



STRONG-FOR-LIFE CHOICES

Strong For Life

**THE FOUNDATIONS-FOR-LIFE SERIES
VOLUME 1**

The Foundations-For-Life Series by Rachel Burchfield
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The Foundations-For-Life series was written originally to support young adults in their commitment to follow Jesus Christ. The first workbook, The Adventures of Following Jesus, was written in 1994 exclusively for the students of Texas Bible Institute. Each of the remaining nine workbooks also teach timeless truths and provide answers found in God's Word, the Holy Bible. TBI is an outreach of Burchfield Ministries International, Inc. in Columbus, Texas.

After thirty years of serving as TBI's President, Rachel Burchfield has revised her time-proven Foundations-For-Life series to equip all ages. Teens and adults can now become Strong In Life through TBI's Distance Learning Program, while the On Campus option still remains an option exclusively for 17 - 25 years of age.

The overall objective of the Foundations-For-Life series is to:

- Make unshakeable disciples for Jesus Christ
- Create a love for the inspired Word of God
- Introduce the adventures of being a bold Bible believer

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Statement of Faith

Burchfield Ministries International, Inc. believes in the inspiration of Scripture which reveals the Fatherhood of a Creator God, eternal life found only in His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in every believer for guidance, comfort, and strength. To review BMI's complete Statement of Faith, visit burchfield.org.

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT



1983

*Dear Sons and Daughters,
Welcome to the great adventure of following Jesus Christ!*

We are proud that you have chosen to build your life on God's unchanging Word. The decisions you are making during these treasured TBI months will determine the course of your life, family, and future legacy. Pastor Tommy and I both made those same choices fifty years ago!



2003

This "Foundations-For-Life" curriculum was written exclusively for our dear Texas Bible Institute students. Thousands of TBI Alumni from thirty-nine states and forty-two nations are now "Strong For Life" and fulfilling God's purpose for their lives. Now, it's your turn!

Building strong foundations occurs when you accept the inspired Word of God as the final authority in your life. Once you learn that the Bible is a living love letter from your Father, it will become a joy. Settle it forever that God is good, His ways are perfect, and miracles still happen.

So, dear one, read and re-read this workbook until you've "made it your own." As you mature in Christ, these writings will serve as reference manuals for your own miracle moments, and you'll be Strong For Life.

In His Joy,

Pastors Tommy and Rachel Burchfield

Founder and President, Texas Bible Institute



2020

"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3:11

WHAT WE BELIEVE

GOD IS
OUR FATHER



As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him. *Psalms 103:13*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort...

II Corinthians 1:3

JESUS CHRIST IS
OUR SAVIOR



For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. *John 3:16*

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. *John 14:6*

THE HOLY SPIRIT
EQUIPS BELIEVERS



However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth. *John 16:13*

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me... to the end of the earth. *Acts 1:8*

THE HOLY BIBLE
CAN BE TRUSTED



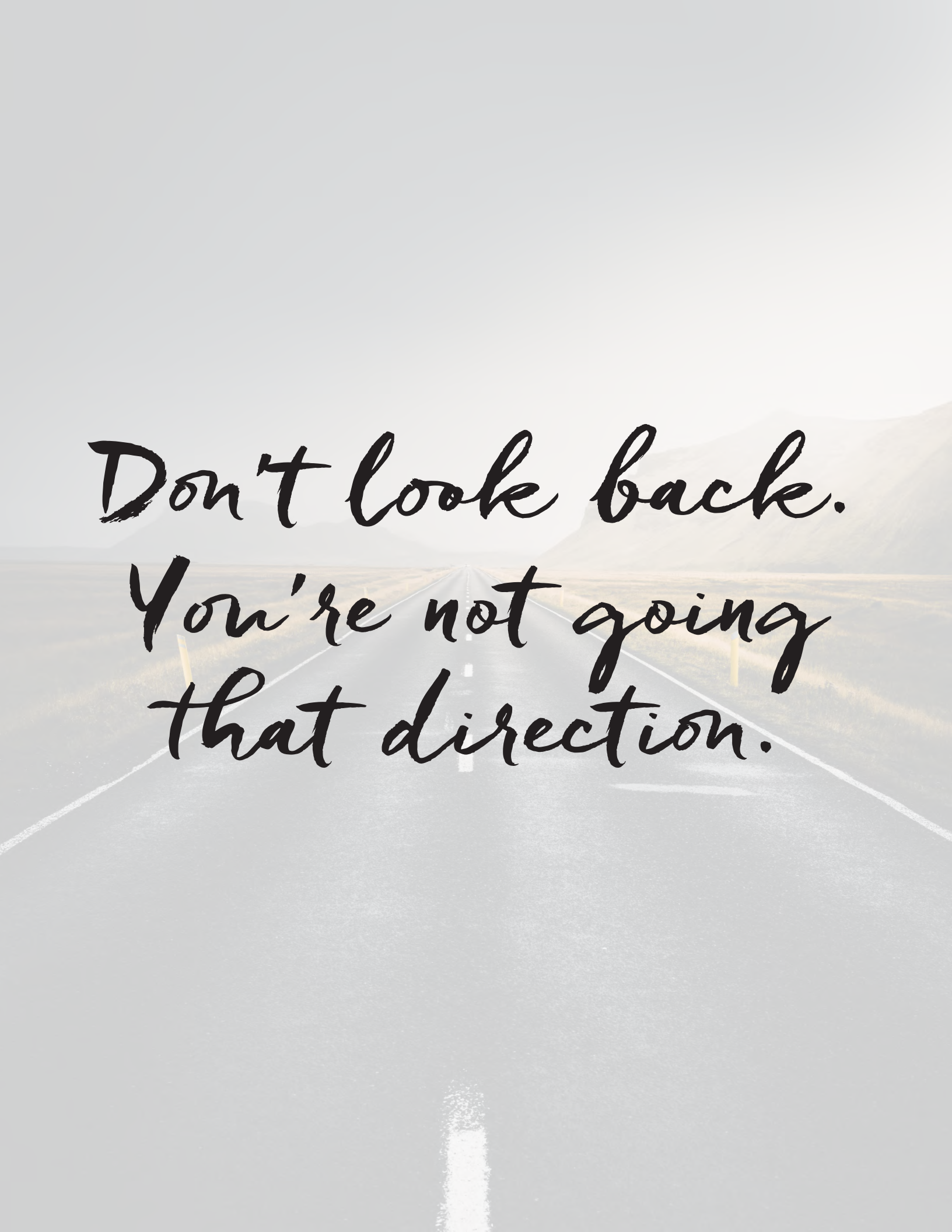
Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away." *Matthew 24:35*

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. *II Timothy 3:16*

Reading scripture aloud enhances comprehension
For a complete BMI Statement of Faith, visit burchfield.org.

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A long, straight road stretches into the distance under a hazy sky. The road is flanked by fields and distant hills. The text is overlaid on the image in a black, handwritten-style font.

Don't look back.
You're not going
that direction.

Chapter 1

THE ONE CHOICE THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

It is *your choices*, not circumstances, that *determine your destiny*. Here are 8 choices you can make today: your mood, your image, your friends, to reject rejection, to refuse drama, to manage expectations, to be teachable or a know-it-all, and to stay angry or forgive.

Do you know your most important choice?

YOUR WORD IS TRUTH JN. 17:17

Highlight these Chapter One scriptures in your Bible

MARK 8:34

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

JOHN 6:68

But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

LOOKING AHEAD

- The ultimate choice
- 4 questions
- I don't need God!

When you choose the Word, you are choosing Jesus.

ONE CHOICE THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

What does it mean to choose Jesus?

- ☐ **I accept the claims of Jesus Christ as truth.**
Jesus Christ claimed to be sent from the Father to redeem mankind from the damages of sin through His multiple roles; Savior, Healer, Baptizer in the Holy Spirit, Deliverer, Redeemer, Lord, High Priest, and more.
- ☐ **I trust His plan for eternal salvation.**
I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except by Me. Jn. 14:6
- ☐ **I follow His teachings.**
You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Jn. 8:32 Following Jesus releases you from all traps of bondage, such as fear and self-centeredness. His teachings lead to personal freedom and kingdom responsibility.
- ☐ **I am learning His ways.**
Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me. Mat. 11:29 His invisible kingdom ways are opposite of the world's kingdom; forgiveness over anger, the way up is down, to receive, you must give. You'll never outgive His giving or outrun His love.
- ☐ **I believe His promises.**
"I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works because I am going to be with the Father." Jn. 14:12
- ☐ **I am heeding His warnings.** Jesus warned us about hypocrisy, covetousness, temporal values, and our influence on others. I obey His commandments. *If you love Me, keep My commandments. Jn. 14:15* This is the litmus test for true Jesus followers.
- ☐ **I expect His miracles.**
And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover. Mk. 16:17-18
- ☐ **I enjoy His abundant-life-adventures.**
I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly. Jn. 10:10 Jesus is using me to share His love with others. It's natural for me to live supernaturally,
- ☐ **I am developing a Christian worldview.**
My view of the world and my journey for truth and reality is anchored in the light of Scripture. Therefore, I reject any philosophy that opposes the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- ☐ **I choose Jesus Christ as my personal Savior today.** _____
(Date)

Choosing Jesus means that you accept His claims as truth and commit your life to His cause.



I couldn't talk until I was four or read until I was nine years old, but won the Nobel Prize in Physics in the early 1900s
Albert Einstein

WHAT IS A WORLDVIEW?

A worldview is a framework from which we view reality and make sense of life and the world. Every worldview, Christian and non-Christian, addresses these fundamental life questions:



Simply put, a worldview is the way a person views the world. Everyone has a lens through which they look at the world, and the way we look at the world makes all the difference in the world.

For example, a 2-year-old believes he's the center of his world, a secular humanist believes that the material world is all that exists, and a Buddhist believes he can be liberated from suffering by self-purification.

To quote Dr. Jeff Myers, a worldview "is like an invisible pair of eyeglasses you put on to help you see reality clearly. If you choose the right pair of glasses, you can see everything vividly and can behave in sync with the real world, but if you choose the wrong pair of glasses, you may find yourself in a worse plight than the blind man. You think you see clearly when in reality your vision is severely distorted."

A worldview is the way a person views the world.

8 REASONS A CORRECT WORLDVIEW IS IMPORTANT

1. It determines our fundamental _____ system.
2. It determines our _____.
3. It determines our _____ and actions.
4. The basis for short-term decisions and long-term _____.
5. It determines our _____.
6. It determines our successes and _____.
7. A worldview is comprehensive, affecting _____ area of life, from money to morality, from politics to pleasures.
8. A synonym for worldview is ideology. Ideas have _____.

THAT SNEAKY CIRCLE OF LIFE

If you are an adult, you already have a worldview. However, psychologists say a child's worldview is fully developed by the age of 12. So how is a worldview developed? It begins with our family, but our social contacts and media influences quickly form a buffet of mixed messages. Here is an example of how subtle these influences can be.

As the all-star choir sang the "Circle of Life," Disney's 1993 hit, the audience knew every word and sang along.

*Cool song,
wrong worldview* →

**It's the circle of life, and it moves us all,
through despair and hope, through faith and love.
Till we find our place, on the path unwinding,
in the circle, the circle of life.**

Like everything we watch, listen to or read, *The Lion King* contains a worldview. What message does this give to impressionable children who are enamored with Simba, the cuddly cub and the future lion king? Despite a handful of good moral lessons, the two concepts of a "circle of life," that history is circular and the spirits of one's ancestors heavily influence the present, is closer to Eastern pantheism or native spiritualism than the linear view of history presented in the Bible.

A synonym for worldview is ideology. Ideas have consequences.

HUMANISTIC WORLDVIEW

An unsound structure built on an unstable foundation

(A false view that is satanically influenced. *Eph. 2:2-3*)

MAN IS SUPREME

Willfully Autonomous

Self-Centered Desires

Open rebellion against God (*Rom. 1:28-32*)

A man-engineered utopian worldview. There is no real meaning to life. The end justifies the mean

evolutionism, socialism, atheism, pantheism, new age, Marxism, amorality, self-serving, relativism, situation ethics, etc.

The old lie of the godhead of man. Acknowledges the supernatural, mysticism, spiritualism, alien life, etc.

