”

(John 8:44).

Think of the last time you found out you'd been *deceived*. How did you feel? Angry? Foolish? Horrified that you naively fell for a lie? You're not alone. If you are determined in your heart to follow Jesus and live in Covenant with your Father, Satan has a snare set for you. The master of lies and deception relishes using these weapons to tear apart relationships and thrust guilt on Jesus' family.

Satan knows you well — you were his before you came by trust into the Kingdom of our Lord. The master of lies also knows God's Word probably more accurately than you do. He was brash

enough to quote it to Jesus during His time of wilderness temptation.

Because the devil is aware of the freedoms our Father has showered on you in His Word as well as the boundaries established there, Satan is eager to entice you to become dissatisfied with your freedoms and overstep your boundaries. As he did with Adam and Eve, the devil will strive to deceive you through **presumption** or **false expectation**.

The Bible is our Father's protection for us. It is the revelation of both His freedom and boundaries for us as well as His plans and purposes for each of us. Through the enlightenment and power of the Holy Spirit, the Bible guides and equips us for His service. Never lose sight of the fact that Satan is not concerned if you know the Bible. He knows that knowledge *is not* the same as obedience. Obedience requires applying the Bible to your life and demands your willingness to *change* both your attitude and your actions.

Bible knowledge that has neither found application in your life nor brought you to a greater likeness of Jesus will deceive you into presuming that you are pleasing to God. Just remember: *“Knowledge puffs up...”* (1 Corinthians 8:1). Look at how many Nicolaitan “church” buildings are filled with Sunday School classes and Bible studies each teaching the Word of God. Yet why are the statistics for these people in the areas of divorce, abortion, and sexual

immorality just as high as they are for those who make no pretense about following Christ? They teach knowledge without application!

As we've shared in previous lessons, Jesus warns us against this pattern of teaching as He compares the wise man who built on solid rock and the foolish one who built on sand (see Matthew 7:24-27). A person with understanding realizes that his life will be changed only as He *applies* the truths that have been revealed to him.

He takes action based on his obedient trust in the One Who has given him the means to withstand the floods and winds of trials. This trust that brings obedience separates the wise person from the fool who hears the truth but takes no steps to act on it.

Unlike some outward sins that are readily perceived and perhaps more avoidable, the attitudinal sins of **presumption** and **false expectation** are subtly disguised. It is because they are wrapped around the root of your sin nature.

This doesn't mean that you can't discern their presence, however. Suspect presumption or false expectation if you:

- Take God or others for granted.
- Take on responsibilities not given to you or required of you.
- Take liberties with God's freedoms or with the kindness of others.
- Live in fantasy and delusion rather than obedience to God's Word.

As we shall see shortly, these inner attitudes are often revealed in what people say: *"For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks"* (Matthew 12:34).

In the beginning... Presumption

Adam and Eve experienced the perfect environment for walking in bliss with their God. So what led to their downfall? Was it really eating the fruit? No! It was their sin of presumption:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:1-5).

The holy fear of the Lord that would have produced obedient trust melted as the couple believed the lie that *"you will not die."* The stage was thus set for them to conclude that there would be no consequences for their disobedience. The enticing words, *"you will be like God,"* enticed them to believe they could be like the One who created them. They were deceived.

Without a holy fear that God is absolutely God and that an intimate love relationship with Him calls for obedient trust, Adam and Eve indeed came to know good and evil. With that knowledge came the consequence: shattered intimacy with God and banishment from His presence.

And what do we know about the crafty serpent? The Bible tells us that Lucifer (Satan) was thrown from heaven

because of his presumption to be worshiped like God. Our enemy's goal has not changed. Satan strives tirelessly to destroy your relationship with God and bring worship to himself as master.

He presumes that once the true followers of Jesus have been eliminated, he will then become god:

"[The lawless one] will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

To accomplish this scenario he relies on two assumptions: your ignorance of the Word and your laziness or fear to apply it to your life.

Presumption Causes Disharmony

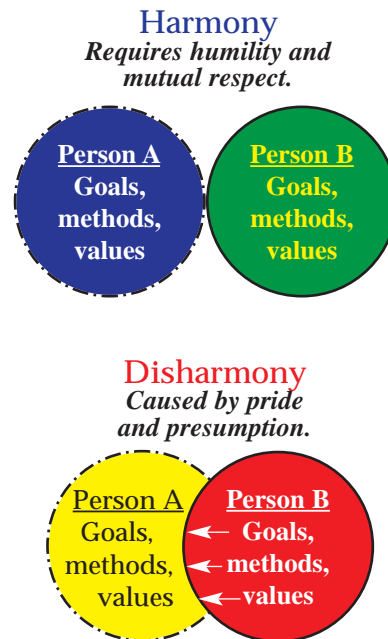
How can you recognize presumption in yourself or in someone else? Most presumptive acts and attitudes infringe on the *goals, methods, or values* of other people, including God. Goals, methods, and values represent a large portion of an individual's identity, motivation and comfort level. They accomplish this by defining the freedom and boundary of an individual's interaction with others and with God. Here is how we are defining goals, methods, and values:

- **goals** The purpose of a person' life. Goals show *where* they are going. It articulates the desired end that all their activities are designed to reach.
- **methods** The manner and practice by which a person lives out their life. These are the principles that clarify *how*.

