

## Lifebyte 65

It's Time For Followers of Jesus To Live Repentantly—Part 8

### *Does Your Marriage Reflect Your Covenant With Our Father?* (Lesson 5)

*"Thanks be to God, Who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him. For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing." (2 Corinthians 2:14,15)*

### **Sanctify Your Marriage Into Christ's Likeness — Repent! and Stay Repentant!!!**



**Turn away from sin  
and strongholds**



**Turn to Jesus and  
become like Him**

*"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."*

(Ephesians 5:25-27)



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*“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out,  
that times of refreshing may come from the Lord” (Acts 3:19)*

## Have You Left The Desert and Crossed The River?

How do you think *our Lord* views your pilgrimage here on earth? Please consider this heaven’s-eye view of your life.

In our June/July 1999 Newsletter, *Crossing The Jordan*, we shared a prophetic revelation that our Lord had given us concerning crossing the Jordan River into the Promised Land to illustrate the Hebraic foundations that He’s restoring:

“The Jordan River is the demarcation between the Desert and the Promised Land. The 40 years of wandering the Sinai Peninsula was a time of testing to see if My people would grow in their trust of Me. Many today remain mired in their own “religious” Sinai, refusing to press onward toward the Jordan River where they might cross over and experience the fullness of the Covenant I offer them.

“As they’ve approached the Jordan, some have skittered alongside the bank to try one last religious venture, believing that they’ll finally experience what they’ve been seeking all throughout their barren Sinai years. A few thought that seeking signs and wonders would please Me, but they were deluded — they were only pleasing themselves.

“Others have been trapped in the Sinai because they’ve blindly followed their clergy. These leaders realized that once people cross over to the Promised Land, they’ll live in union with Me and with each other and not look to someone to stand between Me and them.

“Still others stop themselves from entering the River because they’re **held captive by the bitterness and betrayal** they experienced in failed relationships in the Sinai. Rather than seeing their suffering as part of

their Father’s character development into My Image, they go on resenting the people and events that hurt them. Therefore I allow them to be prisoners in their own man-made cells in the Sinai until they *humble themselves, repent, and forgive as I forgive*.

“Some have entered the River and have experienced difficulty crossing. It takes the persevering courage of Caleb to want the land I promised. When the other spies discouraged the Israelites from entering the Promised Land, “*Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, ‘We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it’*” (Numbers 13:30).

“It’s through **discussion together** that I, the Lord, have been sanctifying the two of you. Now, *together*, minister to others from the changes *I* made in your marriage. Minister from that which I’ve been promising all My children—the Promised Land. ***The Promised Land is the freedom they experience as I rule mind, will and emotions.***

“Warn My people! No married couple who enters the Jordan will set foot on the shore of the Promised Land ***unless both of them do so in union together.*** This message is not intended to divide marriages. Rather, both partners will stay in the river until they both, *in earnest*, decide to cross all the way over. Discord, unbelief, or fixation on the events and experiences of the Sinai by either of them will keep them both from crossing.”

This summarizes the understanding our Lord gave us after we talked with people around the country who were applying the Hebraic foundations as couples and families.

**“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord” (Acts 3:19)**

## **Our Lord’s View of Your Pilgrimage: Out of Slavery, Into Freedom**

Do you realize that you weren’t a “blank slate” when you were conceived? Studies indicate that 65% of human motivations are *prenatally determined*. The remaining 35% are developed through life experience. Your parents passed along to you core motivations that strongly influenced your mind, will and emotions — your soul. And, within these motivations are both a **desire to sin** and any **undemolished strongholds** that give you a *predisposition* to sin (Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:10-12).

When you are **born again**, you enter into Covenant union with our Father, Who seals you with the indwelling Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22)—the Spirit of Jesus (Romans 8:9). Our Lord begins to sanctify you to become increasingly like Him in character and motivations (Colossians 2:11). Sanctification replaces the influence of your sin nature and strongholds with the *Rulership of Jesus* in your soul (Colossians 3:15). This is the path to the true freedom He promises you — when the Spirit of Christ rules your soul (Galatians 5:1).