Gen. 3:1-5; Rom 1:18-25ff

Spiritual or religious humanism.

HUMANISM

Naturalistic, or secular humanism.

The old lie of the supremacy of man. Denies any supernatural phenomenon, but trusts in evolution, and naturalism.

Gen. 3:1-5; Rom 1:18-25ff

RELIGION
paganism
worship of nature

PHILOSOPHY
human wisdom
worship of man

The Imagination of Man.
(*Gen. 6:5, 11-12; 8:12; Rom. 1:21*)

The Lie = "Ye shall be like God."
(*Gen. 3:1-5; cf. Gen. 3:6 & 1 John 2:15-17*)

A faulty foundation that is sure to fail

BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

An solid structure built on a firm foundation

(A true view based on God's inspired Word. *II Tim. 5:17*)

CHRIST IS SUPREME

Submissive to God's Will

Desires to Serve Others

A bold proclamation of the Gospel (*II Cor. 5:20*)

A Christ-centered worldview
Jesus Christ gives real meaning to life. The means determines the end.

Self-sacrifice, sanctity of life, responsibility, family values, morality, absolute truths and values, etc.

Biblical Christianity.
Man's need God's provision
(*Rom. 3:21-26, 12:1-2*)

Creationsim
(*Gen. 1:1-2*)

Acknowledge Scripture as God's revealed will.
(*II Tim. 3:16-17*)

Acknowledge God as Creator.
(*Gen. 1:1, Rom. 1:19-22*)

A sure foundation that cannot fail

DEVELOPING A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

A Christian worldview answers "Yes" to these four questions



Is God in the center?

Is a Creator God in the center, periphery, excluded, or nonexistent in this worldview?



Does man need God?

Look for man's attitude toward God. Is it defiant? Conditional? Fearful?



Does it agree with the written Word of God?

Examine all worldviews in light of the divinely inspired, time-proven Scriptures.



Is Jesus Christ humanity's only hope for redemption?

Worldviews that offer many paths to God are not biblical and should be rejected.

Every culture has a question that only the Bible can answer.

THE ONE CHOICE THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

01

The one choice that changes everything is to choose Jesus.

02

To choose Jesus means you accept His claims as truth.

03

A worldview is the way a person views the world.

04

A Christian worldview examines ideas by the Word of God.



SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Mk. 8:34

Mk. 8:35

Mk. 8:36

Jn. 6:68

Jn. 12:6

1 Jn. 2:6

Two Church Boys

Read Mark 10:17:22 and John 6:63-68.

Are you preparing for the adventure of following Jesus? It comes with a complete abandonment of your plans and opinions, but it also brings a satisfaction that your unredeemed friends will never know.

When Jesus invited two religious Jewish boys to follow Him, their reactions were drastically different. How did they respond?

The rich, young ruler _____ **Mk. 10:22**

Simon Peter _____ **Jn. 6:68**

Jesus always looks at the priority of your heart. You can have things, as long as 'things' don't have you.

Love Himself called out to both of these guys. The successful one preferred religious rules and walked away spiritually poor, while Peter chose a relationship with Love and received true riches. Which are you?



At the core of Christian values is a commitment to Jesus Christ.

Reflection



Choose kindness.

Chapter 2

CHOOSING A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW



In 2002, Elizabeth Smart, 14, was *abducted* from her home at *knifepoint* in Salt Lake City, Utah. During her nine-month captivity, she was *brainwashed* to believe bizarre things. College kids get brainwashed, too, by well-meaning *professors* who ridicule their childhood faith. Beware!

YOUR WORD IS TRUTH JN. 17:17

Highlight these Chapter Two scriptures in your Bible

COLOSSIANS 2:8

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

1 TIMOTHY 6:20

O, Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Beware of brainwashing
- Six competing worldviews
- "Isms" that stick

"... choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Jos. 24:15

CHOOSE A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

Although the Bible never uses the word “worldview,” in Colossians 2: 6 - 8, we are commanded to be able to discern and discard **false philosophy - which is essentially a worldview.**

“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world, rather than on Christ.” Col. 2:8 NIV

Read these warnings and strong descriptions of Colossians 2:8 from other Bible translations:

- Takes you captive
- Empty philosophies - false philosophy
- High-sounding nonsense
- Human thinking
- Endless arguments of human logic
- Humanistic and clouded judgments
- Human traditions
- A mindset of this world system

LOOK FOR FIVE KEY AREAS

GOD

Is there a personal, Supreme Being to whom we are all accountable? If so, what is this God like? If not, then what?

CREATION

Where did the world come from? What sustains it all? Is there a spiritual part of reality or is it all material?

HUMANITY

Who are we? What gives us any unique value?

MORAL ORDER

Who makes the rules? Do some rules apply to everyone?

PURPOSE

Why do we exist? Who determines this?

A child's worldview is fully developed by the age of twelve.

SIX COMPETING WORLDVIEWS

Worldview charts differ and have overlapping categories, but I've selected Dr. David Noebel's list due to his profound impact on American college students. His six worldviews contain a particular perspective regarding each of the ten academic disciplines; theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history.

01

THE CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW – *How Great Thou Art*

A time-proven mindset that exalts Creator-God as our Father and the focus of our worship, His Son Jesus Christ is the sinner's hope for redemption and His Word, the Bible, as the final authority on all questions of life.

02

THE ISLAMIC WORLDVIEW – *How Great Allah Is*

This philosophy goes beyond religion and puts the onus of earthly purpose and eternal rewards on the individual committed to the teachings of Mohammed, the prophet of Allah.

03

SECULAR HUMANISM – *How Great I Am*

A philosophy where human potential is achieved by reason, logic, and willpower, excluding God or other supernatural forces. The Humanist Manifesto II, published in 1973 by the American Humanist Association states, "No deity will save us; we must save ourselves."

04

THE MARXIST WORLDVIEW – *How Great The Government*

A political philosophy that promotes a government-run utopia where all work together for the common good. Socialism. Communism.

05

THE NEW AGE WORLDVIEW – *How Great Is The Third Eye*

New age thinking has its roots in Eastern mysticism, which attempts to bypass the mind and enlighten one to create their own reality, often with the assistance of a channeler or spirit guide; sophisticated synonyms for a medium and demon.

06

THE POSTMODERN WORLDVIEW – *How Great We Are*

Postmodernists claim there is no overarching truth that applies to everybody. There are no absolute truths or moral standards. Each person or culture develops its own moral value. "Is it right?" is replaced with, "Is it right for me?" Emotions, feelings, intuition, mystical experiences are center stage. "I know" has been replaced with "I feel."

These anti-God worldviews are prevalent on today's college campuses. Students should be aware of this bias, be grounded in their faith before they attend, and join a Christian community upon their arrival. This action plan will keep them Strong-For-Life.



I went bankrupt five times before I created the first automobile empire.
Henry Ford

EVALUATING THE AMERICAN DREAM

Worldviews have many cousins or influential mindsets that splinter off of the mainstream to create their own problematic "ism." However, the root problem is always the same; **somebody removed God.**

"He who dies with the most toys wins." (Materialism)

This phrase is the worldview of materialism, which can be summed up with one word. More. Materialism says that the only thing that matters in life is acquiring items. Those who subscribe to this worldview live mostly to collect stuff.

The Bible's answer: *"A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions ..." Lk. 12:15* Jesus tells us not to judge our lives by how much we've got. The greatest things in life aren't things.

"If it feels good, do it." (Hedonism)

Hedonism is the love of pleasure. The number one goal of a hedonist is to feel good, be comfortable, and have fun. It's the worldview that Hugh Hefner founded Playboy magazine on. He willingly acknowledged he was an "eat, drink and be merry" hedonist. It's not just playboys who are hedonists, though. Someone who lives for the goal of retirement is a hedonist. If the whole goal of a person's life is self-centered, not contributing to the world, that's hedonism.

The Bible's answer: *"Are you addicted to thrills? What an empty life! The pursuit of pleasure is never satisfied" Prv. 21:17* Msg.

"Whatever works for you." (Relativism)

Cultural relativism believes that all beliefs, customs, and ethics are relative to the individual within his own social context. In other words, "right" and "wrong" are culture-specific. This worldview replaces the securely biblically grounded values with a subjective perspective of "whatever works for you." Different strokes for different folks.

The Bible's answer: The Bible says, *"There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end, it leads to death" (Prv. 14:12 NIV).* Our ideas may seem right, but in the end, our beliefs lead to death. "Whatever works for you" leads to death. If you break God's universal laws, they break you.

"God doesn't exist." (Naturalism)

This worldview is naturalism or atheism and can be summarized as: 1) God either doesn't exist or doesn't matter. 2) We are the product of random acts of nature with no real purpose. 3) We do not respect nature as we should. 4) We can save the world through ecology and conservation. A naturalistic worldview generates many related philosophies such as moral relativism, existentialism, pragmatism, and utopianism. It takes more faith to be an atheist than it does to believe in God.

The Bible's answer: *"From the beginning of creation, God has shown what he is like by all he has made. That's why those people don't have any excuse. They know about God, but they don't honor him or even thank him...They claim to be wise, but they are fools." Rom. 1:25 NIV*

"Me-only, Me-god." (Humanism)

Humanism exalts human potential without God. It is prevalent among the "Me Generation," also known as Baby Boomers. This me-first, individualistic view doesn't want or need God because they captain their own fate. Commercial slogans cater to this self-centered view with, "Have it your way," "You deserve it," and Sinatra's "Did It My Way."

You'll also hear this philosophy in the New Age movement which promotes, "Determine your destiny. You're divine. You're a god." It's ironic. God wired us to worship something, but if we don't worship God, we end up worshipping ourselves.

The Bible's answer: Jesus says, *"If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for me, you will find true life" Matt. 16:25 NLT. "They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped created things rather than the Creator." Rom. 1:25*

All of these worldviews have consequences. We're influenced by them every day through the media, the social status quo, and political persuasions. Usually, we're not even aware of the subtle indoctrination that is occurring.

HOW TO DEVELOP A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

Finding answers using the Bible provides the foundation of the Christian worldview.

GOD – Who is God? _____

Gen. 1:1, Jn. 6:57

CREATION – Where did the world come from? What holds it together? _____

Rom. 1:20, Heb. 1:3

HUMANITY – Who are we? What gives us unique value? _____

Ps. 8:4-6, Rom. 8:16-17

MORAL ORDER – Who makes the rules? Do some rules apply to everyone? _____

Micah 6:8, Heb. 8:10

PURPOSE – Why do we exist? _____

1 Cor. 10:31

Looking to your Bible for answers is the foundation of a Christian worldview.

CHOOSING A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

01

A worldview is comprehensive, affecting every area of our lives.

02

Asking five specific questions will reveal the six competing worldviews.

03

False philosophies which contradict God's Word should be rejected.

04

The foundation of a Christian worldview is God's Word, the Bible.



SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Gen 1:1

Col 2:6-8

1 Tim 6:20

Prv. 14:12

Lk 12:15

Rom 1:25

Watermelon Seeds

Read Acts 17:16–34

Growing in the Lord is like eating watermelon and spittin' out the seeds. College campuses are also filled with trendy "seeds," intellectual philosophies that collide with the claims of Christ. This cranial clutter is nothing new.

When Paul visited the wealthy Greek city of Athens, he was appalled at the ideological deceptions. On a rock hill called the Areopagus (Mars Hill), Paul debated with a group of cultured philosophers that only God should be worshipped. It was a seed-spittin' contest, for sure!

Which *two* of these deception-seeds should be spat out?

- _____ Many roads lead to God. Compare with Jn. 14:6
- _____ Being a good person will get you to heaven. Compare with Eph. 2:8-9
- _____ Every trendy idea needs to be compared with God's Word. Col. 2:8

Philosophy is man's attempt to find meaning in life and solutions for suffering without God.



Christian values never change because they are founded on God's Word.

Reflection



Choose to
be teachable.

Chapter 3

CHOOSE RADICAL RESILIENCE

Regrets. Adversity. Loss. Setbacks. At any given moment, you have the power to say, *"My story won't end this way."* Sometimes you just need to move on. Start over. Be forgiven. Break free. He is the God of a second chance.

