

BUILDING GOD'S HOUSE – Part VI

A House of Healing



This month we will continue our discussion on building a house fit for Jesus to enjoy here on earth by looking at some more of the dynamics of how our Lord heals us. We've talked about God's sovereign ability to begin our life of wholeness with Him when we first invite Him into our lives by accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. When we admit to breaking His laws laid out in the Old Testament, the penalty of which is eternal death, and realize He provided a sacrifice in Jesus Christ for this crime, if only we will accept Jesus into our hearts and minds (Romans 10); we then provide an avenue for God to miraculously

make our spirits alive once again in Him. He desires this with an all-consuming passion. This is why He sent His only Son as a sacrifice. Once we realize this truth an awakening takes place inside of us. This 'awakening' of our spirit-man also places our whole being back in order. Before this time our souls and bodies were running the show. When we invite Jesus to take over, He makes our spirits alive to His Holy Spirit. Our spirit now tells our minds, our will and our emotions how to behave and think because our source now is not our own feelings, but the Holy Spirit washing over the word of God that we now begin to hear, know and read (Ephesians 5:26). While this is instant, it is also a process. That process is commonly called sanctification. The thief on the cross next to Jesus had accepted Jesus the day he died. He obviously did not go through the same sanctification process that those of us who have lived any length of time after we accepted Jesus are going through. It would seem that the thief was sanctified enough in Christ's blood to enter heaven the way he was. This scene has repeated itself throughout history. We have all heard the stories or been involved in deathbed conversions. They are real, and thank God when we accept Jesus, we are sanctified enough right then to enter heaven just the way we are. But if we live for any extended length of time thereafter, we are commanded to work out our salvation, the Bible says with fear and trembling, because it is God that does the work in us (Philippians 2:12, 13). So which is it? Is God doing the work or are we supposed to

do the work? And which work is the apostle talking about?

This is the work of sanctification, also commonly called inner healing and deliverance, which in many cases also affects our physical healing as well. And just like salvation, it is a both/and story. In other words, you accepted Jesus; He showed up and saved you. Now you desire to be like Him by reading His word, prayer and worship. At this point the Holy Spirit begins to talk to you about things that you do, or the way you act or how you think that do not model your salvation or the kingdom of heaven. Now you repent of these acts and decide not to do them again. The Holy Spirit gives you the ability to see and the strength to act on what He says and what you read and hear from the mouth of God, either written or spoken. The problems come in when we don't recognize our behavior and can't hear from God on an item or issue. This happens because we have made a decision, whether conscious or unconscious to ignore God in that area of our being. One of the best ministries in this century on inner healing and deliverance came from the Sandford family. Combined as a family they must certainly have over 100 years experience in inner healing and deliverance. As a result, I believe they are people that have something to say from the mouth of God on the subject. The common objection to inner healing and deliverance from the Christian community is that once you are saved, there is no longer any need for deliverance or healing in your inner man, God has already done the work. While God

has already done the work, we are still in our human bodies and it is clear from the Scriptures that sanctification is a necessary work of the Holy Spirit once we get saved. Having said that, some then object to the ability of demons to still affect us after salvation. John Sandford says that inner healing is like evangelization to those areas of our hearts that did not get the salvation message the first time we heard it. (John & Mark Sandford, 'A Comprehensive Guide to Deliverance and Inner Healing, Baker Book House Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 1992, pp 18-19). I like to define inner healing as the applied shed blood of Jesus Christ to deep areas of our heart and soul that still has unbelief or bitterness---that has put up shields or strongholds to the blood affecting and changing that inner area of our being.