As your marriage covenant grows in loving, obedient trust, your *mutual cooperation* with His Spirit and with your spouse to be increasingly sanctified will ensure that you remain equally yoked. And, your spiritual *freedom in Christ* will deepen your relational harmony.



**“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12).**

Before we could do anything about it, we were all born under the power of Satan, aimed for hell. While Jesus died as our substitute before we ever knew Him, we weren’t accepted by our Father until we *received Jesus* as our Sin-bearer and Lord (John 1:12). This is why we must be *born again* (John 3:3). Your spiritual rebirth is the initial step in being sanctified from the domination of your soul with its sin nature and strongholds. You become more and more ruled by the Spirit of Jesus. Thus, your sanctification is a pilgrimage *away from* slavery to evil so that you can exercise your freedom *to follow Jesus*.

**“Now it is God who has prepared us for this very purpose and has also given us the Spirit as a guarantee” (2 Corinthians 5:5).**

When you’re born again in spirit, our Father consummates His Covenant by giving you the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. Your soul is still influenced by your sin nature and any undemolished strongholds. But sanctification, the process of being *set apart and transformed* into Christ’s likeness, will enable you to be freed from their domination so that Jesus will rule your mind, will and emotions.

**“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh [your sin nature], by the circumcision of Christ” (Colossians 2:11).**

Domination by your soul with its sin nature and strongholds is like an evil foreskin that must be circumcised. When you align your will with that of the indwelling Spirit of Christ and cooperate with Him out of grateful loving obedience, you are prepared to serve His Kingdom purposes.

**“So if the Son frees you, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36).**

True freedom is experienced when Lord Jesus rules your soul. Your sin nature will continue to battle you to give way to temptation and sin (Galatians 5:17). But, as you walk in cooperation with the indwelling Spirit, you’ll rejoice as your motivations change. You’ll want more and more to lovingly obey Him — and this is what is meant by *living in the Spirit* and *walking in Him* (Galatians 5:25).

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**Hurdle 6: Collectively help each other pursue a repentant life, and be confident in our Father’s pardon for your sins.**



*“Who is a God like You,  
Who pardons sin and forgives the  
transgression of the remnant  
of His inheritance?  
You do not stay angry forever  
but delight to show mercy.  
You will again have compassion on us;  
you will tread our sins underfoot and  
hurl all our iniquities into the depths  
of the sea” (Micah 7:18,19).*

Throughout the Bible our Father is revealed as *merciful*, and *ready to forgive* whenever people repent of their sins. Yet so many followers of Jesus today are unable to fully trust in our Father’s willingness to both forgive their sins and to forget them. What hinders our trust? We misinterpret the Spirit’s conviction of our sin as our Father’s condemnation of us.

In what ways does our Father bring us to repentance, and what is His response to us when we do repent?

Jesus declared that the Holy Spirit convicts each of us of our guilt for our sin (John 16:8). If you’re sensitive to Him, you grieve over your depravity when He

reveals to you how you’ve sinned against God the Holy One. But remember, **conviction is not condemnation.** Far from it!

The Holy Spirit is making known to you how you have violated God’s laws. He wants you to humbly *take ownership of your sin* without excuses or blaming others, and then *appropriate the pardon* our Father offers you because of the shed blood of Jesus on your behalf.

The Spirit Who inspired the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16,17) uses that Word to pierce our hearts: *“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”* (Hebrews 4:12).

The Spirit uses the commands and instruction of God to penetrate your innermost being to bring you to repentance. ONLY through forsaking sin and turning to God can you appropriate forgiveness and the cleansing of reconciliation with Him (1 John 1:9).

And what does our Father do when you repent?