YOUR WORD IS TRUTH JN. 17:17

Highlight these Chapter Three scriptures in your Bible

JOHN 8:32

And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Trauma and drama
- Victim or victor?
- Radical resilience

*The secret to being strong for life is to feed
your spirit on God's Word.*

RADICAL RESILIENCE

Life can really clobber you. Unexpected deaths, unfair decisions, and relational heartbreaks are at the top of the “Life’s Most Unwanted” list. The natural response to these setbacks is to be fearful and offended, but you no longer have to live imprisoned with those overwhelming emotions. Jesus paid a premium price for your complete freedom, and it begins with a God-given strength called resilience.

Resilience is the ability to recover from difficult situations and adapt easily to setbacks, changes, or challenges. It is your “bounce-back-buddy.”

WHICH STATEMENT IS TRUE?

You are the sum total of your life experiences.

True

☐

False

☐

You are the sum total of your response to your life experiences.

True

☐

False

☐

THE OVERCOMING SPIRIT THAT DWELLS IN HUMANITY IS PROOF THAT WE WERE CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

It’s not what happens *to* you, but what happens *in* you that’s most important. So, let’s expose some common negative thoughts that have possibly been lying to you.

You have the power to say, “My story won’t end this way.”

FIVE LIES THAT KEEP YOU STUCK

LIE #1 – YOU'RE NOT ENOUGH

*You're not cool.
strong, thin, smart
enough.*

WHAT DOES THE WORD SAY?

How precious are Your _____
_____, O God! ... If I should count
them, they would be more in number than the
_____.

Ps. 139:18

LIE #2 – YOU'LL BE THIS WAY FOREVER

*You've tried to
change, but it's
hopeless.*

WHAT DOES THE WORD SAY?

Greater is He that is _____
_____ than He that
is in the world.

1 Jn 4:4

LIE #3 – THIS WAS YOUR FAULT

*Your parents' divorce,
sexual abuse, deep debt,
etc.*

WHAT DOES THE WORD SAY?

There is therefore now no _____
_____ to this in Christ Jesus.

Rom. 8:1

LIE #4 – YOU DESERVE TO SUFFER

*Your secret sin
caused this to
happen.*

WHAT DOES THE WORD SAY?

He has not punished us as we deserve for all
our sins, for _____
toward those who fear and honor Him is as
great as the height of the heavens above the earth.

*Ps 103:10-11
NIV*

LIE #5 – GOD WILL NOT FORGIVE YOU

*You've messed up
again?*

WHAT DOES THE WORD SAY?

If you confess your sins, He is faithful and just
to _____ and cleanse
us from _____ unrighteousness.

1 Jn 1:9

CONDEMNATION

CONVICTION

Comes from Satan	Comes from the Holy Spirit
Makes you feel worthless and hopeless about your sin	Makes you feel sad about your sin
Imagine a hammer	Imagine a heart-shaped magnet

THINK ABOUT THIS!

List any sin that is greater than the Blood of Jesus?

(There is none.)

REFUSE THOSE LIES! MOVE ON!

At any given moment, you have the power to say, "My story won't end this way." This freedom will begin when you compare your negative thoughts with the Word of God. Then, as you start to recognize the lies you have believed, the Holy Spirit will whisper hope and freedom. If you can accept that God's Word is the final authority, not your feelings, a new chapter in your life can start right now. So, refuse those lies! Instead, choose to move beyond your setback today.

PEOPLE WHO LACK RESILIENCE

Dwell on
problems

Feel
victimized

Become
overwhelmed

Turn to
unhealthy
coping
mechanisms

I refuse to let my past determine my future.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR RESILIENCE

Expect

Expect good. Expect God's strength.

Move On

You can't change the past. So reach for a new chapter. But you can accept it and move beyond it for a hopeful future

Be Proactive

Make a plan, take action and give it time.

Defy Every Hurdle

View life's inevitable challenges as opportunities.

Pamper Yourself

Take care of yourself. Sleep, eat, play, pray well.

Positive Relationships

Be intentional to build positive relationships.

Radical Resilience Battlecry

I'm not living this way anymore!

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power...

Ph. 2:13 NLT



I suffered the death of a child, a nervous breakdown, business failures, and 7 political defeats before I was elected the 17th U.S. President
Abraham Lincoln

CHOOSE RADICAL RESILIENCE

01

What is most important is not what happens *to* you, but *in* you.

02

Resilience is the ability to recover from setbacks and adapt to change.

03

Resilience begins when lying thoughts get replaced with God's Word.

04

The fact that you want to change proves that God is working in you.



SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Prv. 4:18

Jn 8:32

Ph. 2:13

Ph. 4:8

Ph 4:19

1 Jn 4:4

Second Chances

Read Acts 15:36-39, II Timothy 4:11

When was the last time you blew it badly? Yeah, God forgave you, but it was hard to forgive yourself, right? Meet John Mark, who bailed on the legendary Paul, disappointed his cousin, Barnabus, and embarrassed his mom. Yet, he had the same choice that you have during a setback - get bitter or better.

Mark bounced back and experienced the joy, seventeen years later, of receiving Paul's plea to visit him, who even described him as "useful for ministry." Kudos to Mark, who didn't allow a dumb mistake to become a dead end.

Bounce-Back-Burchisms

- Life is not fair, but God is good.
- Quit remembering what God has forgotten.
- Victims lick their wounds. Victors list their victories.
- The reason your windshield is larger than your rearview mirror is so you can move forward.



There is mercy for your past and grace for your future. #Christianvalues

Reflection



Choose to
believe in yourself.

Chapter 4

CHOOSE STRONG LIFE SKILLS

Who do you *admire*? What athlete, celebrity, church leader do you aspire to imitate? They all have *one thing* in common. Learn it well, and you'll succeed at everything you attempt. It's not a magic formula. Hey, it's not even a spiritual attribute. What do these winners have??

Strong Life Skills

YOUR WORD IS TRUTH JN. 17:17

Highlight these Chapter Four scriptures in your Bible

JAMES 1:5 NLT

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you.

PROVERBS 21:5

The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Decision making
- Goal setting
- Time management

God's Word changes you from the inside out.

CHOOSE STRONG LIFE SKILLS

Life skills are learned behaviors needed to effectively handle the activities and demands commonly encountered in daily life. The three mentioned in this chapter rank high on every multi-numbered list.

#1 DECISION MAKING

Decision-making is the process of making choices by gathering facts and assessing alternative outcomes. It is a learned life skill that will benefit you greatly. Here are 6 questions to ask:

What is the question? _____

1	Do I have all the facts?	<i>Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish. Prv. 18:13 NLT</i>
2	Have I listed the pros and cons?	<i>The simple believes every word, But the prudent considers well his steps. Prv. 14:15</i> Creating a risk and rewards list supports logical critical thinking.
3	Am I thinking short-term or long-term?	<i>The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance... Prv. 21:5</i> Say "no" now, so you can say "yes" later. Immediate vs. delayed gratification
4	Could this jeopardize my Christian witness?	<i>But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea. Mat. 18:6</i>
5	What possible motives are driving my decision?	<i>Test me, LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind. Ps. 26:2 NIV</i> Poor decisions can occur due to fear, pride, loneliness, stress, attention-seeking, or feeling pressured to make a premature decision. Spur-of-the-moment decisions are rarely correct. Learn to pause.
6	What is the counsel of my mentors?	<i>Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors, there is safety. Prv. 11:14</i>

God's Promise: *Ps. 32:8, Prv. 2:6, Prv. 16:3 AMPC*

ADOLESCENT BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Impulsive behavior. Emotional outbursts. Neuroscientists now have biological explanations for why teens differ from adults in behaving, solving problems, and making decisions. Their brain is not fully developed until their mid-twenties.

- Amygdala - the emotional part of the brain develops first
- The Prefrontal Cortex - the rational part of the brain matures last. This part includes impulse control, planning, and good judgment.

This information explains why teens are more influenced by a choice's immediate emotional rewards and less concerned with consequences. It also explains why their spur-of-the-moment decisions are rarely correct. Instead, teens can depend on the principles of God's Word as they experience the emotional highs and lows so typical of their adolescent years.

People with strong life skills excel in everything.

#2 GOAL SETTING

Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. Hab. 2:3-4

Goal setting is the process of developing an action plan and timeline to accomplish something you want to achieve. Setting goals helps trigger new behaviors, guides your focus, gives you a sense of personal accomplishment, and enables you to sustain momentum in life.

Goal setting stats! Science-backed research:

- Write it down. People who write down their goals are 20% more successful in accomplishing them than those who did not.
- Being accountable to supportive peers through weekly reports increased goal success 40% more than those who did not.
- 90% of people perform better with relevant and challenging goals.
- Understanding the “why” of the goal increased success significantly.

THREE TYPES OF GOALS

Short-term goals usually consist of one year or less and are sometimes used as stepping stones along the way of achieving their long-term goals.

- Lose 10 pounds
- Paint my living room

Long-term goals consist of plans five to twenty years in your future. They use short-term goals to get there.

- Own my own company
- Buy a house

Lifetime goals are those major goals that you would like to accomplish over your lifetime.

- Discover a cure for a cancer
- Create a tutoring system

The *SMART technique is suitable for beginners:

- S - _____ You know exactly what your goal is.
- M - _____ You can measure and track your goal.
- A - _____ Your goal is realistic, and you can achieve it.
- R - _____ Your goal is exciting and meaningful to you.
- T - _____ You have a clear deadline for your goal.

Practice the Circle Method

WHAT?

WHY?

HOW?

WHEN?



I failed the 6th grade and didn't begin public office until I was 62, but I inspired the world to stand up to Adolph Hitler.
Winston Churchill

#3 TIME MANAGEMENT

So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom. Ps. 90:12

Time management is the process of organizing and designating a specific amount of time to a task so you can accomplish more. Thus, it increases effectiveness and decreases stress. However, activity is not synonymous with productivity. To manage your time effectively, you'll need to detect what is stealing your time currently and learn to allocate the right amount of time to the right activity.

Are you guilty of wasting time? Check those you need to improve on:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Scrolling social media | ☐ Fitness programs |
| ☐ TV or mindless entertainment | ☐ Other people's priorities |
| ☐ Video games | ☐ False responsibilities |
| ☐ Family drama | ☐ Unfruitful obligations |
| ☐ Answering email instantly | ☐ Doing non-essential things |

If you don't manage your time, someone else will do it for you. Ephesians 5:16 instructs us to redeem the time. Be inspired by these ten quotes.

- Plan your work. Work your plan.
- Time is the one thing you can never get back. Once it's gone, it's gone forever.
- It's not enough to be busy, so are the ants.
- Time is more valuable than money.
- Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin. Mother Teresa
- Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the ax. Abraham Lincoln
- Most of us spend too much time on what is urgent and not enough time on what is essential.
- You only need to do something once if you do it right the first time
- If you love life, don't waste time, for time is what life is made up of.
- The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot.

Your daily disciplines determine your destiny.

CHOOSE STRONG LIFE SKILLS

What's today's most important goal? _____

Prioritize your daily tasks here	Time needed to complete task
Devotional: Read 1 chapter in Luke	15 Minutes

Break time and interruptions: _____

Organize yourself. List deadlines: _____

What is non-essential and needs to be removed from today's schedule? _____

CHOOSE STRONG LIFE SKILLS

01

Life skills are learned behaviors that help us deal with the activities and demands of life.

02

Decision-making assists in making good choices by gathering facts and assessing alternative outcomes.

03

Goal setting helps you accomplish something by attaching an action plan to a timeline.

04

Time management enables you to accomplish more by designating a specific amount of time to a task.



SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Ps. 90:12

Prv. 2:6

Prv. 14:15

Prv. 21:5

Eph. 5:16

Jms. 1:5

Woody and Buzz

Read John 14:26

In Disney's *Toy Story 2*, Woody rescues Buzz, and a lifetime friendship begins. Finally, Buzz realizes that he's only a toy, not a real space ranger, regardless of his impressive martial arts training. His rescue occurred when he admitted he needed the loyal, predictable help of his once-rival-now-friend, Woody.