Look at the example of Simon the sorcerer in Acts 8. The Bible states clearly that he accepted Jesus (Acts 8:13). After he believes he watches the Lord accomplish signs and wonders through Philip. While Simon has accepted Christ, his old patterns of thinking are still at work. As a sorcerer, he would perform for money, power and influence. As he functioned with these demon spirits, wonders would take place from him. He thought it was the same way with this new 'spirit,'---the Holy Spirit. Not having understood the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob---Yahweh---from his youth, he had no other basis than his own soulish experiences with demonic spirits. His thinking and habits were still based on what used to give him comfort and strength in the way he used to live. Philip has evangelized Samaria and this

Simon is baptized and devoting himself to the Gospel as is the other Samaritans. They are now observing the miracles that the Lord is doing through Philip (Acts 8:13). Peter and John are sent to Samaria by the Holy Spirit because as yet they have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking with other tongues. As they lay hands on the Samaritans, they receive the Holy Spirit. This Simon, still in his old thinking, and influenced by these demon spirits wants to buy this ability from the apostles. You would think that Philip would have been the one to lead Simon further in his healing and deliverance, but the Lord allows Peter to see the fleshly, soulish issue of jealousy that has contrived this scheme and the demon forces behind it that are using a believer's own stronghold habits of thinking. Peter, as a priest exposes both the human flesh thinking that has allowed this and the demonic forces behind it. What is Peter's remedy for this behavior? Repentance, coupled with prayer and the seeking of the face of the Lord.

Two months ago we looked at one of the Old Testament priesthoods' mandate of healing the nation through sacrifice and offering. Here is a perfect example of our New Testament priesthood doing the same, but with Christ as the sacrifice and repentance and prayer as the offering. Two things jump up at me when I read this story. One I have already mentioned and that is that even though Philip preached Jesus to Simon, God sent Peter to bring Simon further along in his sanctification. The other is the fact that Simon did not see this in

himself. There obviously was a place in Simon's heart that had not wanted to be exposed to the cross. Think about it. If you were in Simon's place and you met holiness in the form of God Almighty, wouldn't you think your old ways weren't going to fly as a means and method for your new life in Christ? The obvious answer is yes. But that's the problem with sin. It blinds us, whether we are pastors, apostles, prophets or among the newly converted. We are all capable of this deception of not bringing every aspect of our being to the cross, even though we profess otherwise. It takes another believer to expose this. And that's also where other problems occur.

In an independent society such as America, Europe and other parts of the modern world, we are so free that we don't want anybody telling us truth. Couple that with how we were raised and you can have a mix of dysfunctional Christian people. Some folks were raised in households of crises and violence or strife. They get saved and set free, yet they must always create a problem or crisis with somebody to feel comfortable with them. Then you have people who were raised to work out problems and remove controversy---in other words, let's not have a conflict! My husband and I belong to this group. While peace is always best, we can also make a mess of things if we are not careful. As Jesus said, sometimes He does not come to bring peace but a sword (See Matthew 10:32-39). It is in this portion of Scripture that Jesus makes a point that following Him, in the form of denying our previous comfort environments will bring a

separation if those previous environments are against Christ and His cross. The environment you were raised in will have implications on your soul if you refuse to deny them by listening to your spirit, which is following the Holy Spirit. If your spirit man is not strong and in charge with the Holy Spirit telling you what's what, your soul (your flesh) will imagine, work up or create the environment you are most comfortable in, even though it is not real and very probably not a part of what the Holy Spirit wants. This alone would not be an issue because as Christians, if we are in the word and listening to the Holy Spirit, He will either send someone or tell you Himself what is going on. The problem comes in with the spiritual world that we don't see. The devil has no ability to come to earth except that we allow or invite him into a situation. He has no physical body and the only way he and his hordes can function is with flesh---the soul. He can work on your old thinking, hurts and wounds and patterns of how you were raised to convince you that something is one way, usually his way---when in reality it is something quite different. For example, he can convince you that people are after you or hate you or are evil or want to hurt you in one way or another so that you in turn hurt other people or act with bitterness, strife, etc. The outcome will be to hinder the kingdom of God.

The next problem comes in with how our life progresses. Disappointments, wounding expectations (the loss of health, job or family, either through death or divorce) and

other circumstances can create bitterness in our souls that can pollute the environment around us. Whole churches can have this pollution in a real way surround their spheres of influence---all while God is working among them. While demonic forces will not function where the Holy Spirit is in charge (this is why evil forces were exposed in Simon when the Holy Spirit started to move among the Samaritans in Acts 8), demons will function on whatever piece of flesh (soul) they can get their claws of wrong thinking attached to that is filled with accusation and incrimination. It was this area of Simon's thinking that the demons attached themselves to and prompted him to offer the apostles money for power.