*He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. He **has not dealt with us** according to our sins, **nor punished us** according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is **His mercy toward those who fear Him**; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He **removed our transgressions from us** (Psalms 103:9-12).*

*For I will **be merciful** to their unrighteousness, and their sins I will **remember no more** (Hebrews 8:12).*

Can you perceive the *wonderful love* of our merciful Father? Always remember that while you were still a slave to

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sin, the penalty for your violation of God’s righteous law was paid by the shed blood of Jesus. How wondrous is that kind of love! So don’t ever tolerate any thought that would convince you that your sin is beyond pardon.

That you *grieve* that you’ve violated God is a good thing! That’s because when you experience His pardon and are forgiven and reconciled to Him as His child, your love for Him *increases all the more*. He offers supernatural power to love Him more each and every time you repent!

When you were born from above, you became His beloved child. He is calling you to *trust in His forgiveness* when you repent, and to *trust in His power* for you to live according to His righteous ways. And, a privileged part of our journey together in Jesus is to *encourage each other* to trust in our Father’s forgiveness and to press on in His Kingdom.

***“I hate, I despise your religious feasts;  
I cannot stand your assemblies.  
Away with the noise of your songs!  
I will not listen to the music of  
your harps” (Amos 5:21,23).***

**Each time you join others in a religious service in which there is no demand for *repentance* as a condition for fellowship together, you’re either *hiding out in tolerated sin* or allowing *others to hide out*.**

Warning: Don’t be like Adam and Eve! Because of their sin they *hid from God*. And sadly, many today are hiding from God behind religious services and rituals that soothe their guilt over compromise with wickedness.

Having “fellowship” with the unrepentant is akin to getting high on drugs. Unrepentant people try to mask over the pain of the Spirit’s conviction (or ignore

it) through lively music and entertaining sermons. They feel comforted by other unrepentant folks who are *just like them*.

Liturgy is a hallmark of many religious services, acting as an opiate for those who enjoy their sin. No matter how simple or pompous, liturgy entails a *prescribed set of events* within a religious service and calls for little or no participation since the clergyperson in charge orchestrates all that takes place.

Liturgy can *mask over sin* by allowing attendees to feel good about their “worship” even if they’re violating God and His Word! That defilement is an enemy of the **communal righteousness** our Father demands of biblical fellowship among His Son’s followers.

When liturgical performance takes place, rebellion is fostered against the *communal responsiveness* His Word calls for in gatherings of His called-out ones:

***Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification [strengthening] (1 Corinthians 14:26).***

The *Spirit in you* wants to obey this command! If you will respond to His voice, He’ll make sure you don’t contribute to **communal unrighteousness** through unconfessed sin. And, He’ll help you be prepared *before* you gather with others so that you can edify them.

The Spirit of Christ *will not participate* in communal unrighteousness. Even if *you* are repentant and cleansed before the Father, the Spirit won’t give you peace around those who are “fellowshipping” with unconfessed sin. Please, when you gather to fellowship, don’t do a thing until *everyone* has repented and received forgiveness and cleansing from our Father.

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**Hurdle 7: Collectively applying our Lord’s commands to manifest your love for Him.**



### **The Word of God: Your Way of Life Because You Love Him**

Keeping God’s Word *doesn’t* make Him love us any more than He already does! Out of His vast heart of compassion, “while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). How wonderful is that? Our part of receiving that amazing love is this: a grateful heart that eagerly responds to His Spirit and applies His Word to bring Him pleasure and praise.

To *worship* our God in Spirit and in Truth is to gratefully love Him as Lord of our lives and to willingly cooperate with His indwelling Spirit in obedient trust. These two elements, **love** and **obedience** that emanates from trusting Him, are the authentic expression of our covenant relationship with our holy Father that’s been ratified in Christ. Our *lives* become our daily worship! (See Romans 12:1.)

