

# BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

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## THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

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It is important to realize that the lessons that follow are not something to read through and then go on. They embody eternal truths, none of which should be taken lightly. The lessons are not designed to be an easy read through to get knowledge or to learn something new. They are a way of life, a way of living day to day so they become your very life. There are many tremendous truths in these lessons, and if approached in the right manner will lead to a new way of living so you can discover the life that is truly life. So the attitude that must be put in place to begin this journey is to realize that it is about both learning and doing. If you leave off the doing you will be worse off than you were because the tendency is to think since I know this truth now I am good to go and you end up with a false faith and a powerless Christian life. You become only a hearer of the word and not a doer and so you gain no value and you are stuck in a place where you know truth but are not living it. Your life becomes hypocritical.

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## PERSISTENT AND CONSISTENT

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Our lives are often so full of activities, wants, needs, expectations, desires and possessions that we find precious little time to pursue that which really matters, that which will provide the greatest value for our own lives and that of our family and friends. Persistence means we press in after it even when we don't feel like it. We press in even though there are a hundred other things we need or want to do. We press in regardless of all the pressures and expectations from others to satisfy them. We must learn that we need to satisfy the Lord first and He will help us to see rightly to satisfy the needs of others and keep a right attitude towards things.

C Consistent means we keep a right mind and attitude about what is important and what really matters to God. We set aside a time that is the Lord's only and in that time we pursue and seek Him so He can show us what He wants us to know. He will show us the way to life that is truly life and will draw us into oneness with Himself and His Son. But I promise you He will not take second seat to anything in your life. If there is something in your life that is of more value to you than seeking Him to find the life that is truly life, those will be the very things that keep you in bondage.

But I believe since you are reading this that you are most likely a true seeker and you will realize that this is exactly what you need and you will pursue it wholeheartedly. You will begin a journey to a destination that few are willing to pursue. The destination is not a degree or a certificate, but a person whose name is Jesus. When you get Jesus you get life and life more abundantly and Jesus becomes your way, your truth and your life and you will experience a life of peace and contentment and a wonderful relationship with God through Jesus. Fear, worry, doubt, and stress will melt away and give way to faith, love, grace, mercy, compassion, kindness, goodness and many other wonderful virtues that are God's very nature.

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## CORNERSTONE AND PRECIOUS STONES

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Each of the following lessons presents a basic key truth that is essential for the Christian faith. Each truth uncovers areas of wrong believing and wrong thinking and attitudes that have crept into our

lives over the years. Many of these religious beliefs and attitudes are counterfeits of the truth in God's Word. Jesus is the cornerstone of truth, the foundational stone that keeps everything in place and establishes an unshakable foundation. The truths are precious stones with which we build on the cornerstone into a holy and pure temple for the Holy Spirit to reside in. It becomes a building whose maker is God because it is built on His Son and His truth.

If any of these precious stones are cast aside because we don't like the color, or the shape, or because there is something in our life that causes us to reject a precious stone, the structure becomes weakened and will eventually crumble along with our life. The method for applying these precious stones to the foundation is by simply learning a truth, believing that truth, and then living as if the truth is true. If you only learn the truth and believe the truth, but do not live as if the truth is true, the precious stone will fall off. You will learn this truth in the lessons, that unless you are living your life as if the truth is true, you don't really believe it. Living as if it is true means your actions and speech reflect that truth in your life.

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### **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**

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There are many spiritual disciplines along the way that you must put into practice in your life to keep those precious stones in place. The disciplines help us to continue on the journey of living what we profess to believe and they encourage us to keep our focus on the one most important thing in all existence, God. As our spiritual building is being built, our lives look more and more like the life of Jesus. Our thinking, choices, beliefs, attitudes, and actions become godly. We build a godly character that looks like His character.

The word discipline is not very popular today because it insinuates that we have to give up something we enjoy or want. Actually, spiritual disciplines help us realize that most of those things don't really matter and are just a distraction to keep our eyes off Him. Satan truly does not want you to find the life that is truly life. He does not want you to have that foundation and precious stones in your life. He will do everything he can to destroy what God is building in your life because he hates God so much. Spiritual disciplines will put him on the run and destroy his kingdom and put to flight all his wicked, evil demons of darkness. You win, he loses.

