

Core Bible Verses

3rd Edition

Meaningful Lives and Communities
With God's Word

CoreBibleVerses.org

Jason A. Krause

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3rd Edition

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Anewtrek LLC

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Core Bible Verses is a compilation of my previous works, including Key Bible Verses, The Best Bible Verses, Scripture Foundation Guide, Christian Wisdom Guide, and The Christian Daily Prayer. It also includes new work.

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and to all people committed to growth and wisdom.

Thank you God, for your love. I am grateful for my life.

Thank you Jesus, for your grace and truth. I confess you are my Lord and Savior, and I believe in my heart that God raised you from the dead. Through you I am redeemed and free.

Thank you Holy Spirit, for your comfort and guidance.

Growth: Health, Meaning, and Significance

May you strengthen your spiritual, mental, and physical health:
And prioritize personal meaning, before wealth.

May understanding and trust build a fortress around your relations:
With calm, clear, caring, and courageous communication.

May meaningful commitments inspire you:
And govern idealism with realism, to improve your view:
With responsibility and significance that spread and shine through.

- Jason A. Krause

Wisdom: Aspire, Believe, Commit, and Discover

May you carefully think, and plan out your goals:
And be guided by humility and integrity, as you fulfill your roles.

May you believe in, and commit to, honorable outcomes:
With truth and faith, that help with your time and freedom.

May you be a life-long learner, always looking to discover:
Asking, "How can we..." be more resourceful and build up one another:
With respect, empathy, and reason, that help communities come together.

- Jason A. Krause

DISCLAIMER

The Bible verses in this publication are based on the King James Version Bible. I've just organized them in ways that help me better understand the world and strengthen my faith. This publication is only meant as information about Christianity.

This publication is not meant to replace reading the Bible, the power of prayer, or a personal relationship with the Holy Triune.

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INTRODUCTION

This book is for Christians who want to strengthen their faith, and build a meaning life, and for people who are considering Christianity and have questions. It may even help Pastors with ideas to supplement sermons, or help their staff or congregation to strengthen their faith and wisdom, or to encourage Bible study or small group engagement. Do not let the humble design of this book discourage you from reading its powerful messages. The Bible is God's word, and it is helpful (2 Tim 1:7). We don't live on food alone, but on God's word (Mt 4:4). God gives wisdom (Jas 1:5). Making some time each week to read the Bible, or go through this book, with family or friends, could be priceless. Check the Table of Contents for the different chapter titles, to see what seems interesting to you.

In more than ten years of studying, I've read over 300 books including five Bibles. I put together my notes on the Bible, with some other research, and published this Core Bible Verses book, knowing it can help other people as it has helped me. During this time, I struggled through many challenges. Being a thinker, I continued to study important topics, with humility. I learned about the big four major religions, and found they share important values, but also have very different foundational beliefs. *In all, my faith was strengthened, mainly with information I share in this book. My favorite chapter is the Christian Wisdom Guide, basically a Christian worldview. It includes the Complete Wisdom Model, with the 4 Core Virtues, the 4 Core Skills, and the Wisdom System.*

Over 70 percent of the world's population claims to belong to one of the big four major religions, and it seems that they are all exclusive and inclusive. Consider how they all have different ways to heaven or enlightenment, but also allow people to convert to their religion and follow their ways. This book is not intended to push Christianity on anyone; I feel that all people should be given the respect and freedom to make their own choices.

Most of the chapters in this book basically organize important Bible verses on important topics. Reasonable historians believe the Bible is a credible historical document and that Jesus of Nazareth was a real person. Some historians just do not believe in God, or Jesus as the Son of God. *Search a digital King James Version (KJV) Bible for phrases like, "saith the Lord" and "the Lord said" and you will get over 1,000 results.* The New Testament of the Bible was written by or with eyewitnesses of Jesus, or personally experienced Jesus (in Paul's case). Jesus claimed to be the Son of God (Jn 10:36-38), God claimed it (Mk 1:11), an angel (Lk 1:35), demons Jesus rebuked (Mk 5:5-7), and His disciples (Mk 1:1). The Old Testament said God would give us a new covenant (Jer 31:31-34). The New Testament tells us that Jesus redeemed us from sin (Ro 5:19), and fulfilled the Law (Mt 5:17) with love (Jn 3:16), and nothing can separate us from it (Ro 8:38-39).