A love relationship with God that’s evidenced by obedient responsiveness was a pattern set for us by our Hebraic forefathers. What we call the *Hebraic Stream* of the children of Abraham

(Romans 4:16) responded to God out of righteous trust, serving Him in reverent fear for Who He is. This relationship with God stands in stark contrast to the *Judaizing Stream* who were *fearful of God*. They constructed ever more laws and rules just to make sure they didn’t come close to violating them (Matthew 23:4) — a heavy burden that God never put on His beloved!

During the earthly time of Jesus, the *Judaizing Stream* was epitomized by the Pharisees, for whom obeying God’s commands as well as the Traditions set down by their forefathers was preeminent. In other words, the *Judaizing Stream* diligently studied the Scriptures because they thought that *by them* they would possess eternal life. But those are the very same Scriptures that *testify of Jesus*, bearing witness that He was the long-anticipated Messiah! (See John 5:39.)

Jesus confronted their error boldly. He made known to them that had they trusted God in love-grounded righteousness, they would have had eyes to see that all of Torah, the Prophets and the Psalms pointed directly to Him (Luke 24:44). But many of the Pharisees were rule keepers with no desire for nor concept of a *love-based relationship* with God.

One of the scriptural stipulations to embrace the Gospel of the Covenant is that it begins *and* continues with your *love for God*, as both Testaments confirm at least 16 times. That kind of love is responsive to His will and obeys His commands because of *Who He is* to you (1 John 5:3).

He doesn’t intend that your love relationship with Him remain static. Rather, your love for God, as well as your love for your spouse, should *increase over time* as His Spirit continues His sanctifying work in you. In this way your marriage covenant will increasingly reflect your

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love-based Covenant with our Lord, our heavenly Bridegroom.

Another vital blessing comes as we *learn and obey His commands*, a principle that’s first found in the Older Testament:

*Therefore be careful to observe [God’s teachings and laws]; for **this is your wisdom and your understanding** in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a **wise and understanding people.**’ For what great nation is there that **has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?**’ (Deuteronomy 4:6,7).*

If God showered teachings of wisdom and understanding upon the children of Abraham “to whom He was near”, how much more does He value wisdom and understanding in the hearts and lives of those whom *He indwells*? He can’t get any closer to us than that!

Living in wisdom reflects the rule of Jesus in our soul. He commands us to seek after both wisdom and understanding so that our lives are set apart from those under bondage to sin (Proverbs 4:7). Keep in mind that *His reputation* lies in the lives of His called-out ones, His Church. If our lives as His followers don’t reflect His presence in us through wisdom, then *His name is dishonored and blasphemed* among unbelievers because of *our disobedience* (see Romans 2:24).

The life choices our Lord wants us to make are found in the *wisdom of His Word* (3 John 1:11). In that way, those who are currently headed for hell may see His commands being lived out in us because we want to please our beloved Father. In light of this truth, Jesus could so emphatically proclaim the intertwining of *hearing and doing* (Luke 6:47,48). Those who hear the wisdom of God yet *ignore or resist* put-

ting it into practice will never survive the calamities that are currently taking place around the world! (See Luke 6:49.)

The half-brother of Jesus sums up biblical justification as the wisdom of working out trust through *responsive actions* (James 2:21-24). Responsive to whom? To the indwelling Spirit of Jesus, Who reveals God’s will and empowers those who follow Him to *enact* that will in His wisdom and power.

If you’ve never given thought to *why* you need to apply God’s commands to your life, we hope that you’ll discuss this with your spouse now and determine together how He’s directing you. Why? Because to live in the Promised Land means that *you love Him*, which you evidence as you keep His way and bring Him praise!

Begin with your marriage partner to experience *authentic biblical fellowship* that’s undergirded by our Lord’s love for you and your love for one another in Him. This is an *ongoing pilgrimage of transformation* into Christ’s likeness in which you both yearn to mature in your faith *together*. As you press ahead with willing hearts for the Spirit to have His way in your lives, He’ll present to you daily opportunities in which you can respond with actions of love-grounded, obedient trust.