Conversely in Romans 1 & 2 Paul goes into an amazing two chapters. He starts off telling the believers at Rome (many who were already suffering from persecution) that he desires greatly to come to them but he has been hindered. His reason for coming was to preach the gospel among both believers and unbelievers, to impart spiritual gifts and to receive fruit from them (not just good spiritual benefit but money). That money was also involved is clear from 2 Corinthians 9 and his mention as receiving the same fruit from other Gentiles and his use of the term debtor. So it's not the money that bothered God concerning Simon, but the motives. One might miss motives in this portion of Scripture concerning giving and receiving, but they are strong. In verse 18 Paul talks about the wrath of God being revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness (please read the Scripture

because I have not quoted it in its entirety). A cursory reading would assume that Paul is only talking about unbelievers. But he is talking about believers as well as unbelievers when he says in verse 21, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God neither were thankful..." Almost every minister and reader of this portion of Scripture would think about people involved in witchcraft, all kinds of sexual sins, murders, gossipers, drunks and drug abusers. But I doubt that was his only intended audience because he talks about preaching the gospel to the believers as well as the unbelievers and later in chapter 2 talks about judging people of their sins. He is talking about the religious as well as 'obvious' sinners. So what's my point? Paul makes it clear that something inside a person changes, on almost a cellular level---certainly on a soul-based level when sin is involved. I believe this is what is going on in the homosexual community, as well as in other sin-based environments. We already know drug and alcohol abuse alters chemical and brain activity, why would one sin be different from another?

Likewise where judgment and religious superiority (exclusivity) exist, it also wars against the Holy Spirit, opening a doorway for a change in our humanity that is negative which can also be followed by demonic activity. This is one part of toxic environments that exist in many different religious organizations---including Christian ones. The book of Hebrews was written to very religious and holy believers. Yet the writer says clearly in Hebrews 12:14-16,

“Follow peace with all, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” It would take three pages to go into a proper evaluation of the preceding verses. Suffice it to say that peace and holiness have more to do with obeying God in these verses, than acting that way externally. It is an internal environment. The writer talks about Esau and food. Food was just a catalyst. Esau was a man who followed his feelings, needs and desires; not God’s will. This is why any religious endeavor can fail if we have never been challenged by the Holy Spirit in this area. It is one reason why fasting (among many other things) challenges toxic environments. I find it amazing that when the Lord tells me to fast it is usually related to a toxic individual or environment that I will be finding myself in. The fasting helps my soul to fall in line with God’s vision, not the vision of the toxic environment or individual that I will be encountering. It helps me to see with the Lord’s eyes, not my human understanding. The portion of the verse that we’re looking at here is in verse 15, the fact that we look diligently upon the Lord, for it is His grace that sustains us, not our religious or spiritual perfection. For if we don’t hear what we want from someone or get our own way and we don’t turn toward the Lord, we contrive our own situations or belief systems---we go according to our own feelings like Esau did. This inevitably leads

to bitterness, and that bitterness defiles or pollutes our surroundings.

This is why it takes prayer with fasting and a deep hatred of our own sin---not the sin someone else is involved with (which produces the judgment Paul talks about in Romans 2) to change us on a spiritual level. It is our deep sorrow of breaking God’s law that brings about the Holy Spirit’s miraculous transformation in our inner man. Simon was deeply sorry when his sin was exposed to him by Peter. He didn’t get all arrogant with Peter---and Peter didn’t get all accusatory with Simon. That is another subtle difference between a priest actually being called of God to minister and a Christian making accusatory statements about another believer based on their feelings. I have heard hurt believers say things that have nothing to do with a real issue, but instead they ‘perceive’ they hear or see something and then accuse their intended target of what they see or perceive. The difference is love. If a believer actually sees something that looks like an inner healing issue in another believer, the motive will be to see the person healed and pray for them. The one really called of God will be approachable---they won’t be avoiding you. They will be able to accurately state a position or an experience and able to accurately, and without incrimination, be able to expose an unhealed area, or an area that must be brought to the cross. They will have a humble attitude, always coupled with the knowledge that “there but for the grace of God goes I.”