I've heard some people struggle with the idea of a Holy Triune God that is three in one, as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Consider that God made us in His image (Gen 1:27), as a three part being. We are a spirit, with a soul, in a body (1 Th 5:23). Consider our spirit also has three parts; power, love, and a sound mind (2Tim 1:7). Understanding the spiritual world has helped people for thousands of years, and continues to help people. *If reading the Bible, or this book, seems overwhelming, remember that God doesn't require perfection, but, like any good parent, He does expect some love, obedience, responsibility for ourselves, and to help "around the house."* You can read the entire Bible in one year, with four chapters a day. You can read the Bible in two years, with just two chapters a day. I recommend taking notes. The Bible is a light for your path (Ps 119:105). Reading is exercise for the mind. You can learn to read faster and remember more, especially if you enjoy it, as it empowers you.

There are many arguments against religion, however, you will probably find many Bible verses and principles in this book as self-evident and helpful to improve lives and communities. While applying them may not be easy, it will be worth it. I offer the idea, the best way to improve anything is to learn about it, plan it, then commit to it. The simplest plan is a one-page goal plan or growth plan, which you can find for free on the Resources page at CoreBibleVerses.org. *It also helps to understand the 4 Core Guarantees in life, which are daily changes, opportunities, challenges, and choices, along with our 4 Core Traits for Achievement which are responsibility, respect, reason, and resourcefulness.* Renewing our mind with God's word and natural laws can help us manage opportunities and challenges, and make better choices. Our main challenge is our daily desires of the flesh that fuel our short-term situational desires. Some of our most dangerous desires of the flesh are arrogant pride, envy, idolatry, fear, and anger. Some of our most helpful natural opportunities include wisdom, gratitude, faith, courage, and love.

Foundational verses for overall **Personal Growth**: Knowledge increases strength (Pro 24:5), and wisdom is better than might (Ecc 9:16) or gold (Pro 16:16). Get wisdom (Pro 3:13-35) and learn (Pro 1:5-7, Php 4:8). Love God and love people (Mt 22:37-40). Do to people what you want done to you (Mt 7:12). If someone sins against you, talk with them about it alone (Mt 18:15). Beware of dissension, blessed are peacemakers (Mt 5:9). Speak with grace and know how to answer each person (Col 4:6). Bad decisions will be made (Ro 7:15), wrong words will be said (Jas 3:2), but the gifts and calling of God remain (Ro 11:29). Have faith in God (Mk 11:22), and be courageous (Jos 1:9, Jn 14:27). Let no one despise you for your youth, but be an example in word, love, faith, and purity (1Tim 4:12). The thoughts and work of the diligent lead to plenty (Pro 10:4, 21:5). Obey leaders (Heb 13:17), but most importantly obey God (Acts 5:29-39).

12 CORE BIBLE VERSES

KNOWLEDGE: To realize basic helpful truths (simple foundational information)

1. The Bible is God's word, and it is helpful (2Tim 3:16)

Search a free digital King James Bible for the phrases "saith the Lord" and "the Lord said" and get over 1,000 results. The Old Testament has prophecies of Jesus (Mic 5:2/Lk 2:4-7; Isa 53:3/Jn 1:11). We are sanctified in truth; God's word is truth (Jn 17:17). The truth will set you free (Jn 8:32). God gives wisdom (Jas 1:5), which is better than gold (Pro 16:16).

2. God created the universe, with His words (Gen 1:1+)

It seems illogical that the universe grew from nothing. Science claims the universe is still expanding, which means if we go back in time it had a starting point. The heavens declare God's work (Ps 19:1). Consider the quantum physics theories of uncertainty, tunneling, entanglement, decoherence, and the unified field, which seem to provide evidence of a spiritual world. Science done well reveals natural laws. God is over all and in all (Eph 4:6). Truth is in the earth (Ps 85:11).

3. God created humans, in His image (Gen 1:27)

It seems illogical that a self-reproducing organism evolved into male and female, to reproduce and survive. Science says we are about 95 percent oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, and nitrogen, with trace elements. God created humans from dust of the earth and the breath of life (Gen 2:7), as a spirit, with a soul, in a body (2 Thess 5:23). God's love endures (Ps 136).

UNDERSTANDING: To realize how the spiritual and physical interact (complex interactive information)

4. God gave us a spirit not of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind (2Tim 1:7)

Your heart holds the issues of life, guard it (Pro 4:23). The heart is deceitful (Jer 17:9), but God can give a new heart and spirit (Ez 36:26). Don't forget God's teaching, keep it in your heart (Pro 3:1), and manage your thoughts (2Cor 10:5). Your mind can transform you, renew it (Ro 12:2). Know them by their fruit (Mt 7:20, Gal 5:22-23). Help people (Gal 6:10).

5. Our tongue has the power of death and life (Pro 18:21)

Declare Jesus is Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead, to be saved (Ro 10:9). Don't talk corruptly; encourage people (Eph 4:29). Words can harm or heal (Pro 12:18). Speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15). A soft answer repels anger, but a harsh word stirs it (Pro 15:1). Be quick to hear, slow to speak and anger (Jas 1:19), for understanding (Pro 14:29).