Spiritual maturity takes place through a process of *progressive character development* as we yield to His power at work in us (2 Peter 1:3). Partaking of His divine nature and escaping the corrupt influence of the world around us takes determination, which the apostle makes clear:

*For this very reason, **make every effort [be very diligent] to add to your faith goodness [virtue]; and to goodness, knowledge;***

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and to knowledge, **self-control**; and to self-control, **perseverance**; and to perseverance, **godliness**;

and to godliness, **brotherly kindness**; and to brotherly kindness, **love**.

For if these qualities are yours **in increasing measure [abounding in them]**, you will be **neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ** (2 Peter 1:5-11).

Think of this progression of character traits as crossing the Jordan River and going deeper into the Promised Land. Out of obedient trust you *press on* through each of the developmental points to make them part of your motivation, character and purpose. And if you're married, your pilgrimage together intensifies in fruitfulness as you "add to" each preceding quality.

You start with trust in Jesus as Lord of your life, and progressively grow in your knowledge of Him. But note that first you add *goodness* to your faith, or as other translations put it, *virtue*. Biblical virtue is in reality Christ-like character.

A wise person once said, **“Character is who you are when no one is looking.”** The Greek word for *character* means “minting a coin”. An image is impressed on the coin, an image that anyone can recognize. For followers of Jesus, the Bible presents clear guidelines of the type of Christ-like virtue He wants to *impress into us* through the working of His Spirit.



Motivated by *His goodness* at work in and through you, you can then increasingly grow in *knowledge* of God and His good and righteous ways. Then you won't get puffed up with all the knowl-

edge you've accumulated and lord it over others! Instead, as our Lord modeled and commanded, you'll choose the path of serving others (Mark 10:45).

Goodness must precede the qualities that follow so that your *heart attitude* will align with that of Jesus and bring about fruitfulness. As you and your spouse grow more like Him, that initial starting point of ongoing trust produces *ever-increasing transformation* as you cooperate with the Spirit. Remember, your transformational progression *doesn't* take place at scheduled meeting times. Rather, you grow as you *daily put into practice* Christ-like choices in your home, workplace, school, and free time.

Note in the passage that just before the quality of perseverance is addressed for you to diligently pursue, *self-control* is called for. Don't limit your definition of self-control to merely refraining from specific sins or negative behaviors. That framework is incomplete since **self-focus** concentrates on your own personal list of “don'ts” but blocks out your *connectedness with others* on your journey.

There's an important purpose for self-control *preceding* perseverance. You're being commanded to resist the self-absorbed motivation of your sin nature, and to look beyond yourself for the interest of others (1 Corinthians 10:24). Walk in someone else's moccasins, beginning with your spouse and then your children and faith family. How can you be used by our Lord to come alongside and help them in *their* sanctification process to be equipped to serve His purposes?

Remember, everything about your pilgrimage and growth in Christ-likeness *together* is to draw closer in your love for Lord Jesus and bring Him glory as you serve Him in His Kingdom. As you



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humbly look to the interests of others, you’ll find that He’ll *pour you out* to meet their physical, emotional and spiritual needs as *His* hands, feet and heart! It will cost you as you willingly make yourself available to serve others — but that’s the kind of yielded life that will stretch you into Christ’s likeness in ways that self-focus never could! (See Philippians 2:3-5).



### ***Perseverance* — The River of Fire**

Since we’ve been using the metaphor of the River Jordan, let’s look at Peter’s listing of faith, goodness, knowledge and self-control as the character qualities that lead you *into the River*. Godliness, brotherly kindness and love can be considered the qualities you need as you live *in the Promised Land*. The character quality listed in the middle, perseverance, is the critical link that connects the other two sets of qualities.