So what has happened to the person that repents but they have been so changed by sin that demons still hang around seeing if they can oppress them after their conversion? Or what about the believer, who may have experienced some kind of wounding incident, like Paul did, and a messenger from satan is sent to oppress them? [See 2 Corinthians 12. While Paul states this is to keep him humble because of the great revelation he has received, sanctification is the theme in this epistle. See also 2 Corinthians 13:5.] Obviously at some point in time demons affected the situations that fall into Paul’s admonitions in Romans 1 & 2. One year I had the experience of discussing inner healing and deliverance with a deliverance minister from a particular church. Eventually she mentioned her position that healing cannot take place until deliverance took place first. Her firm stance on the subject caused me to do some research. After all, I thought, I might be wrong and maybe the demons always have to be cast out first; so I turned to the Scriptures. I isolated 42 times in the four gospels where Jesus healed and/or cast out a demon. In less than one-third of the times He rebuked or cast the demon out first and then healing took place. In the rest of the times He healed the individual and either they were whole or the Bible makes mention of a demon leaving. In ten of those situations, all from the book of John, Jesus told the individual to believe in Him and that belief or confession of faith was enough to mention that they were either healed or the devil left. As in all things ‘God’ we can’t box Him in. I can’t emphasize enough the

importance of the Holy Spirit in this whole process. Enough cannot be said about following His lead. The circumstances in which God leads me are not the circumstances God may lead another. When we are obedient to Him, He exposes many of these issues throughout our Christian life. I have seen Him say nothing to an individual about these areas in their lives when they get saved. All they do is follow Him into the waves of evangelism. They witness and share Christ with all those around them. Then, all of a sudden, it's like a water dam burst. They are immersed in inner healing and deliverance ministries, receiving whatever teaching and ministry that they need. For others the Holy Spirit does this in seasons or a little here and a little there. That's why it is so difficult in an article such as this to teach on this subject. Even though the information and teaching is logged into my brain, I never approach people with a cookie-cutter or one-size-fits-all mentality in this area. I follow exactly what the Holy Spirit tells me for each individual. No two people who come for ministry in this area are identical. Our tendency will always be to cast out the demons. But I have learned the hard way that some people like their demons or like the issues that keep those things surrounding them. If being angry at someone or blaming them is how you cope in life, and a harassing spirit is attached to that flesh, blame or anger, oppressing that person, you can cast it out until you are blue in the face. It will return and start speaking to the person about blaming or incriminating someone else! Let's say you're a personality that has learned to cope through some kind

of external addiction---food, drugs, alcohol, caffeine, you name it. I once met a person who was addicted to caffeine. When we met him he said he was set free. Do you want to hear his confession of deliverance? "Oh, I'm totally set free from coffee, all I drink now is Coca-Cola." We laughed; all he did was exchange one form of caffeine for another! As long as the habit or stronghold is firmly in place and not exposed, it will come back--or never leave! I've used the issues of anger, blame, alcohol, sex or some other addiction, but you can substitute whatever issue you have. Whether it is feelings of religious superiority or whatever habit or thinking pattern that works for you. Some people actually enjoy playing recordings of beating themselves up in their heads. Their parents did it emotionally to them as children and they feel comfortable always blaming themselves when something 'isn't right' according to their feelings.

What I'm trying to say here is that the next few paragraphs are just guidelines to get you started. The revelatory, prophetic word of God spoken or read in the Bible, through the Holy Spirit and coupled with someone who understands their priestly role, not as a controller, but just an intercessor (mediator, priest) in what the Lord is doing in your life is what will help you for the long haul. We'll just look at a list of the basics in these areas and you can see if there is an area in your life that you might want to bring to the cross. The first area would be living in the past. In the case of this person, wounds, disappointments, failed expectations or tragedy will always hold you. Unbroken