Time management, goal setting, decision making ... have you admitted that you need to be rescued? Even Jesus had to depend on the Helper. The Holy Spirit will help those who invite Him, so why not ask Him now.

Thank you, Father, for not expecting me to do this alone. Thank you for sending me a Helper. I recognize my great need for Him today in these areas:

_____ Choosing friends

_____ Controlling screen time

_____ Time management

_____ Making good decisions

_____ Believing in myself

_____ Completing a goal

Remember this! You're the doer, and He's the helper. As you get started, He will show up.



When Christian values are your guide, decisions and goals come easy.

Reflection



*Choose to
call home.*

Chapter 5

CHOOSE COURAGE



This chapter is dedicated to all *young adults* who refuse to compromise, back down, or cave in to their compromising culture and find courage in their *undivided hearts* for Jesus Christ.

YOUR WORD IS TRUTH JN. 17:17

Highlight these Chapter Five scriptures in your Bible

PROVERBS 4:23

Ponder the path of your feet and let all your ways be established.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:12

Everything is permissible for me—but not everything is beneficial—but I will not be mastered by anything.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Is it okay to _____?
- Budweiser or Be wiser
- Refuse compromise

A steady diet of God's Word will totally change your appetites.

CHOOSE COURAGE

The Holy Spirit put steel in your convictions. 1 Th. 1:5 Msg.

Racial injustice, friends with benefits, social drinking, euthanasia, gender dysphoria ... what a broken, messy world you live in. You will need courage, the mental and moral strength, to stand up for Jesus and stand against the onslaught of compromise and moral decay of your generation.

COURAGE FOR PERSONAL CONVICTIONS

Convictions are personal beliefs that put spiritual backbones in us. They come from making proactive choices based on an undivided heart towards the Lord. Here are eight reasons to develop personal, godly convictions.

- 01 Godly convictions _____ us.
They determine our reputation, financial worth, who we marry, family legacy, physical and mental health.
- 02 Godly convictions _____ us.
They are the boundaries that cause us to make good decisions.
- 03 Godly convictions _____ us.
They protect us from distractions and negative influences.
- 04 Godly convictions enable us to be godly _____.
Who has your hero been? Now, it's your turn.
- 05 Godly convictions empower us to _____.
Your source of approval is now your heavenly Father, not a person or group of people.
- 06 Godly convictions provide _____ for others to remain strong.
Your unwavering position will release confidence for others to do the same.
- 07 Godly convictions enable us to resist _____.
Instead of struggling to say "no," you've learned to say "yes" to what God loves.
- 08 Godly convictions create an opportunity for _____.
People notice you are different from the status quo and wonder why you live as you do.

COURAGE OVER COMPROMISE

To compromise means you are living a little bit below what you know is right. Many Christians are settling for a life of compromise: they live for God on Sunday, but they live like the rest of the world on Monday. So, what is the litmus test for authentic faith? Jesus said,

"If you love Me, _____." Jn. 14:15

Compromise is a slippery slope. It pushes the "just this once" envelope, and the dominoes begin to fall.

Convictions are personal beliefs that put a spiritual backbone in you.

THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF COMPROMISE

Just this once
Everybody's doing it.
What's the problem? I'm still a Christian.
Even pastors do this.
I'll ask for forgiveness later.
Don't judge me.
I'm reaching people who will never come to church.
Quit preaching to me.
Leave me alone. I can do what I want.
God, where are You? My heart is so hard.

When you decide always to do what is right in God's eyes, He will supply you with the same courage He gave to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Refuse to bow!

FIVE SIGNS OF A SEARED CONSCIENCE

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits ... whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. I Tim. 4:1-2

Q. What is a Seared Conscience?

A. Christians who suppress the conviction of the Holy Spirit, continue to sin, and refuse to repent, will (after a time) experience a seared conscience. Their sense of right or wrong will be dulled, and they have no concern over losing their ability to hear or feel the Holy Spirit.

Read a case study of King Saul's destruction in I Samuel chapter 13. The five signs of a seared conscience are clearly seen.

1	Rationalizes	"It's not that bad."
2	Comparison	"Everybody's doing it...so it must be okay."
3	Compromises	"Okay, but just once."
4	Defends action	"What's the big deal? I'm still saved."
5	Resists action	"Don't tell me what to do."

*A divided
heart*

*An unrepentant
heart*

*A hardened
heart*

*A seared
heart*

Please take this seriously! Jesus' stern warning was that, "*many will be offended and fall away and turn away from the faith*" when hearts get hardened by "*the deceitfulness of sin*." The deception is that compromise is not affecting them, but continual compromising leads to a seared conscience; complete desensitization. *Mat. 24:10, Heb. 3:13*



I helped
rescue 800
Jewish
neighbors and
was tortured
unbearably in a
Nazi concentration
camp. When released
by a "clerical error", I
spent 30 years teaching
on forgiveness

Corrie Ten Boom

RADICAL RESILIENCE

BACKBONES OF SPAGHETTI OR STEEL?

No one can give you your personal convictions. Young adults who attempt to live by their parent's convictions instead of their own learn quickly that their backbones are more like spaghetti than steel. Just as your walk with Jesus needs to be personal, so do your convictions need to be personally determined. So, here is your action step.

Before you move out of your parent's home

Before that hottie texts you

Before your roommate hands you a beer

Before your friends watch an R rated movie

Decide where you stand on these unavoidable issues. As you write them down, think long-term about your future spouse, children, legacy, and even that Day when you will give an account. *Rom. 14:10*

Live this day with *That Day* in mind.

These proactive life decisions are so serious that the warning to be sober-minded appears fourteen times in the New Testament. You'll never regret keeping your standard high. God will flood you with such purpose that staying strong won't be a concern.

A CALL FOR COURAGE

Do you live with a purpose beyond pleasure? Here are eight personal convictions shared by some admirable young leaders.

- **Social media** - *"Because I live for Jesus, my social media platforms will be fun, positive, and point people to Jesus."*
- **Social drinking** - *"Because I live for Jesus, social drinking is a deterrent to my spiritual growth, a distraction from my long term goals, and a compromising activity for me."*
- **Complaining** - *"Because I belong to Jesus, I refuse to complain because God is good."*
- **Nightclubs** - *"Because I belong to Jesus, I do not go clubbing because it does not promote my Christian values."*
- **Sexual Purity** - *"Because I belong to Jesus, sexual purity means I will look to Him for affirmation, dedicating my eyes and body to Him before and after marriage."*
- **Marriage** - *"I believe a biblical marriage is a covenant between a man and woman."*
- **Honoring My Parents** - *"Because I love Jesus, I will obey His command to value and be considerate of my parents, not because they are perfect, but because of their God-given position in my life."*
- **Finances** - *"Because I obey Jesus, I have chosen His plan for 'more than enough,' tithing, helping others, saving a little each week, resisting impulsive spending, and I will never purchase what I cannot afford."*

It's true that our freedom allows us to do anything, but that doesn't mean that everything we do is good for us. I'm free to do as I choose, but I choose to never be enslaved to anything. 1 Cor. 6:12 NLT

See page 66 for "Christians and Social Drinking."

COURAGE TO ASK THE REAL QUESTION

The real question is not whether something is right or wrong. The better question for a Christian is, "**How brightly do you want to shine for the Lord?**" In addressing some gray areas of behavior, here are some thought-provoking comments that will help you:



The world is watching. Your God is watching. Your choices determine your wattage.

Circle One:

40 Watt 60 Watt 75 Watt 100 Watt 150 Watt Floodlight

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your _____
and glorify your Father in heaven. *Mat. 5:16*

**KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN, HOLD TIGHT TO YOUR
CONVICTIONS, GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT, BE RESOLUTE,
AND LOVE WITHOUT STOPPING. I COR. 16:13 MSG.**

When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others
are often stiffened. #courage

CHOOSE COURAGE

01

Courageous convictions come from the proactive choices from an undivided heart.

02

Compromise is lowering your standard for profit, pleasure, or popularity.

03

One sentence can silence all temptation, *"Who are you living for?"*

04

Replace, *"Is it okay to ...?"* with, *"How brightly do you want to shine for the Lord?"*



SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Gen. 39:9

Prv. 4:23

Mat. 5:16

Jn. 14:15

Rom. 14:12

Ph. 2:15

1 Tim. 4:2

Jms. 1:8

A Naughty Hottie

Read Genesis 39:9

Genesis 39 is an R-rated narrative of an Egyptian cougar and her daily lure for adulterous pleasures with her husband's associate, Joseph. If anyone had a right to cave in, it would have been him. Between the bitterness from his brothers' betrayal and a dream from God not fulfilled, the disillusionment would have been enough to knock him out of Hebrew's Hall of Fame.

What was his secret to courage? He had made a personal vow to walk in the fear of the LORD. Notice his response to the seductions of this leading lady. After multiple invitations for adulterous pleasures, Joseph told this naughty hottie,

"No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" Gen. 39:9

Let's examine Genesis 39:9 to discover Joseph's source of courage to say, "No" to sin and, "Yes" to God.
Answers in Genesis 39:9

What had Pharaoh put into Joseph's care? _____

What action was the "wicked thing"?

_____ Betraying his master's trust _____ Sexual sin with his master's wife _____ Both

Why did Joseph describe it as "sin against God" and not a sin against Potiphar?

_____ It violated his vow to God _____ His loyalty was towards God, not his boss
_____ His life goal was to please God, not himself _____ All of the above



My Christian values determine what's right, not the status quo.

Reflection



Choose to
try new things.

Chapter 6

CHOOSE BIBLICAL MARRIAGE

Beware! *If you drop* a frog into 212 degrees of boiling water, he'll jump out. However, if you put it in tepid water and bring it to a boil *slowly*, it will not perceive the *danger* and will be cooked to death. This chapter is about God's beautiful plan and a *whole lotta* culturally-cool frogs.

YOUR WORD IS TRUTH JN. 17:17

Highlight these Chapter Six scriptures in your Bible

GENESIS 1:27

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God
He created him; male and female He created them.

ISAIAH 5:20

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Male and female
- Counterfeits
- Heaven on earth

*Build your life on the unchanging Word of
God.*

BIBLICAL MARRIAGE

Romantic love and biblical love are polar opposites; emotional vs. sacrificial. From God's perspective, marriage is not a Hallmark moment of two lovers on a moonstruck beach. Instead, marriage is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ and His church. He emptied out His divine privileges to create a people who would be free and radiant. He poured out His life to fulfill her every need.

In return, the Church represents Him well while on the earth. She uses His name and His authority to do His bidding. Her trust and adoration fulfills her Bridegroom. This love is a mysterious union, picture, and the secret to a truly biblical marriage.

SETTLE THIS FOREVER!

Who should we listen to as we begin this conversation of biblical marriage and cohabitation?

____ Scientists ____ Hollywood ____ Professors ____ Relatives ____ God

1. God's character is _____

You are _____, and do _____; Teach me Your statutes. Ps. 119:68

2. God's ways are _____

As for God, His way is perfect. The word of the LORD is proven. Ps. 18:30

What a God he is! How perfect in every way! All his promises prove true. He is a shield for everyone who hides behind him. Ps. 18:30 TLB

3. God's Word is _____

Take notice that both of the preceding scriptures connect God's character with His word.

All Scripture is _____ and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. II Tim. 3:16 NIV

God's **character** is good. God's **ways** are perfect. God's **Word** is inspired.

Embracing these three realities will create an unshakeable foundation and guarantee you will be Strong-For-Life. God's Word is the final authority over scientific discoveries, self-centered celebrities, and well-meaning relatives. Settle this forever!

WHAT IS BIBLICAL MARRIAGE?