After self-control has become a part of your life, you must go through fires of perseverance in which your faith is tested for its genuineness (1 Peter 1:7). Only through times of *fiery refinement* will godliness become implanted in you so that God can prepare you for further Kingdom purposes! The *godliness* that follows perseverance means that you’re living in such worship and awareness of your beloved Lord that others have no doubt He’s the object of your devotion.

Our Father makes sure that areas of character dross have been scorched away

as He brings about situations in which you’re called to persevere. Why? Because when you lived in your religious Sinai Desert, you were still *self-focused*, trying to find *self-fulfillment* and *self-satisfaction* in whatever form of spirituality you could. In other words, you were able to compromise with the world and live comfortably in Satan’s domain without anyone confronting your double-minded choices and lifestyle.

But to live in the Promised Land means that you’re going to have to fight and resist whatever fed your ego and flesh back in the wasteland! Pressing on in His Spirit through the fires of perseverance isn’t for the faint-hearted or slothful who care more about themselves than the interests of their King.

We find in the Hebrew Scriptures our Lord’s principle for waging spiritual battle against Satan as we live in the Promised Land. Our lives *do* affect others around us. If we give way to fear of what others may say or how they’ll react, then our companions on the journey may be shaken as well. Before the Israelites went into battle the officers would challenge the troops:

*What man is there who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, lest the heart of his brethren faint like his heart (Deuteronomy 20:8).*

Our Lord finds no pleasure in people who shrink back in cowardice (see Hebrews 10:38; Revelation 21:8). That choice to forsake trust in Him brings down His name and steers you off His pathway of love-grounded obedience, the emblem of His Kingdom. Out of His faithful love He tests us to see if we’ll persevere. A married couple is united in covenant, and *both* are called to *persevere together* through fires in order to walk

fruitfully in His Promised Land.

You'll find yourself repeatedly encountering flames of perseverance in the river of fire until your hesitancy to trust Him and press on is removed. Your testing point is this: Will you press on in His Spirit toward godliness? Or, will you return to the barren sand of your previous religious Sinai Desert? Sadly, we've seen many end up back there.

During eleven years of serving at a retreat center, we discovered a common hindrance that deterred married couples from *pressing on together* all the way into Christ-like love.

In the vast majority of marriages the wife recognized they were in fiery circumstances, but her husband was oblivious. When she confronted him with her pain, he went *backward* in Peter's progression of character qualities and sought more *knowledge*, while she wanted to press ahead to get through the fire and reach godliness. We'd admonish the man, "If your wife is in the fire, *you are too*. Jump in and go through it with her!"

A few heeded our counsel and united themselves heart and soul with their wives, coming through their trial with their marriage strengthened. Most, however, looked only to their own interest, retreating from involvement in the trial. They inwardly disdained their wives and found counterfeit solace in gaining more facts which they haughtily quoted to their suffering spouses.

On rare occasion we'd encounter a husband who had embraced perseverance by himself as his wife had abandoned the fiery trial, just wanting to escape the discomfort.

But in either case, until both partners embraced their ordeals together, they couldn't press onward in crossing the Jordan into fruitful Promised Land service.

Your fellowship family needs to play a key role here as part of your family-in-

Christ. You're called to help each other through the fiery times that *any* of you are going through. You can't remain aloof, or view the tough times that others are going through as "*their problem*." Biblical fellowship comprises *one body* with many parts. That's the unity to which Paul attests: "*If one part suffers, every part suffers with it*" (1 Corinthians 12:26).

***Perseverance does more to bind you together in true fellowship than anything else can.***

***Suffering together is God's design for your communal growth into godliness, brotherly kindness and love. If you try to side-step the suffering of others who are united with you in fellowship, you'll quench any further personal development into Christ's likeness.***

Let's look briefly at another metaphor. You undergo a season of perseverance when our Father *prunes you* of branches that will hinder your fruitfulness in the future (John 15:2). Pruned branches are often lopped off during times of trial in your faith journey. As with Abraham and his beloved son Isaac, you may be called to an "altar experience" to make sure there's nothing you're unwilling to sacrifice to lovingly fulfill His will.