soul ties, curses or vows spoken in childhood keep you bound. Understanding basic teaching on your spirit, your soul and your physical body will help, though not be the end. You are still living through your soul. What is the soul? It is your mind, your will and your emotions. These cannot sustain you. Only the word of God can sustain you (See Matthew 4: 3, 4). The word of God, coupled with the Holy Spirit feeds your spirit man, making your spirit strong. It tells your emotions, your will and your mind how to think and feel things that are truthful. As you infuse yourself with the word of God unholy desires (remember, unholy for you) will come to the surface. We all know the BIG sins, but what about other problems? Is music bad? Are videos bad? How about food? For addicts in these areas they are because they expose deeper roots of past hurts and coping mechanisms. For someone who could care less about rock 'n roll or the food channel, it doesn't matter. God's Holy Spirit needs to be in charge and if that means you can't go into a movie theatre or a restaurant or music store or get on the Internet (which means you are not reading this article!!), then so be it. Maybe you have been abused or molested as a child by men and you can't get over your fear of all men (the same could be said for people who have been abused by women). Your childhood needs to be healed and the word of God, Jesus Christ needs to be invited into your past, all the way back to conception (See Hebrews 13:8; 3:12, 13). You will need another believer or minister that can help you while the Holy Spirit is working with you to break the cycle of your fearful

thinking and the habits that produced it. Walking in forgiveness can help you on the road to recovery. Many people think that they need to 'feel' like forgiving someone. Nothing could be further from the truth. Forgiveness is not a feeling, forgiveness is a choice. You choose to forgive, even though you do not 'feel' it. Jesus forgave you and me regardless of how we felt or how He felt. You can't tell me that in His humanity He was jumping for joy in order to go to the cross. In fact we know that in the Garden of Gethsemane He sweat drops of blood. He even asked if the cup of suffering could be removed from Him ("Not my will but thine be done;" See Luke 22:39-46). Jesus chose to do the Father's will. He chose the path of forgiveness. I know it's hard, but there it is. It helps sometimes to realize that tragic circumstances also create a hurt in us that can lead to unforgiveness concerning God. Usually this doesn't crop up until years after a true conversion experience and the hurtful circumstances occur. The question of "Where was God when I needed Him?" for the believer is more difficult than for the unbeliever. The unbeliever is tied to the past and knows it and blames God, thereby making salvation a big hurdle. So once they cross the line into trusting God, they can easily acknowledge their hurt feelings concerning Him and overcome them. But the believer has already accepted Christ and in their mind they shouldn't feel the way they do about God. So this stays hidden, until they realize that they can't let go of the past and somewhere deep inside they blame God for what occurred after salvation. If you understand the difference between living by

your thinking, feelings and desires and living by the Holy Spirit, but you are still suspicious of people or snappy and irritable, ask the Holy Spirit why. I've never had Him remain silent when you ask Him why we act the way we do and how to be set free.

Another area that can cause trouble is with those who constantly live in the future to the exclusion of dealing with the past and living in the present. Their pasts have been too painful or disappointing. They have left them behind---good riddance! So they are looking toward the future almost to the exclusion of the present. These are usually very prophetic people that have learned that their souls cannot be in charge, so they act very spiritual, humble and holy. From personal experience it is amazing to be here on earth but with God in such an awesome spiritual reality that you immediately know what might take place or receive a prophecy concerning it. Again, I said "know" I did not say understand. The reality is that only God lives in the future and understands it. We have the NOW. We usually don't understand all the dynamics associated with the words we receive from Him. To stubbornly hold onto our assumptions about what He has said, instead of just receiving it word for word, not adding our own understanding, can cause us to fall into dangerous territory. He may tell us about the future, and we may see it and be excited about it, receiving it by faith, but only by putting one foot in front of the other can we get there. In other words, we have to go through the sometimes not-so-exciting, day-in-and-day-out of daily life. These folks are

usually procrastinators though they seem very busy. Instead of them getting up and going by themselves, they need an army with them to fulfill 'their vision.' They don't realize that it's God's word and God's vision that will be fulfilled---and God can do so all by Himself, thank you, very much! In order to be healed they must see as He sees the present and start dealing with current soul issues. These folks are usually in some form of denial. In the worst and extreme cases they are in deception. Those in deception are usually the 'gurus.' Everybody looks up to them to the extreme of almost a cult-like following in their midst. You can never speak anything remotely subjective as an observation about a truthful and real issue. It is unfortunate but true that those who are involved in some of the biggest and more prosperous ministries fall prey to this. I do want to be careful here about public opinion. I'm not talking about causing strife and mentioning everybody's faults or giving your opinion about how a leader should do something. I've learned that it's God's opinion that counts about how a ministry or household or business is run, not mine or yours, unless we have been given the responsibility by God to oversee such an endeavor. What I am speaking about is a cultural environment in a household or organization where the leadership or the person or people involved are observed as practically infallible. There are simple Biblical truths that can help Christians specifically from falling into this trap. As far as unbelievers, some form of deliverance will always be necessary. If a Christian has been involved in this type of stronghold for