- **values** The emotions a person attaches to other people, things, or events that explain *what* they cherish and *why* they do.

[For more on the importance of goals, methods and values see our book, **Growing Relationships Through Confrontation**, a free download on our website].

Harmony in a relationship exists when the goals, methods, and values of those who are involved are sufficiently understood by the parties and respected as part of the conditions of that relationship. This takes open discussion by humble people.



Disharmony occurs when one person acts presumptuously and crosses the boundary to infringe on the goals, methods, and values of the other person. This unwillingness to respect another person

is impudence: it shows a disregard for the other person's dignity and identity.

A presumptuous person Person B (previous page), is like a "bull-in-a-china shop". They will never change unless someone gives them **feedback** and/or **confronts them**. This is where "tough love" comes in — the loving courage to say to the person the truth.

For the presumptuous person, repentance that turns from impudence and asks forgiveness for the hurt caused is the biblical condition for undoing the damage done to the relationship.

Do you consider yourself a presumptuous person? Yes or no? If yes, what do you do to others and why do you do it?

When confronted about your actions how do you respond?

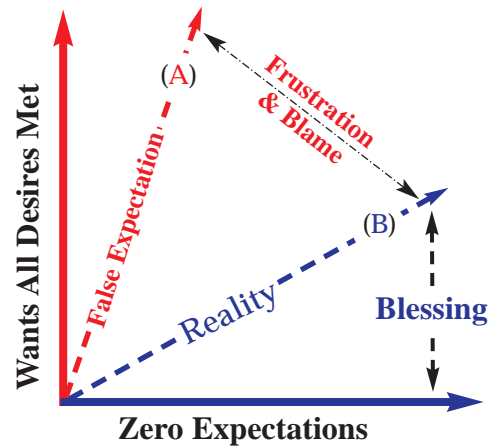
If answered no above, do you find yourself giving in to presumptuous people? Yes or no? If yes, what do you do and why?

If you're married, has presumption hindered your relationship with your spouse? Or your children? Yes or no? If yes, describe what it has done.

False Expectation

How can you recognize a person who has been swayed by false expectation? That individual is never content. He or she is never content unless each desire has been met.

People with **false expectation**, (A) on the diagram, already have a preconceived notion about how they want something to turn out. Their unchecked sin nature causes them to be **outcome-based**, and not **obedience-based**. They view any boundaries as infringements, and they are definitely not concerned with God's will.



Frustrated by not having all their desires met, or achieving an outcome that fits their expectations, they look for someone or something to **blame**. Their frustration fills them with ungratefulness. They neither recognize nor experience blessings from God or from anyone else who shows them kindness.

Reality (B) on the diagram, which is the real world, always falls short of their expectations. The humble hearts of these people understand that blessing comes when a person with **zero expectations** is grateful with any kindness they receive. They will chose to be **obedience-based** trusting God for all good things.

The heart of the humble who have zero expectations is captured by Isaiah:

I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD, the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the LORD has done for us— yes, the many good things he has done, according to his compassion and many kindnesses. (63:7).

Where would you place yourself on the false expectation chart? If you're married, has false expectation hindered your relationship with your spouse? Or your children? Yes or no? If yes, describe what it has done.

THE HOME

The Basic Building Block For Spiritual Growth: Applying God's Word To Train Yourself Not to give in to Presumption and False Expectation

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

How does one keep themselves from giving in to their sin nature through pre-

sumption and false expectation? It is done by applying God's Word to their lives. Do you see, lives marked by presumption or false expectation need to be biblically confronted in order to stop the damaging effects of the sin nature.

Shortly you will see a number of case studies simulating conversations you may at some time experience. Each scenario represents a particular facet of presumption or false expectation. By developing a biblical application, a *halakhah*, for dealing with each case study, the Spirit of God will train your mind to recognize Satan's ploys. Remember: He loves to use your own sin nature against you.

[We want to suggest that you use the steps we suggest in our book, **Christian Halakhahs** for establishing a *halakhah*. Below we list the four steps. We also encourage you download and read the entire book].