In any case, *something* is going to be changed in you during the trials which develop perseverance! You must first yield to His Spirit in obedient trust, giving up or removing that which is un-Christlike. Then He can fill in those behavioral or attitudinal ruts with His nature and character so that godliness — His likeness — will grow.

[In our series, *Discussing How To Restore The Early Church, Lesson 29. THE FATHER AND JESUS — Suffering: The Spirit's Agency For Change*, we discuss suffering as a key facet of embracing the Gospel of the Covenant. Please ponder and discuss this lesson with those close to you.]

### **Kingdom Commands To Lovingly Live By**

*“For the LORD gives wisdom,  
and from His mouth come knowledge  
and understanding”* (Proverbs 2:6).

The Newer Testament overflows with commands given by our Lord for our well-being. None are burdensome, and all are possible as we cooperate with His Spirit to bring Him pleasure and praise through our loving obedience!

You can look up the complete verse, or just use the phrase as the basis for your discussion and *application* as a couple, a family, and a fellowship family. Ask the indwelling Spirit of Jesus for guidance in how He would have you live out each passage:

**‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’** (Luke 10:27)

**Love your enemies** (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:27,35)

**Be doers of the Word** (James 1:22)

**Seek God's kingdom first** (Matthew 6:33; Luke 12:31)

**Understand the will of God** (Ephesians 5:17)

**Admonish one another** (Colossians 3:16)

**Flee besetting sin** (Hebrews 12:1)

**Be clothed with humility** (1 Peter 5:5)

**Be ready for Christ's coming** (Matthew 24:44; Luke 12:40)

**Be merciful as God is** (Luke 6:36)

**Be like faithful servants** (Luke 12:36)

**Be thankful** (Colossians 3:15)

**Be ready to give an answer for the hope that is in you** (1 Peter 3:15)

**Be given to hospitality** (Romans 12:13)

**Be always abounding in God's work** (1 Corinthians 15:58)

**Be angry and sin not** (Ephesians 4:26)

**Be filled with the Spirit** (Ephesians 5:18); **Let us walk in the Spirit** (Galatians 5:25)

**Be anxious for nothing** (Philippians 4:6)

**Do to others what you'd have them do to you** (Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31)

**Do all to God's glory** (1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17,23)

**Do all things without murmuring and disputing** (Philippians 2:14)

**Mind your own business, and work for a living** (1 Thessalonians 4:11)

**Give to him that asks** (Matthew 5:42; Luke 6:30); **Give to needy saints** (Romans 12:13)

**Give freely as God has prospered you** (Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6)

**Seek things above** (Colossians 3:1)

**Lay not up your treasures on earth; Store up treasures in heaven** (Matthew 6:19, 20)

**Seek God in prayer** (Matthew 7:7)

**Seek to edify the church** (1 Corinthians 14:12)

**Don't despise little ones** (Matthew 18:10)

**Don't be like the hypocrites in prayer; Don't be like hypocrites in fasting** (Matthew 6:5,16)

**Don't be called "Rabbi"; Don't be called "Master"** (Matthew 23:8,9)

**Don't be afraid of man** (Luke 12:4)

**Don't have a doubtful mind** (Luke 12:29)

**Don't be conformed to world** (Romans 12:2)

**Don't be weary in well doing** (2 Thessalonians 3:13)

**Cast out the beam from your own eyes**  
(Matthew 7:5; Luke 6:42)

**Beware of covetousness** (Luke 12:15)

**Avoid arguments about the law** (Titus 3:9)

**Cast out wicked people** (1 Corinthians 5:13)

**Abstain from idols** (Acts 15:20)

**Abstain from all appearance of evil** (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

We encourage you to continue to search the Bible for other commands our Lord wants you to apply to your life for your good. He intends that these be an ongoing process throughout your life journey so that you can become more like Him and display the wisdom of living in Him to an unbelieving world.