any length of time, deliverance may also be necessary. One of the most practical Biblical truths to help us live in the NOW and inoculate us from living in denial is to understand that in Christ my placing or position is perfect and whole, but experientially I am not. Because I am seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus, I can be nothing other than perfect in my position and standing in Christ, but my two feet are firmly and squarely attached to this earth and therefore, since I am in my human body, my experiences are still in a sin-filled world and in an imperfect, sin-affected body. God is in the future and the present, having declared me righteous and perfect in the beloved. Since God alone has this ability and I do not, I must trust Him for my experiential perfection. I must be willing to walk it out in the day to day experiences of my life, not denying or attempting to put it off for another time. Another Biblical truth that may help Christians work out their salvation in this area is seen in Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." There is something about the word of God, whether spoken or written that stops you dead in your tracks when you're acting like a fool. Quite often in Christian circles there is a big discussion of the relationship between your spirit and your soul. I'm not saying we shouldn't research and dig up as much from the word on this subject as possible, but this verse in Hebrews is probably the shortest, most

eloquent explanation that I have read anywhere. What your joints are to your body for movement, is what your soul is to your personhood; and what your marrow is to your life, your spirit is to your existence. When your soul is damaged, it's like a damaged joint; you are immobile, unable to think rationally, paralyzed emotionally. Without the marrow in your bones you would not be able to manufacture cells or fight off disease. Your marrow sustains life like your spirit sustains the God-life inside of you (See Ecclesiastes 12:1-7, without a spirit you die). It's such a small thing, like the marrow, unseen, hidden inside, but with huge consequences. The breathing, living, written or spoken word of God is such a sharp and specialized instrument in this area that nothing else will do. He, by and through His word examines your spirit and soul and separates which is acting like which to you. He gives you the discernment to realize when you are off balance, if you are truly seeking Him and His word. This is why those that have gone all the way to the deceptive side of this issue will almost certainly have demonic presences afflicting them. They are no longer sensitive in this area to God's word correcting them. Staying in touch with His word and realizing our imperfections, on every level will help us realize healing and deliverance through the Holy Spirit. Reading Hebrews 4 before and after verse 12 makes you realize how much obedience, coupled with faith gets us through to the 'Sabbath rest' the writer talks about. This 'rest' is found only through the total salvation message in Jesus Christ. We looked at Simon as an example of someone

affected by their past. In this category I think of Jonah as someone who has a milder form of this problem; i.e., always living in the future. Jonah receives a word of deliverance for Israel's archenemy, Assyria, specifically Assyria's capital, Nineveh. Assyria is a past and present enemy of Israel. You might think by getting on that ship he is fleeing from his future, but he is not. He is fleeing from his present task because of the present and past wounding that has occurred to him and his countrymen from Assyria. History as well as the Old Testament is replete with Assyria's brutality toward its enemies. Jonah wants nothing to do with this situation. The future he wants to see accomplished is their downfall. But that's not God's present word to them. His word to them is repent and I'll deliver you now. By the Lord sending a fish to catch Jonah, God is catching the prophet to deliver him from his past and into his present. When Jonah accomplishes the present task, he has a temper tantrum because he is living in the future he wants for Nineveh, not the present and future deliverance God has just granted them. God does not give Jonah the future destruction of the city that Jonah wants. Jonah needs an example from the present by God (the tree-like gourd) as to why the prophet needs to get out of his stubborn attachment to his desired future. Once Jonah accepts the present, he can accept the future God has decided works for Nineveh.