Steps in Establishing *Halakhahs*

When you are prompted by a need or concern such as one of those listed on the previous page, begin to prayerfully seek God to determine how the Word would apply.

- 1 Prayer.** To establish a *halakhah* for your particular issue, pray. Ask for a spirit of wisdom and revelation (see Ephesians 1:17), entreating the Father to convey His will regarding your issue or concern.
- 2 Bible passages.** Next, ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind any verses or passages from the Bible that would apply to your situation. Don't try to apply anything to your situation *until* you are sure that you have compiled all possible biblical references. Some verses will be more pertinent than others. That is, you'll recognize one

or more of the verses as more foundational to the issue. Other verses will add understanding to the foundation. When you have taken the extra pain to pursue all the biblical leads prompted by the Holy Spirit, a sense of peace will probably rest on you and anyone who may be sharing this investigation with you.

3 Biblical application. Armed with the appropriate verses and passages, you can address your problem and concern. Be careful to not get into “if—then” reasoning as you try to apply the Word to the situation. The normal tendency after pondering the Bible application to the situation is to immediately draw conclusions and ask questions. What will this decision cost you? How will this affect others? What changes will you need to go through if you decide to live by this new conviction? No matter how strong the urge is to weigh the personal cost of your decision — don’t! You must first determine in your heart that you *do* have the correct biblical application for your situation. The Holy Spirit will again give you peace if this is what God wants for you.

4 Action to take. Only after you are convinced in your heart that you have correctly applied God’s Word to your situation is it time to take the next step, application of grace. Grace is the power and desire to uphold God’s truth in your life no matter what it costs you. Remember, you are applying *halakhahs* to your life because of your *love for Jesus*. The goal is not right behavior for its own sake. If correct behavior in the hopes of gaining God’s favor is your motivation, you will become prideful. You may even develop a disdain for others who don’t live or think the way you do. God’s grace will enable you to keep your new conviction because of your

desire to lovingly obey Him. Continue to pray for grace. And repent of your failure for not having known these new truths or lived by them before this time.

Examine each case study to discern what the true issues are and where presumption or false expectation are revealed. With your spouse and/or others close to you in the faith, create a *halakhah* — a biblical application of response for that situation. The more you practice this as a way of life, the more you will find the Holy Spirit training you to apply what you are learning.

At the same time you will learn to recognize the attitudinal sins of presumption and false expectation in yourself. You’ll also be preparing yourself to give a biblical response to others who are facing similar circumstances.

Have your Bible and a Concordance at hand so that you are establishing a solid biblical foundation for your application. The verses suggested for each case study are only a small sampling of biblical wisdom. Find others that pertain directly to your own life situation.

1. Trapped by the Past

For men: “I wish I was able to love my wife more. My problem is that I never saw love and affection between my own parents. My Dad was an alcoholic and my mother was very controlling. I know what the Bible says about loving my wife but I can’t do it because of my past.”

For women: “I wish I could respect my husband more. I never saw my own mother respect my Dad. He was an alcoholic and she was very controlling. I know what the Bible says about respecting my husband but I can’t do it because of my past.”

- In your own words, what message are the husband and the wife really giving to their spouses?

- What are they saying about the power of God to heal?

- See 2 Corinthians 3:17,18 and 1 Corinthians 2:3-5. What other verses can you find that would reveal the nature of their presumption and their need to repent? What counsel would you add to help strengthen their marriage relationship?

2. Self-indulgent Widow

“My widowed mother has just attempted suicide. She told us kids that she did it because she doesn’t think we love her. It’s really sad because Mom has put on over sixty pounds since my Dad died 3 years ago and has to take all kinds of medications now for ailments due to her self-indulgence. It seems as though she’s spending most of her time partying with her friends.”

When a woman loses her husband she enters into a whole new realm of freedom and boundaries that are described in God’s

Word. Her widowhood often demands new relational responsibilities on the part of her children. Using your concordance, study the verses which apply to widows and the responsibilities of her children.

- Now that she is not under her husband’s authority, under whose authority and protection does she come? How might that authority and protection be enacted on a regular basis?

- How could you help her to identify activities and relationships that would be pleasing to God?

3. Getting into Debt

“My wife and I believe that God wants us to start a Christian business. We want to develop a line of sweatshirts and tee shirts with Christian messages on them. The bank told us we could borrow \$25,000 to start our business.”

- Is getting into debt God’s way of providing for His children? See Luke 12:16-21. How does this man’s presumption about the future apply to borrowing money?