Biblical marriage is a fulfilling, three-fold covenant between God, one man, and one woman. Its foundation is an unconditional, sacrificial "you-before-me" type of love. Scripture begins and ends with the picture of marriage as an institution ordained by God. Jesus' first recorded miracle was at a wedding between a man and a woman. Is it a coincidence that marriage is divinely described and celebrated in the Bible's beginning, middle, and end? Certainly not! *Gen. 1:26, Mat. 19:5, Rev. 19:7*

FOUR COUNTERFEITS TO BIBLICAL MARRIAGE

Satan creates counterfeits to biblical marriages in four ways. They are so prevalent today, that one hardly raises an eyebrow. The prophet, Isaiah, warned of this:

Woe to them that call _____ good, and good _____ Is. 5:20

Counterfeit #1: Cohabitation

Today's sex-saturated culture is nonchalant about two people living together outside of marriage, but that doesn't redefine the Scriptures. Not only does it violate biblical commands, but it puts their future marriage at risk. This "try-before-you-buy" concept lacks a key ingredient to a successful marriage; commitment. If you will be honest and look beyond the benefits of free housing and romantic moments, the reality is that you are living with someone who does not love Jesus (Jn. 14:15). If they don't honor their personal covenant with God now, they certainly won't when someone better comes along. So don't compromise, dear one. Keep your standard high and expect God's best.

Counterfeit #2: Secular Marriages

The foundation of a secular marriage is a soulless connection between a man and a woman. It might be a love for sports or a commitment to their children, but they are two independent people living two distinctly different lives under one roof. Some are compatible and exemplify mature, selfless love. Nevertheless, this is not a biblical marriage because serving Jesus together is not at the core.

Counterfeit #3: Christians Who Divorce and Remarry

Divorce is never God's best plan, and the idea of, "I'll be happier with someone else" is a counterfeit to the enduring love of biblical marriage. The high rate of Christians who divorce usually reveals they didn't "do marriage" God's way. Often, Christians enter marriage with a preconceived concept based on romantic love, not biblical marriage's "you-before-me" sacrificial love. When two Christians pursue marriage based on secular values (my money, my family, my body) you can expect secular results of fighting, bitterness, and betrayal.

Other common contributors to marital trouble are selfishness, a lack of personal submission to Jesus, and defiance to God's divine order for the home. **Adultery is a biblical reason for divorce, but Jesus clearly stated in Matthew 19:8 that a soft, teachable heart can often prevent it. Counseling and forgiveness can work miracles.** Sadly, mental health issues can cause marriages to fail, even against the desire of a devoted spouse.

A failed marriage does not make you a failure. Be kind towards those who have walked through the pain of divorce. You rarely know the whole story. Write out God's promise for those walking through the pain of divorce.

He will redeem you from _____. Ps. 103:4

Counterfeit #4 - Homosexuality

The fourth counterfeit of a biblical marriage is homosexuality. Regardless of how nice your gay neighbor might be, homosexuality is condemned by God. Although there are only seven specific references on the subject, God's Word is explicitly clear.

Lev. 18:22	<i>You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is a detestable act.</i>
Lev. 20:13	<i>If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination.</i>
Mat. 19:4	<i>Jesus defines marriage between a man and a woman.</i>
Mk. 10:5	<i>Jesus refers to Genesis to define biblical marriage</i>
Rom. 1:21-28	<i>"...men ...burned in their lust ... men for men..." (Read 7 verses)</i>
I Cor. 6:9-10	<i>Do you not know that ... homosexuals ... will not inherit the kingdom of God?</i>
I Tim. 1:9-10	<i>Homosexuals ... consider nothing sacred and defile what is holy...(paraphrased)</i>

The LGBT community has an intentional, calculating agenda to become accepted, approved, and celebrated by mainstream society. Christians should be equipped to walk in love, but not cower down to their name-calling or intimidating threats. God refers to them as deceived despite their celebrity status or educational accolades. A heart of compassion should consume us. You can be sure what one generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace.

See page 68 for FAQ About Homosexuality



I was a Five-time GRAMMY®-winner for my contemporary Christian music, but in 2008, my teenage son accidentally ran over our adopted 5-year-old daughter. In her memory, we built an orphanage in China.

Steven Curtis Chapman

RADICAL RESILIENCE

SATAN PERVERTS GOD'S WAYS

Satan twists things. Because he can't create, he counterfeits through a spirit of perversion. Every good thing that God created, Satan attempts to pervert. Webster's Dictionary defines perversion as a "diverting from the true intent or purpose; a change to something worse; a turning or applying to a wrong end or use." A quick word study of the Hebrew word *iqqesh* from Strong's Concordance #6141 means "twisted, perverted, crooked."

The spirit of perversion has infiltrated many areas. For example, a perversion of the poppy plant is to use opiates for non-medicinal purposes. The idolatry of sports icons and music that inspires adultery are twisted diversions from good.

God created sexuality and called it good. Sexual union has a dual purpose -- procreation and "one flesh" union. Unfortunately, since the ancient days, the spirit of perversion has pushed humans into twisted uses for sex: premarital sex, pornography, nymphomania, sadomasochism (and even masturbation or petting) are selfish perversions of the true love between a married man and woman.

THE PERVERSION PROCESS: EXCHANGING THE TRUTH FOR A LIE

They exchanged the truth of God for a lie. Rom. 1:25

The perversion process has already infiltrated those being shaped by culture more than God's Word. Be careful! A secular agenda is conditioning you right now to accept what God opposes. If you continually ponder these popular lies, your heart will get callous to the things of God, and your mind will get darkened. Ask the Spirit of Truth to expose every lie contrary to God's Word, and He will.

*Living together
before marriage is
okay.*

*I can love whoever
I want to love.*

*What's right for
you may not be
right for me.*

*The Bible is
outdated and
irrelevant today.*

Professing to be _____, they became _____. Rom. 1: 22

We cannot bend the principles of God's Word to pacify a vocal minority group.

YOUR SINGLE SEASON

Some singles celebrate their freedom by living a self-centered, independent lifestyle, while others sit home alone in self-pity. Marriage will not solve either of those extremes. The greatest gifts you could give your future spouse are a secure identity and a rock-solid commitment to Jesus Christ. You can make the most of this valuable season by focusing on these two objectives:

- Look to Jesus for your affirmation
- Learn to give selflessly to God and to others

Wholeness involves a heart attitude, not a marital status. The secret to joy is:



PREPARING FOR A BIBLICAL MARRIAGE

- _____ I accept God's definition of marriage between God, one man, and one woman *Gen. 1:27*
- _____ My primary affirmation comes from the Lord, not my spouse. *Ps. 62:5*
- _____ I am learning to manage my emotions and finances
- _____ Guarding my eyes and heart against destructive temptations is my personal responsibility. *Gen. 39:5, Ps. 101:3*
- _____ During courtship, spiritual, social, and emotional oneness occurs.
- _____ Sexual activity with your fiancé distracts you from trust-building communication.
- _____ Discuss and manage preconceived expectations.
- _____ God created sex for the two-fold purpose of reproducing and one-flesh intimacy.
- _____ God's divine order is mutual submission; Christ first, then husband-wife. *Eph. 5:25*
- _____ Watch the example of sacrificial love between mature Christian couples.

If you are already married ...

Your marriage is more important than anything else, so make it great, and keep it fresh! Examine your attitude and actions in the light of Scripture. Forgive quickly. Love at last sight is more precious than love at first sight. A biblical marriage reflects the character of Christ and amazes a watching world.

A biblical marriage is a billboard for heaven on earth.

CHOOSE BIBLICAL MARRIAGE

01

Biblical marriage is a covenant between God, a man, and a woman.

02

Deception gradually occurs each time truth is replaced for a lie.

03

Counterfeit concepts of marriage foster perversions from God's intentions.

04

Contending for a heaven-on-earth marriage begins when you're single.



SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Gen. 1:27

Lev. 18:22

Mat. 19:4

Mk. 10:6

Rom. 1:25

Eph. 5:25

Extra Baggage

Read Matthew 6:33-34

Wouldn't it seem strange if a bride dragged a few suitcases down the wedding aisle? Yet, that's exactly what happens in many marriages. Poor guy. He doesn't see the extra baggage of debt, doubts and depression coming his way.

Marriage tip! Your First Love can handle your extra baggage better than your spouse. A solid relationship with Jesus is the greatest gift you can bring into a marriage.

Trust your First Love with your:

- | | | |
|----------------------|----|----------------|
| _____ Insecurities | A. | Psalm 32:8 |
| _____ Fears | B. | Psalm 31:14-15 |
| _____ Emotions | C. | Psalm 27:1 |
| _____ Life's details | D. | Psalm 18:1 |
| _____ Guidance | E. | Psalm 30:11 |

A biblical marriage, like Priscilla and Aquila, is the most fulfilling relationship on earth. In all six mentions of this New Testament duo, their names appeared together. They worked side-by-side with each other in a career and risked their lives for the Lord. They opened their home to Paul for a Bible study, and the world-changing church of Ephesus was the result! *Acts 18*



Christian values, such as a biblical marriage, don't change over time.

Reflection



Choose to
forgive.

Chapter 7

CHOOSE TO BE ACCOUNTABLE

High-profile leaders all too frequently become *headlines* for adultery, sexual perversions, *embezzlement*, and fraud. How does this happen? Was it their relentless schedules? Pressure to produce continual success? No. It's always the same thing; a lack of *personal boundaries* and their refusal to be accountable.

YOUR WORD IS TRUTH JN. 17:17

Highlight these Chapter Seven scriptures in your Bible

PROVERBS 13:1

A wise son heeds his father's instruction, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

GALATIANS 6:1

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

LOOKING AHEAD

Accountable, Define

- Five reasons
- Beware of bristling
- Grow up and Own up!

God's Word is a seed.

BE ACCOUNTABLE

This might not be the most inspiring chapter, but it's possibly the most important. It will save your marriage, protect your retirement fund, and, most of all, guard your Christian witness.

Accountable, define

- Taking full responsibility for one's actions
- A scriptural principle of answering to and allowing a fellow believer to correct or instruct you for emotional wholeness and spiritual maturity
- The act of being required to explain actions and defend decisions

FIVE REASONS ACCOUNTABILITY IS IMPORTANT

01 Constant stress = weariness = vulnerability = skewed focus

02 A critical step towards maturity and leadership

03 Prevents distractions or the sin of pride

04 Prevents negative social patterns of loneliness and isolation

05 Promotes personal wholeness, completion of spiritual calling or secular goals

As iron sharpens iron, so _____ *Prov. 27:17*

THREE TYPES OF ACCOUNTABILITY



Personal Accountability
To Self



Relational Accountability
To family, friends, co-workers



Spiritual Accountability
To God and church family

Proverbs defines a fool as someone who is unteachable.

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Do you still need a babysitter to control your behavior? Managing yourself is a sign of maturity and a much-needed life skill.

- Time management - Making the most of your time
- Money management - Making the right choices
- Stewardship - Management of all personal belongings

Check the areas you need to manage.

_____ Confronting tardiness	_____ Excessive spending	_____ Controlling screen time
_____ Healthier food	_____ Procrastination	_____ Paying bills promptly
_____ Staying on a budget	_____ Excessive generosity	_____ Sexual fantasies
_____ Ironing your shirt	_____ Wash your car	_____ Chronic

People who take responsibility for themselves, their behavior, and the consequences of their behavior have a high degree of personal responsibility. They have a clearly defined set of ethics, or moral principles, that guide what they do and how they do it. These ethics help them make decisions even in complicated situations.

Relational Accountability

A sweet friendship refreshes the soul. Prov. 27:19

Do you have friends and family that you listen to and learn from? Evaluating the health of your closest relationships is beneficial. Friends are like elevators that either take you up or down. Multiple broken relationships reveal character flaws that need to be addressed. People who insist on, "It's my life, and I can do what I want" invite an independent spirit of pride. Unfortunately, it also will cost you meaningful relationships.

*Six Signs of a Healthy Relationship

- Two-sided in giving and taking
- Sees you at your best and worst
- Discussions revolve around a variety of topics
- Able to be honest without concerns of rejection
- Inspires you to be a better person
- Your connection is a positive entity: sports, hobby, family, God

Two are _____ than one...For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But _____ who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to _____. Ecc. 4:9-10

Friends are like elevators that either take you up or down.

**Foundations For Life, Vol. 8, Strong-For-Life Relationships*



I was only 13 when a shark attack left me without my left arm. One month later, I returned to surfing and eventually won first place in the 2005 NSSA National Conference.
Bethany Hamilton

SPIRITUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Check up on yourselves. Are you really Christians? Do you pass the test? Do you feel Christ's presence and power more and more within you? Or are you just pretending to be Christians when actually you aren't at all? II Cor. 13:5 TLB

Your relationship with your Heavenly Father is the most important of all. To prevent destructive detours in life, He surrounds you with other people of faith. If they are spiritually mature, they will speak up to you regarding habits or attitudes that will distract you away from God's best. Don't resent them. Stay teachable. Here are some Bible examples of the beautiful relationships that require accountability. Can you list the names of people in your life that reflect each relationship?