The last guideline area for our review this month is concerning those who live only in the present. They live for today with never a thought for God's future and are in denial

about their pasts. If you were to have to have one area of imbalance in your life, the practical among us would pick this one. Those living just for today are usually workaholics, as long as they feel their needs are not met for the present time. They either are high achievers or have the ability to be that. They are usually those kids that get their report cards back and a note from the teacher may say something like, "if little Johnnie applied himself he would be an outstanding student." They also tend to be very independent and feel they don't need anyone else helping them. They are actually quite able to get the job done themselves. Like the last group they are in denial about their pasts, but because they are such high achievers, they don't really feel the need to be bothered about the past. Because they are trusting in themselves for the now, they feel the future will take care of itself because they are doing a good enough job right now. The reality here for anyone ministering to this person, or for anyone involved in this stronghold is, how can you argue with them? They're getting the job done and they seem the most well adjusted of the whole group. They might be a little hyper or bossy to be around, but I've got to hand it to them, they look perfect doing it! Unfortunately, below the surface is a boiling pot. The deep-seated issue here is trust. If trust is involved, control will be the stronghold--the way they feel comfortable. Eventually manipulation, whether passive, aggressive or passive-aggressive will manifest itself. Because control and manipulation is such a stronghold in humanity as a whole, you might not see what an issue it is for these

folks. These folks can manipulate you so imperceptibly, you'll never know what hit you. The main difference here between the first and the second group that we've talked about is that this group is afraid to confront both the past and the future. The past because they will have to deal with old issues, and why bother? It's just going to slow them down!! And they are afraid to look squarely at the future because of their trust issue with God; after all, He's the only one really able to be outside of time and in their futures. Repentance is the key for all of humanity, but this group needs to repent before God for their lack of faith, trust and the resultant control and manipulation that follows. Identifying the specific triggers or influences or circumstances in their lives that have caused this situation is crucial. Frankly I believe the Holy Spirit, with a direct word to the minister or the Christian being ministered to will be the only reliable source able to do this. Since control and manipulation are directly tied to witchcraft and idolatry (See 1 Samuel 15), deliverance will also need to take place. King Saul is probably the best example of an individual in this group. Before he becomes king he is focused so much on pursuing the present that he goes to a prophet to find out where his father's donkeys are. After Samuel tells him of the future, all of Israel goes to anoint him as king, thus fulfilling Samuel's word of the future. But where is Saul to be found in order to participate in his future? A direct word of knowledge from the Lord tells the congregation assembled that Saul is hiding in the baggage! I find that very interesting for obvious reasons. This is exactly what

these individuals will do. They will use some form of busyness or other pursuit to hide from their futures. Later on when David comes on the scene, old issues of jealousy, bitterness and envy crop up in Saul. He obviously does not have it in his heart to make room for David. There's too many past experiences that have caused too much wounding, and David looks like the perfect candidate to take this out on. After all, isn't David going to take the throne away from Saul and his chosen next descendant? That Saul hasn't dealt with past issues is obvious and that he can't trust God to fulfill His word about the future security of Saul's throne (if only Saul will repent and obey God) is also evident. It's his focus on the present and lack of trust in God that causes him to offer the sacrifices instead of waiting for Samuel, the priest to do so. And it's that situation that causes the Lord to speak of Saul's loss of the throne. Because these situations read like a daily calendar in the Scriptures (from 1 Samuel 9 to 15), we don't realize that it actually took 21 years for David to receive the throne. I've always felt that the Lord was waiting on Saul to repent; to actually get what the problem was and to find it in his heart to ask the Lord to help him to change, or at least ask someone else to help him. I can only speculate what would have happened in that case; whether he still would have given over the throne in his lifetime or whether God would have allowed him to die a natural death, or if there would have been peace in Saul's heart, along with God working out the circumstances so that David would have received the throne anyway, I don't know. But whatever the

case, Saul is an excellent example of why we should deal with our issues and strive to work out our salvation with the help of the Holy Spirit in order to see every part of our being sanctified and set free.

I need to reiterate what I said earlier about this being only a cursory guideline. I suggest you read any book that you can get by the Sandford family (John is the father, Laura the mother and Mark is a son.) I should also mention that because we change, we can go through some of these previous situations that I have outlined, but be in a totally different category. This is why the guidance of the Holy Spirit is so crucial. I know we cannot go through this process without His daily input. That's the best advice I can give. Personally I've learned to embrace and celebrate my past, my present and my future in Christ. If you need prayer or have any questions about this month's subject, please don't hesitate to contact us. Log on next month for more.....

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