- Some sins attack the very character of God. Our worry about His ability to provide attacks His Name, *Jehovah Jireh*—God our Provider. See Matthew 6:25-34. What do worry and being debt have in common?

- If you are in debt, do you sense a need to be free from it? What creative means is God prompting in your heart to change your ways of money management?

4. Worship by the Unrepentant

“My friend leads worship at his congregation. He told me that people don’t need to repent of their sins before they enter worship. He says that as a person worships, God will cleanse him or her from their sins.”

- Does God accept our worship or prayers even when we are aware of unconfessed sin? Yes or no? What is the biblical basis for your decision

- Does His love for us override His standards of holiness? See 1 Peter 3:10-12; 1 John 1:9; James 5:16.

- How do *you* prepare for prayer or worship? Develop a biblical basis for your own preparation.

5. Rejecting Parental Authority

“We’ve really prayed about it and believe that God wants Brittany and me to get married before school begins this fall. We both only have one year left of college and it will be easier on both of us if we’re married. It’s just that her Dad who is an unbeliever told us to wait until we finish school. Should we obey God or respect her Dad’s wishes?”

- Would God guide a child to dishonor his or her parents? See Ephesians 6:1-3.

- Does it matter whether her father is a believer or not?

- Will the girl respect her husband’s authority if she does not respect her father’s?

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- Is this young man’s question about “obeying God” valid in the way he is using it to contrast with the counsel of the girl’s father?

6. Interfering with God’s Chastisement

“My brother-in-law’s business wasn’t doing well so his wife, who is my sister, got involved. Before long she was making all the decisions and the business started turning around. The sad part is that after the business got better he ran off with his secretary.”

- Read Deuteronomy 28. Does God still chastise His people today? What might God have been trying to do in the businessman’s life before his wife stepped in?

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- How would you know when you or someone else were being chastised by the Lord?

- If you were the wife’s friend, what would you have counseled her from the very beginning? What would you have counseled the husband?

7. Facing the Future

“As I look at the lives of other Christians, it seems that my wife and I are never as blessed as they are. We put a lot of time into planning our future and still nothing comes out as we expected. On top of that, all of these failed plans have only caused my wife to worry more.”

- Is it failed plans or worrying that is the real problem here?

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- How does Proverbs 21:5 apply to planning for the future?

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- See Matthew 6:25-27. What is the correct understanding between *planning* for the future and *worrying* about the future?

- Is there anything that you or a family member is worried or anxious about at this time? Yes or no? If yes, what is it?

8. Employer Authority

“My boss wants me to start putting in overtime on Sundays. It’s alright for him, he’s divorced and doesn’t have a family to be concerned with. He’s such a jerk! How will I be able to observe my Sabbath with my family?”

- **Read Daniel 1. The captives were asked to violate God’s Word. How did they handle their situation?**

- **Does the gist of Romans 13:1-5 apply to this situation? Why?**

- **See Ecclesiastes 10:20. Could the Lord be bringing this situation upon this family head to deal with his or her sinful disrespect?**

- **What approach should this person use to make an appeal to the boss?**

9. Is Bankruptcy Stealing?

“Tanya and I are going to file for bankruptcy. We have about \$16,000 in credit card debt and if we don’t file, we’ll lose everything we have purchased.”

- **Does Exodus 20:5 apply to bankruptcy and paying back legitimate debts? Why? Explain your position.**

- **What recommendations would you give to this couple if they came to you for counsel?**

10. Handling Mistreatment

“Dad, that bully Kevin keeps saying mean things to me on the school bus. How can I get him to stop?”

- **See Psalm 27:11; Romans 2:4; Matthew 5:43-48. What are the proper attitudes and actions in which you should train your children to handle mistreatment by others?**

- What is true biblical meekness? How should this child respond in this situation?

11. Priorities: Ministry or Family

“My Mom hasn’t been feeling well for the past few days. This coming Sunday my husband and I were thinking of driving the four hours to go and see her. The only problem is I teach Sunday School and our pastor says ministry takes precedence over everything else.”

- What are God’s priorities for a follower of Jesus?

- When these priorities seem to conflict with each other, how would God have you resolve them?

- What situations have you encountered in which an obligation or activity conflicted with a family need? How did you respond? Was your response sound from a biblical stance?

12. Tithing versus Family Need

“My brother has been out of work for over a year since he got hurt. The money that he’s getting isn’t keeping up with the bills. My wife thinks we should give our tithe to help my brother and his family. I talked to our pastor and he says the tithe is only for the church.”

- What is God’s purpose for the tithe?

- With the Temple gone and the Levitical priesthood no longer necessary, to whom should your tithe go?

- Are you regularly setting aside an amount of your income to be used for God’s Kingdom purposes?