- Teacher - Disciple: I Tim. 1:2, Paul // Timothy _____
- Co-laborer in Christ: Prv. 27:21, Paul // Barnabus _____
- Small Group: Rom. 12:16 _____
- Husband / Wife: Eph. 5:21 _____
- Local Church: Heb. 13:17, Pastors _____
- Intentional Interaction: Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, Annually
- Levels differ: Spiritually mature is not as vulnerable as a new convert.

I was very close to a TBI Alumni who had struggled with addictions. I counseled her to choose someone to be accountable to for one year, and she chose me! Bless her heart. If she was three minutes late for church, I was sending her a text saying, "Where are you?". She didn't resent it. She appreciated the support, and today, she is a strong leader in our ministry.

If you've missed your Bible Study or church a few times and no one has checked on you, find a church family who will! A real pastor will encourage you and spiritually spank you in the same sermon because they know what will help you grow in the Lord.

Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Heb. 13:17 NLT

OWN UP!

Sooner or later, your past will catch up with you. To be accountable is the act of being required to explain your actions and defend your decisions. So when confronted about a lie or poor choice you've made, just own up. Honesty is the best policy because truth sets you free.

The moment you bristle, you are busted.

GUIDELINES FOR “OWNING UP”

- 01 What risks will I take if I choose never to tell?
- 02 What consequences will occur if the truth is exposed later?
- 03 Is my motive to expose skeletons that are dead or mistakes that are forgiven?
- 04 Will my truthfulness disillusion others beyond recovery?
- 05 Will details bring emotional closure or arouse added distrust?

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Look at the word responsibility - “response-ability” - the ability to choose your response. Highly proactive people recognize that responsibility. They do not blame circumstances, conditions, or conditioning for their behavior. Their behavior is a product of their own conscious choice, based on values, rather than a product of their conditions, based on feeling.

Wherefore putting away _____, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another. Eph. 4:25

THREE ACCOUNTABILITY ATTRIBUTES

A _____ spirit
A willingness to be convicted, corrected or instructed. (Jms. 1:19)

Am I willing to submit my personality, approach, accomplishments, and plans to other godly believers without reacting in pride and defensiveness? If not, why?

How do I respond when someone exposes pride or questions my motives?

BEWARE OF THE “BRISTLE”

Pay close attention to your response to a friend or spiritual leader addressing a questionable habit or attitude in your life. If you bristle, you’ve been busted! Bristling is that agitation that occurs when you’re offended and think, “Who do you think you are? Get out of my face!” Be careful! It reeks with pride and is the opposite of a teachable spirit. Many people are polite on the outside while bristling to the point of extreme offense on the inside.

The better response is to be teachable. Being teachable forces you to recognize your vulnerable areas, exposes destructive attitudes, and keeps you focused on spiritual growth.

By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honor and life. Prov. 22:4

CHOOSE TO BE ACCOUNTABLE

01

Accountability is taking full responsibility for your actions.

02

Personal, relational, and spiritual accountability bring wholeness.

03

Those who resent or refuse to be accountable lack spiritual maturity.

04

Being accountable fosters humility and protects us from blind spots.



SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Prv. 13:1

Prv. 18:1

Prv. 17:17

Ecc. 4:10

Mat. 8:9

Heb. 10:24

Heb. 10:25

Heb. 13:17

Own Up!

Read Ephesians 4:25

Are you hiding mistakes or secret sins from your past? To be accountable requires you to explain your actions and defend your decisions. When confronted about a lie or poor choice you've made, just own up. Honesty is the best policy because truth sets you free.

- ☐ **Should you leave a note with your cell number on the parked car that you hit?**
- ☐ **Should you tell your fiancé that you're \$18,000 in debt?**
- ☐ **Should you tell your professor that you cheated on the final exam?**

Own up and grow up.

Wherefore putting away _____, "Let each one of you speak _____ with his neighbor," for we are members of one another." Eph. 4:25

Wanna enjoy freedom? Guilt cannot grow, and shame cannot hide when you own up.

The Blame Game

- _____ I blame my parents
- _____ I blame my circumstances
- _____ I blame conditions
- _____ I blame someone else

No More Excuses

- _____ I was wrong
- _____ I take responsibility
- _____ I deserve the consequences
- _____ I will learn from this and move on

Look at the word responsibility - "response-ability" - the ability to choose your response.



Being accountable is a Christian value that leads to personal freedom.

Reflection



Choose to
dream again.

Chapter 8

CHOOSE *True* SUCCESS

An African farmer named Ali Hafed sold his farm to *pursue wealth*. He got depressed and *took his life*, only to miss the discovery of one of the largest land mines in the world ... in the farm that he sold; acres of diamonds. The very thing he craved was *closer than he knew*.

YOUR WORD IS TRUTH JN. 17:17

Highlight these Chapter Eight scriptures in your Bible

PROVERBS 23:4

Do not overwork to be rich; Because of your own understanding, cease!

ISAIAH 48:17

I am the Lord your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go.

LOOKING AHEAD

- False success
- True success
- How to choose

Our attitude toward the Word determines the place that God holds in our daily life.

CHOOSE (TRUE) SUCCESS

Success means different things to different people. Most would agree that a person's values and belief system determine their definition. For example, some cultures value familial support over personal independence. Therefore, they wouldn't consider leaving their extended family for a better job. At the other end of the spectrum, a higher-paying job would be a priority, regardless of the relationships they had to leave behind.

What is true success? First, let's look at the alternative.

FALSE SUCCESS

What could be worse than failure? False success. After all, when you fail at some endeavor, you can take steps to correct the situation. At the very least, you can learn from the experience and resolve to do better next time. False success is different. Under its influence, you can think you are winning when in fact, you are losing. By the time you see the need to change, it may be too late.

For what profit is it to a man if he gains the _____, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in _____ for his soul? Mat. 16:26

That question from Jesus could well apply to those who devote themselves to the pursuit of money and all it can buy—the epitome of false success. Consider these pithy quotes about false success:

- He who wins the rat race becomes the chief rat.
- If the ladder is not leaning against the right wall, every step we take just gets us to the wrong place faster.
- He who dies with the most toys still dies.

Is that the definition of success? No, not for the Christian who has a higher calling.

Life is about making an impact, not making an income.

SUCCESS, DEFINED

1. The status of having achieved and accomplished an aim or objective
2. The opposite of failure
3. The attainment of wealth, respect, or fame

Life is about making an impact, not an income.

CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW OF SUCCESS

A quick comparison between a Secular and Christian Worldview regarding success reveals a stark contrast. Priorities are quite different!

Secular Success

Wealth accumulation
Prestige
Covetousness
Competitive w/others
Pressure to perform
Exclusive
Anxiety / Stress

Biblical Success

Prosperity for a purpose
Status is for shining & serving
Generosity
Supportive to others
Doing your best for Him
Inclusive
Peace of mind

Secular Success: Get rich, respected, and recognized

Biblical Success: Love God. Serve people.

TRUE SUCCESS

What does the Bible say about true success? True success is believing, loving, and obeying God. It is focusing on that which is eternal rather than on that which is temporary. True success is being transformed in our lives, minds, and hearts by the Word of God.

When King David was about to die, he gave his son Solomon this advice for success:

Do what the LORD your God commands and follow his teachings. Obey everything written in the Law of Moses. Then you will be a success, no matter what you do or where you go. I Kings 2:3

Jesus reiterated this teaching in the New Testament when He declared which is the greatest Commandment:

'Love the Lord your God with all your _____ and with all your _____ and with all your _____ and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your _____ as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these. Mk. 12:30-31

WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT MONEY?

- Money is not the root of all evil.
- The *love of money* is the root of all evil.
- Money is a tool for the gospel.
- Money should never be your master.
- It's not wrong to have money. It's wrong for money to have you.
- Riches are deceitful.

Deceitful, defined: *Misleading, having a tendency to deceive or give false impressions, imposing a false idea or belief*



My junior high coach didn't choose me for the JV team and suggested I try baseball, but today I have 5 NBA Championship rings.

Michael Jordan

RADICAL RESILIENCE

HOW ARE RICHES DECEITFUL?

In the Sower and the Word parable, Jesus clearly reveals His attitude towards (trusting in) riches.

*Now these are the ones sown among thorns; and the cares of this world, the **deceitfulness of riches**, and the desires for other things entering in **choke the word**, and it becomes unfruitful. Mk. 4:19*

1. Riches are deceitful because they are temporary, and our focus is eternal.

Do not overwork to be rich... For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven. Prv. 23:4-5

2. Riches are deceitful because they appear to offer that which satisfies man's needs, but instead creates an insatiable appetite for more. Paul warns us in I Timothy 6:10:

For the _____ of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their _____, and pierced themselves through with many _____.

3. Riches are deceitful because they appear to serve one's needs, but in reality, they become the master, and you become their slave. Jesus said,

No one can serve two _____. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to _____. Mat. 6:24 NLT

4. Riches are deceitful because they offer false security and hide the fact that they are not eternal. Timothy has a serious warning for you.

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in _____ but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. I Tim. 6:17

Let's not become a slave to things that will not last, but focus our eyes on those things that will forever endure. God's purpose for money is to preach the gospel and advance His kingdom.

Your definition of success depends on who you are living for.

The best things in life aren't things.

PROSPERITY FOR A PURPOSE

We had a friend whose greatest joy was to invest thousands of dollars into time-proven ministries. He was a paymaster. He understood that money was a tool to advance the kingdom of God. He was promoted to heaven and greeted with true riches - the rewards of generosity.

The Bible makes a distinction between “deceitful riches” and “true riches.” God wants you to be blessed in every area of your life, including your finances. Why are you blessed? You are blessed so you can be a blessing to the work of the Lord, to others, and for yourself. If God can trust you with finances, He’ll channel millions of dollars through your hands. Don’t get sticky fingers

“I am the Lord your God, Who _____.” Is. 48:17

Why would He teach you to profit if it were a sin to be rich?

Give, and it will be _____: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and _____ will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you. Lk. 6:38

7 ATTRIBUTES OF TRUE SUCCESS

- 01 True Success puts God first place in their life
- 02 True Success embraces God’s values and priorities.
- 03 True Success learns from the past and focuses on the future.
- 04 True Success accepts and loves who they are.
- 05 True Success develops their God-given talents and desires.
- 06 True Success is committed to healthy relationships.
- 07 True Success is living with an eternal perspective.

SLAM DUNK

The late John Wooden, a committed Christian who became the most successful college basketball coach in history, was asked how he would define success. He replied,

*“Success is **peace of mind** which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.”* Now certainly, this is a large part of the biblical meaning of success; we are to take the talents and opportunities God gives us and make the most of them.

CHOOSE TRUE SUCCESS

01

The perspectives of secular vs. biblical success are polar opposites.

02

From God's perspective, any success without eternal value is a failure.

03

True success connects promotions and prosperity with an eternal purpose.

04

True success is a life that has embraced God's values and priorities.



SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

1 Kgs. 2:3

Prv. 23:4

Is. 48:17

Ps. 1:1-3

Mat. 16:26

1 Tim. 6:10

1 Tim. 6:20

III Jn. vs 4

A Successful Failure

Read Jeremiah 9:23-24

Once upon a time, there were two rich guys named Ananias and Barnabus. When God gave Ananias money, the guy lied about it and dropped dead. Being a successful failure will be his legacy forever. But, when God trusted Barnabus with some money, he invested it in the Lord's work and changed the world. Leaders today still consider him a history maker. *Acts 5 / Acts 4*

According to Jeremiah 9:24, true success is _____.

- ☐ Can you be wise and know God?
- ☐ Can you be strong and know God?
- ☐ Can you be rich and know God?

The secret of success is not to brag about who you are, but about who God is!



Christian values embrace an eternal perspective of success.

Reflection



Choose to
move on.