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### **REPETITION AND REMINDERS**

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Often you may learn a truth and choose to believe the truth, but it may not immediately be lived in your life. It is a process and a journey that takes time and effort. It cannot be pursued one time but must be pursued relentlessly. We must come back to the lessons and truths when we begin to see ourselves wavering or forgetting the truth. The lie that the truth overcame begins to creep back in and suddenly we see an old behavior or habit spring back to life. It happens. It can happen a lot. But that is ok. We go back and focus on that truth again, read and study the truth again, and then step out very deliberately to root out the lie and get that precious stone back in place.

Disciplines such as prayer and reading God's Word are critical disciplines you will learn that will help you keep your precious stones in place. Satan's attacks are ruthless and relentless as he waits and watches for the right moment to trip you up. You will learn how to use the armor of God to beat him back and put him on the run. You will learn the disciplines of watching, being vigilant, standing steadfast, discerning of spirits as well as worship, praise, and thanksgiving. You will learn that when

you stumble, God's grace, mercy and love are right there so you can always put it behind you and press on into the journey of life that is truly life. Never let the condemnation and accusations of the enemy keep you trapped.

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### DISCIPLE PARTNER

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Another thing that will speed you along on your journey is to have an experienced disciple walk with you on the journey. It is similar to going on a long hike and having someone along who has made the hike before. They know where the important places are, the dangers, and can keep you from getting off the right path or getting lost. Often we need encouragement or help thinking through an issue or event or clarification on how to live certain truths. They will be praying for you and suggesting other resources for you to help you on the journey. You may be stuck in some personal areas of your life and you will have someone who will love you and walk you through those areas.

A disciple partner will help you begin to disciple others when you are ready and teach you how to come alongside them in their journey in the same way your disciple partner helped you. A disciple partner may be available locally, but more than likely it may be remotely. Use the Blog section of this website to express your desire for a disciple mentor.

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### QUIET COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT

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It is best to have a quiet, comfortable environment where you can focus your mind and minimize distractions. Minimize the influence of things such as cell phones and other distractions. If you think really hard you will be able to find a place where you can have consistent time with the Lord as the Holy Spirit shows you what He wants you to know and do as you pray.

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### DON'T BE IN A RUSH

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There is no time frame for completing a lesson. If possible set up a time with your disciple partner to read the lessons together. This gives the disciple partner an opportunity to share their thoughts on the lesson as you are going through it and answer any questions you may have. You don't need to get through a complete lesson in one session. Sometimes you may only get through one paragraph in a session because the ensuing discussion addresses lots of questions so you can discuss the truths in light of your own and the disciple partner's experiences.

If you rush through a truth and have not yet worked it into your life so that you are beginning to act and speak as if it is true, you have missed the whole point of the journey. Maybe you need to stay in a lesson and review parts of it every day for a week or a month until it begins to ooze out of your life through your thinking, attitude, and actions. The disciple journey is a lifelong journey. Sometimes you have to go back and relearn a truth or a discipline. You will know when you need to do this because when problems arise in your life, they will reveal to you what you really believe and what you do not believe.

It is best to go through the lessons in order as they have been sequenced to get the right layers of precious stones in place in order for other precious stones to be added. This is not a hard and fast rule. Many of the lessons will build on important earlier lessons so you can live a particular truth.

Some lessons may show you that you need to tackle another previous lesson or later lesson to deal with a particular attitude or wrong belief that is hindering you from appropriating another truth. Each lesson has a section called bumper sticker summary so you can come back to get a quick understanding of a particular truth. There are action steps and an illustration in many of the lessons as well as a list of pertinent scriptures. The most important thing is not to rush to other lessons before you have trained yourself to live in the truths in previous lessons.

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## ONE FINAL WORD

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The whole purpose of the disciple journey is for your life to become like His life. Jesus said it is enough for the disciple to be as his master. Every area of your life that does not look like His life must be torn down and rebuilt on the Cornerstone with the precious stones of truth. If you are not seeing this happening in your life as you pursue the disciple journey, you need to get help to sort out what is wrong. Sometimes the old godless foundation needs to be blasted out with dynamite. It can go, it must go, and it will go because it cannot withstand God's power and God's light. May God richly bless you as you truly seek to become His and become like His Son as you find the life that is truly life.