ADDENDUM

ANSWER KEY

Chapter	Exercise	Answers
Chapter 1	8 Reasons a Correct Worldview is Important	belief, values, attitudes, goals, relationships, failures, every, consequences
Chapter 2	Watermelon Seeds	Many roads lead to God., Being a good person will get you to heaven.
Chapter 3	Five Lies That Keep You Stuck	thoughts, sand, in Me, condemnation, His mercy, forgive our sins, all
Chapter 4	Three Types of Goals	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely
Chapter 5	Courage for Personal Convictions	create, guide, guard, role models, stand alone, courage, temptation, evangelism
Chapter 6	Settle This Forever!	good, good, good, perfect, inspired, God-breathed, settled.
	Four Counterfeits to Biblical Marriage	evil, evil, destruction
	The Perversion Process	wise, fools
	Extra Baggage	D, C, E, B, A
Chapter 7	Six Signs of a Healthy Relationship	better, woe to him, help him up
Chapter 8	False Success	whole world, exchange
	True Success	heart, mind, strength, neighbor
	How Are Riches Deceitful	love, greediness, sorrows, masters, money, uncertain riches
	Prosperity for a Purpose	teaches you to profit, given to you, running over

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SOCIAL DRINKING AND CHRISTIANS

Drinking, Gambling, Smoking, Sexting - Romans 14:5

*Watch where you're going! Stick to the path of truth, and the road will be safe and smooth before you. Don't allow yourself to be **sidetracked** for even a moment or take the detour that leads to darkness. Prv. 4:26-27 TPT*

Is it okay for a Christian to drink alcohol? Maybe you're asking the wrong question. Instead of focusing on what's right or wrong, perhaps you should focus on what's beneficial and best. Moderate alcohol consumption may not be a sin, but it's probably a bad idea. Its atmosphere welcomes compromising behavior, its influence pushes you for more, it distracts you from more important priorities, and all previously set boundaries become blurred and often broken. Just because you can doesn't mean you should. So before you ask, "Why not?" ask yourself, "Why?"

What Does the Bible Say About Alcohol Consumption

Does the Bible forbid a Christian to drink moderately?	No	<i>But it has plenty of warnings</i>
Are there scriptures that seem to allow wine?	Yes	<i>Ps. 104:14, Eccl. 9:7, Is. 9:7, I Tim. 5:23</i>
Is getting drunk forbidden in the Bible?	Yes	<i>Prv. 13:13, I Cor. 5:11, Gal. 5:21, I Pet. 4:3</i>
Does drinking tarnish your Christian witness?	Yes	<i>I Th. 5:22, Col. 3:12, Eph. 5:11, I Jn. 2:15-17</i>

Didn't Jesus Drink Wine?

Yes, Jesus probably did drink wine, and I suspect He stopped compulsive Peter from getting drunk a few times. Jesus' first public miracle was to turn water into wine at the wedding of Cana. I grew up hearing fundamental preachers describe this wine as almost non-alcoholic, but the comment made by the banquet's master about it being the "choice wine" makes it pretty clear that is not the case. That's difficult for religious folk to say, but it's true. Jesus wouldn't create what He doesn't approve of, so, maybeAnd yes, I realize in most European countries, wine is the common currency with children tasting it as young as ten years of age. Nevertheless, I have friends who are recovering alcoholics, and I do not drink wine. These are my personal, not biblical convictions. *Prv. 20:1, I Th. 5:23*

You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial. I Cor. 10:23

Alcohol's Destructive Attributes

No one takes their first drink and says, "I plan to be an alcoholic." The Bible clearly warns about the devastating, addictive effects of alcohol. Domestic violence, date rapes, and sexual abuse are often alcohol-related. Binge drinking and teenage alcoholism occur because they were fooled into taking that first drink. *Prv. 20:1, Prv. 23:19-25*

Alcohol's Destructive Attributes

- *Drinking alcohol is illegal until you are 21 years old.*
- *Those with compulsive, addictive tendencies should not drink.*
- *People don't associate alcohol with Christian goals.*
- *Alcohol removes the restraints of your behavior.*
- *Alcohol blurs previously set boundaries.*

Questions To Ask About Drinking In Moderation

- Does it hurt your Christian witness? Does it help it?
- Will it cause a new believer to stumble?
- Does it display good management of your time and money?
- In 20 years, how will you feel if your daughter asks to do the same thing?
- How will you feel if it goes viral on social media?
- Can you drink in moderation without wanting more?
- Do you get defensive when a non-drinker questions you?
- If you want to drink "just one," what makes you think you won't want to drink "just one more?"
- Are you self-controlled in other areas of your life? Food? Money? Sexuality?
- Are you depending on alcohol to mask your inadequacies?
- Can you honestly drink a beer while leading a Bible study in your dorm?
- The next day, did your good time affect your God time

Why Is "Be Sober-Minded" So Important?

Significantly, the instruction to be sober-minded is repeated in the New Testament *fourteen times*. The term sober-minded means "free from intoxicating influences." Most of those references are not specifically about alcohol, but negative things exacerbated by alcohol-induced behavior; irresponsible behavior, a fun-driven lifestyle, crude joking, etc. There is a thin line between drinking responsibly, getting buzzed, and being intoxicated. *I Pet. 4:7, II Tim. 4:5*

Live Above Reproach

Paul encourages believers to stop any questionable behavior and live pure. "Above reproach" is a legal term that means no one can legitimately make any charges against you that will stick. Instead of seeing how close you can get to worldly activities, live as far away as possible. *I Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:6-7*

Leadership Choices

Do you want to be a follower or a leader? A chicken or an eagle? A private or a general? Your daily choices will determine the impact of your influence. Set your standard high. Dare to be different. Live big for God and allow Him to use you to strengthen others. *Rom. 1:16, Acts 17:6b*

The Bottom Line - A Sin Or A Distraction?

Moderate drinking might be okay, but its companions are not. Erratic behavior, blurred boundaries, risky sexual behavior, and binge drinking are just a few of the rascals that alcohol invites. Drinking in moderation is a distraction to your destiny. It is a counterfeit of the new wine He wants you to enjoy. The new wine is the Holy Spirit, your source of real joy, your solution to anxiety, and the launching of supernatural adventures in God. People who are full of the Spirit need nothing else! Don't settle for anything less!

Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit. Eph. 5:18 NLT

Disclaimer: TBI does not advocate social drinking, but young adults deserve to understand the "pondering process" needed to come to a conclusion regarding this controversial, personal conviction. Prov. 4:26, Ps. 119:59, Eccl. 12:1

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOMOSEXUALITY ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE

The root causes of homosexuality are complex. The common hard-nose Christian response has been to tell the homosexual to repent and change as if it were a simple matter of choice. This response is simplistic and cruel. Let us all approach these questions with the awareness of our deep need for the compassion of Jesus Christ, the One who says, "Come, and I will ..."

Q: If I have a same-sex attraction or a gay dream, am I homosexual?

A: Not at all. Sensual thoughts and surging hormones, especially during adolescence or when recuperating from relational brokenness, can cause your body to be aroused. Sometimes there are unmet needs of acceptance and approval from your childhood that create irrational desires. Three out of four boys who think they are gay at 16 aren't by 25.

Q. How should I respond to these same-sex urges?

A. Respond to same-sex urges the same way you would respond to an urge to lie, steal or murder. The same way a married man should respond on a business trip with his secretary in the next room, or a widower wants to cheat on his taxes. Just say, 'No.' Regardless of the temporary pleasure it might bring, every thought that does not agree with the Bible is a lie. Recognize it. Reject it. Replace it. *Col. 3:5, Ph. 4:8, Jms. 1:14-15*

Q. What causes a person to be a homosexual?

A. Homosexual feelings and behavior are rooted in a wide array of overlapping and intertwining psychological, physiological, and developmental factors. It is a lifestyle choice, not an inborn sexual orientation, and is usually a subconscious response to a soul wound that only God's love can heal. God designed the family to meet the human need for acceptance and approval, but, due to sin, we live in a broken world with broken people looking in wrong places to get their unmet needs fulfilled. Homosexuality is not primarily about sex. It's about everything else -loneliness, rejection, affirmation intimacy, identity, relationships, etc. God's love is the solution, but when His plan for wholeness is rejected, either through ignorance or defiance, a spirit of perversion plants alternative solutions in their mind, and deception slips in.

Q. What does the Bible say about homosexuality?

A. Homosexuality is a counterfeit to biblical marriage and is condemned in the Bible. It contradicts the created order of man and woman, causes God's command for reproduction physiologically impossible, and is fueled by a spirit of perversion. *Gen. 1:27-28, Lev.18:22, Lev. 20:13, Mat. 19:4, Mk. 10:6, Rom. 1:26-27, I Cor. 6:9-10, I Tim. 1:9-10*

Q. How does deception begin?

A. Deception is an important component of homosexual orientation. It begins when their perception of God changes gradually from being a loving, fulfilling Father to a bully-god who controls and withholds. It then grows by questioning the goodness of God and the Word of God. Often people get disillusioned with God due to an unanswered prayer or a tragedy. The serpent still whispers, "*Hath God said?..."* *Romans 1:21* explains this mind-darkening process. People who refuse to worship God and be thankful for His created order are vulnerable to "*deceiving spirits and doctrines of devils.*" Satan plants thoughts and arouses desires. Each lie a person accepts darkens their mind until, eventually, they rationalize all vile behavior. *I Tim. 4:1-2*

Q. What thoughts does the spirit of perversion use to persuade a person into homosexuality?

A. Three prominent thoughts get planted in their mind:

- *I'm different*
- *Maybe God made me this way*
- *People should love who they want to love.*

Instead of heeding Paul's instruction, to "*love the truth*," they "*trade the truth for a lie*" and the Romans 1:25 mind-darkening process begins. *II Th. 2:10*

Q. Is there a "gay gene" that makes homosexuality genetic?

A. No. God wouldn't create someone gay and then condemn them in His Word. Despite the implication this genetic theory is to be assumed, there is no conclusive science to back this claim. Conflicting research abounds on both sides. The most convincing argument is derived from studies researching identical twins -- that is, where both twins have the same set of genes. If homosexuality were strictly genetic, both twins would be homosexual 100 percent of the time, however, the correspondence was 52 percent; a high incidence accounted for by nurture - the fact that these twins grew up together in the same home. Other studies of twins who were separated at birth confirmed the same results. Some became homosexuals, while their identical twin living in another part of the country did not. A brief Bible study on the nature of the fallen man will explain these "inborn genetically sexual orientations." We were all born sinners with an "orientation" towards sin. Do we excuse a man who has an orientation to drink? To gamble? To murder? Were they "born that way?" Yes. That is why we need to be born again! Upon being born again, you become a new creation with a desire for the things of God. *Rom. 3:23, Rom. 6:23, II Cor. 5:17*

Q. Why has mainstream society seemingly accepted the LBGT agenda?

A. A spirit of perversion has infiltrated the world and the church through the influence of celebrities, sports icons, scientists, and "enlightened educators." Popularity leads the pack. Additionally, once a person has a gay uncle or nice LGBT neighbor, only those rooted in God's Word will oppose it. Paul's warning of "deceiving spirits and doctrines of devils" is in full swing. Those who scoff about God condemning homosexuality have already "exchanged the truth for a lie" as described in Romans 1:21. Keep in mind that "every knee shall bow" still applies. *Ph. 2:10*

Q. What is Revisionist Gay Theology?

A. A pro-gay, theological, systematic questioning that casts doubt and redefines what the Bible says about homosexuality. This campaign's objective, complete with inaccurate interpretations of scripture and misinformation, is to redefine homosexuality as God-ordained and morally acceptable. "...Having itching ears ...having teachers to suit their own passions..." *II Tim. 4:3-4*

Q. How should a Christian respond to the LGBT community?

A. Similar to any marginalized part of society, they deserve authentic compassion which comes from Jesus. The adage of "Hate the sin, but love the sinner" is correct, but shallow. If you are a relative, close friend, or youth leader, the Lord could use you to share the joys of freedom in Christ in a non-judgmental way. Otherwise, pray for them in general and be equipped to answer the questions from this FAQ page.

Q. What can Christian leaders and parents do to promote healthy biblical sexuality?

A. Identity comes from fathers, so make the Fatherhood of God a common topic. Celebrate being made in His image. Teach and model the joys of biblical marriage. Help kids become confident in something. Intentionally keep positive role models in their lives, and let them hear you say what God says about them.

Q. How do I respond if my teenage son announces he is gay?

A. Don't react! This is usually an emotional issue, not sexual. Calmly say something like, "Really? I didn't expect to hear this from you, but I'm sure you realize that having a few same-sex experiences doesn't make you gay. Thanks for sharing this with me. This is such an important topic, that, before I ruin everything by preaching, I'd like to hear how you came to this conclusion." (A preachy, judgmental reaction is your worst response. Please don't.)

Q. Doesn't homosexuality exist in the animal world?

A. Yes, there are some occasional animal species that display homosexuality, but God didn't create them that way. Our fallen world was corrupted by sin. By the way, animals also eat their young, sniff their mate's anus, barf up food to feed their young, and eat poop. Are we going to use that information to condone the same practice in our homes?

We cannot bend the principles of God's Word to pacify a vocal minority.

Q. How do "deceiving spirits and doctrines of devils" operate as mentioned in I Timothy 4:1-2?

A. Invisible demon spirits plant thoughts in your head that cause you to doubt God's goodness.

They whisper to you daily, but they are disguised as "your" thoughts. Examples are,

"If God is good, then why ..."

"I know porn is wrong, but my spouse is too selfish to fulfill me,"

"The Bible is outdated, so I'm going to try a same-sex lover just for fun."

Christians who are grounded in God's Word reject these thoughts subconsciously; treating them as annoying gnats, not threats. Carnal Christians or the unredeemed, however, are open prey for the bondage that follows their vile suggestions and false teachings. Romans 1:22 describes their result. *"Professing to be wise, they became fools."*

Q. What is the spirit of perversion?

A. Deceiving spirits and doctrines of devils *I Tim. 4:1-2* Any thought or teaching that opposes the Word of God. Perversion begins through the subtle turning away from the way God created man, His divine order and losing the heart of thankfulness for how God created them.

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. 1 Timothy 4:1-2

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TBI WORLD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

42 Countries

Dedicated to our Sons and Daughters in the Texas Bible Institute World Alumni Association

May God continue to use you to share the good news of Jesus Christ in your nation!

English

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

Spanish

Porque tanto amó Dios al mundo que ha dado a su hijo unigénito, que todo aquel que cree en él no debe pierda, mas tenga vida eterna. Juan 3:16

Arabic

ملاع الال بال حب اذل

Amharic (Ethiopia)

ከፍተኛው ዓለም ውስጥ

Belize Creole

Yu si, Gaad lov di peepl dehn eena dis werl soh moch

Bengali (India)

কারণ ঈশ্বর জগৎকে এমন প্রমে করলিনে যে

Bulgarian

Защото Бог толкова възлюби света

Chamorro (Guam)

Sa taegüenao na jaguaeya si Yuus y tano

French

Car Dieu a tant aimé le monde

German

Denn also hat Gott die Welt geliebt

Haitian Creole

Paske, Bondye sitèlman renmen lèzòm

Hausa (Nigeria)

Gama Allah ya yi kamnar duniya

Hebrew

מלועה תא מיהולא בהא כח י

Hindi (India)

परमेश्वर को जगत से इतना प्रेम था

Hungarian

Mert úgy szerette Isten e világot

Japanese

神は世を愛された

Jamaican Creole

Kaa, yu si, Gad lov di worl so moch

Korean

신이 세상을 너무 사랑했기 때문에

Mandarin Chinese

神愛世人

Maori (New Zealand)

Koia ano te aroha o te Atua ki te ao

Romanian

Fiindcă atât de mult a iubit Dumnezeu lumea

Russian

Ибо так возлюбил Бог мир

Setswana (Botswana)

Gonne Modimo o ratile lefatshe mo go kalo

Swahili

Kwa maana jinsi hii Mungu aliupenda ulimwengu

Tagalog (Philippines)

Sapagkat pag ibig ng Diyos sa sanlibutan

Tamil (Sri Lanka/India)

தவேன் இவ்வளவு உலகத்தில் அன்புகூர்ந்தார்

Thai

เพราะว่าพระเจ้าทรงรักโลก

Ukrainian

Так бо Бог полубив світ

Foundations-For-Life Reference Tools

Stand-Alone Teachings, Topical Index, Illustrations

The Foundations-For-Life curriculum serves as a reference tool for TBI Alumni and Christian leaders of all ages. The reader has permission to use these materials in any way that develops a healthy lifestyle and Christian growth. For printed purposes, please cite your reference as *Burchfield, Rachel, Foundations-For-Life, 2022.*

Ten Workbooks, 80+ Pages Each

- **115 Stand-Alone Teachings**
- **200 Indexed Topics**
- **65 Supplemental Charts/Lists**
- **40 Illustrations for Sermons**
- **40 Personal Stories**
- **80 Devotionals**

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Illustrations

Topic	Title	Volume/Page	Summary
Choices	<i>Eight "Great Day" Choices</i>	1 / 1	Our lives and our eternity are based on our choices.
Brainwashed	<i>Brainwashed</i>	1 / 9	Evaluate info by God's Word, not popular consensus.
* Compromise	<i>How To Boil A Frog</i>	1 / 41	Compromise is so gradual that it often goes unnoticed.
* Contentment	<i>Acres of Diamonds</i>	1 / 57	After a man sold his farm to pursue wealth, diamonds were discovered.
Sin	<i>The Sin Virus</i>	2 / 8	A computer virus causes billions of dollars of damage.
Die To Self	<i>Mistake at the Morgue</i>	2 / 16	Funny. What it means to "die to self."
* Tongues	<i>Cannibals</i>	2 / 32	True story - Speaking in tongues saved a missionary's life.
Words of Jesus	<i>Words</i>	2 / 33	The words of Jesus are the most important words.
Who You Are In Christ	<i>The Mystery Man</i>	2 / 57	The peasant girl married a king, gaining his name and kingdom.
Bible Study	<i>Fools Gold</i>	3 / 8	Stats about California's 1849 Gold Rush (Psalm 19:11)
Trust God	<i>The Center Of Everything</i>	3 / 17	The central message of the Bible is the center verse.
Who You Are In Christ	<i>The Miracle Mirror</i>	3,4 / 40,16	God's Word is as a mirror reflecting your inner man.
Understand Your Bible	<i>Don't Forget The Oil</i>	3 / 49	The oil of the Holy Spirit makes your Bible come alive.
Habits	<i>The Secret To Success</i>	3 / 57	Our daily habits will make us or break us.
Identity in Christ	<i>Rewards of Identity</i>	4 / 1	Rewards belong to those whose identity is in Christ.
Guidance	<i>God's GPS</i>	4 / 9	God guides believers through their spirit man.
Faith's Confession	<i>Clean and Strong</i>	4 / 17	Confession of sin + confession of faith = clean + strong
Inward Witness	<i>Fully Charged</i>	4 / 25	Your inward man is like swallowing a cell phone.
Righteousness	<i>Daddy's Home</i>	4 / 33	Twins' different responses to their Daddy's arrival.
Prayer	<i>Never Pray This!</i>	4 / 41	Two types of prayer Christians should never pray.
* Overcomers	<i>The Neighborhood Tour</i>	4 / 49	Funny. Demons tippy-toe past the believer's house.
Hidden In Christ	<i>The Secret Room</i>	4 / 57	Those <i>In Christ</i> are storm-proof and satisfied.
God, Is That You?	<i>The Litmus Test</i>	5 / 17	Dip that "voice" into God's Word to test its source.
Deception	<i>Protection From Deception</i>	5 / 49	Deception changes your perception of God.
* Father's Love	<i>My Father Owns It All</i>	6 / 1	Two campers compare their fathers.
Restoration	<i>A Knack For A Shack</i>	6 / 32	God sees us through His eyes as a finished prize.
God Loves You	<i>God's Billboard Top Ten</i>	6 / 35	God sings over us, just as a lullaby or a lover's ode.
The Bible Is Inspired	<i>It's Alive!</i>	7 / 11	The "breath of God" makes your Bible come alive.
* Hungry for the Word	<i>Eat The Word</i>	7 / 46	An Ethiopian Emperor ate pages of his Bible and died.
Grace	<i>It's Who You Know</i>	7 / 62	Heaven is gained by Who you know, not works.
A Real Fool	<i>April Fools Day!</i>	7 / 63	A freshman proves his atheist professor is a true fool.
* Forgiveness	<i>Louis Zamperini Story</i>	8 / 40	WWII vet in Japanese war camp returns to forgive.
Emotions	<i>The Cracked Windshield</i>	8 / 49	The tiny ding left unfixed became a large crack.
Inner Man	<i>The Mall Of America</i>	9 / 1	Our spirit man is like a mall, everything we need.
Spirit Man	<i>The X-Rays Missed This</i>	9 / 9	X-rays show our natural man, but not our spirit man.
Confession of Faith	<i>How Faith Works</i>	9 / 13	A bicycle; confess with your mouth, believe in your heart.
Why Faith Fails	<i>A Wedding Disaster</i>	9 / 17	Mix your problem or promise with faith.
Salvation Benefits	<i>It's Paid For!</i>	9 / 41	Salvation is like an all-inclusive resort. Paid in full.
Faith Works!	<i>Faith Has No Plan B</i>	9 / 47	Our son's response to a marriage proposal setback.
God's Will	<i>A Fun and Faithful Father</i>	10 / 16	God's will unfolds with maturity.
Special Inheritance	<i>That's Billion With A "B"</i>	10 / 27	True story. Two brothers in poverty inherit billions.
* Rich in Christ	<i>The Wealthy Pauper</i>	10 / 32	A pauper didn't know she had inherited a fortune.
Describing God	<i>Artwork By Alyssa</i>	10 / 33	A kindergartener attempts to draw a picture of God.

* Rachel's favorites

STRONG-FOR-LIFE CHOICES

I. Choose Jesus

- A. To choose Jesus changes everything.
- B. To choose Jesus means you accept His claims as truth.
- C. A Christian worldview examines ideas with the Word of God.
- D. *Mk. 8:34-36, Jn. 6:68, I Jn. 2:6*

II. Choose A Christian Worldview

- A. A worldview is the way you view the world.
- B. The Bible warns of false philosophies that contradict His Word.
- C. Five questions can identify the six competing worldviews
- D. *Col. 2:8, I Tim. 6:20, I Cor. 10:31*

III. Choose Radical Resilience

- A. Resilience is the ability to recover from setbacks and adapt to change.
- B. Resilience begins when lying thoughts get replaced by God's Word.
- C. God will give you the desire and determination to bounce back.
- D. *Prv. 4:18, Ph. 2:13, I Jn. 4:4*

IV. Choose Strong Life Skills

- A. Life skills are learned behaviors needed to thrive
- B. Decision making, goal setting, time management, etc.
- C. Once you begin, the Holy Spirit will help you.
- D. *Ps. 90:12, Prv. 14:15, Jms. 1:5*

V. Choose Courage

- A. Courageous convictions come from proactive choices from an undivided heart.
- B. Compromise is lowering your standard for profit, pleasure, or popularity.
- C. Replace, "Is it okay to ...?" with, "How brightly do I want to shine for the Lord?"
- D. *Gen. 39:9, Prv. 4:23, Mat. 5:16*

VI. Choose A Biblical Marriage

- A. Biblical marriage is a three-fold covenant between God, one man, and a woman.
- B. Deception causes counterfeit concepts, heartbreak, and perversions.
- C. Contending for a heaven-on-earth marriage begins when you're single.
- D. *Gen. 1:27, Rom. 1:25, Eph. 5:25*

VII. Choose To Be Accountable

- A. Taking full responsibility for one's actions
- B. Three types; personal, relational, spiritual
- C. Accountability fosters humility and protects from blind spots
- D. *Prv. 13:1, Heb. 10:24, Heb. 13:17*

VIII. Choose (True) Success

- A. The perspective of secular vs. biblical success are polar opposites.
- B. From God's perspective, any success without eternal value is a failure.
- C. True success is a life that has embraced God's values and priorities.
- D. *I Kngs. 2:3, Is. 48:17, III Jn. vs. 4*