6. Be strong in the Lord and put on the armor of God; we wrestle against spiritual wickedness (Eph 6:10+)

The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but Jesus came to give a more abundant life (Jn 10:10). Our spiritual adversaries tempt (Gen 3:1-6, Mt 4:3-11), deceive and accuse (Rev 12:9-10), lie (Jn 8:44), and discourage (2Cor 4:4). The devil tempts with pride (Gen 3:5 Mt 4:8-9) and doubt in identity (Mt 4:3). God's armor is truth, righteousness, the Gospel, faith, salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, God's word (Eph 6:13-17). Don't give way to the wicked (Pro 25:26).

7. God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, and whoever believes in Him will have eternal life (Jn 3:16)

By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, by one man's obedience many are made righteous (Ro 5:19). Nothing can separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord (Ro 8:38-39). Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will judge every deed (Ecc 12:13-14).

WISDOM: To realize how to apply knowledge and understanding (practical probability thinking)

8. Walk in the Spirit, to resist the desires of the flesh (Gal 5:16+)

Humans are naturally sinful (Gen 3:6, 4:1-10). Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38). Greater is the Holy Spirit in us than us in the world (1Jn 4:4). Serve in newness of Spirit, not in oldness of the letter (Ro 7:6). Our desires of the flesh are against the desires of the Spirit (Gal 5:17). Do to people as you want done to you (Mt 7:12).

9. Love God and love people, on these depend all the Law and the Prophets (Mt 22:37+)

God is love (1Jn 4:8), and He first loved us (1Jn 4:19). For those who love God, all things work together for good (Ro 8:28). Love can cover sins (1Pt 4:8). Love involves grace and truth (Jn 1:17). Love is patient, kind, not envious, boastful, arrogant, rude, or resentful. Love doesn't rejoice in iniquity, it rejoices in truth, and it endures (1Cor 13:4-6).

10. Have faith in God, because it can move mountains (Mk 11:22+)

Faith comes by hearing God's word (Ro 10:17). God is pleased by our faith (Heb 11:6). By grace we are saved through faith, not works, it's a gift from God (Eph 2:8), but our works reflect our faith (Jas 2:18). Jesus intercedes for us (Heb 7:25). I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Php 4:13). Not by might, by God's Spirit (Zech 4:6).

11. In an honest and good heart, hear God's word, keep it, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15)

Blessed are those who walk in God's word and keep it (Ps 119:1-2). Get advice (Pro 13:20, 15:22). Wisdom gives wisdom (Pro 13:20). Buy truth and wisdom (Pro 23:23). Wisdom is better than might (Ecc 9:16). Think on good topics (Php 4:8). Knowledge increases strength (Pro 24:5). Laws of nature are God's word. God said... (Gen 1:3-29)

12. Let your heart not be troubled or afraid (Jn 14:27).

Put on the armor of God (Eph 6:14-17). Be strong and courageous, God is with you (Jos 1:9). Be of good courage (Psa 27:14). I fear no evil; God is with me (Ps 23:4). Love casts out fear (1Jn 4:18). Plan (Pro 4:25-26). Let your light shine to glorify God (Mt 5:16). Don't grow tired of doing good (Gal 6:9). All things work out for those who love God (Ro 8:28).

4 CORE VIRTUES

Love, Faith, Wisdom, and Courage

LOVE – Jesus said: Love God and love people, on these depend all the Law and Prophets (Mt 22:37+)

What is love? Love endures suffering and is kind. It doesn't envy and is not arrogant. It doesn't behave badly, is not demanding or easily angered, and doesn't think evil. Love rejoices in truth. Love bears, believes, hopes, and endures. Love never fails (1Cor 13:4-8). God is love (1Jn 4:8). God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, and whoever believes in Him will have eternal life (Jn 3:16). The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus (Jn 1:17).

Why is love very important? Jesus said to love is the greatest commandment (Mt 22:37-40). Prophecy, knowledge and faith without love is nothing (1Cor 13:2). For those who love God, all things work for good (Ro 8:28). Love covers sin (1Pt 4:8, Pro 10:12) Who does not love, does not know God (1Jn 4:8). Love binds all things together (Col 3:14). Do to other people as you want them to do to you (Mt 7:12). Love is attractive and can draw people to Jesus (Mk 16:15-16).

How can we love better? Walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16-23). Give grace and truth (Jn 1:17), and speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15). A soft answer turns away anger, but harsh words stir up anger (Pro 15:1). Love rejoices in truth (1Cor 13:6). Let all you do be done in love (1Cor 16:14). You were called to freedom. Do not use your freedom for desires of the flesh, but through love serve one another (Gal 5:13). Love in action and truth (1Jn 3:18). Commit to 1 Corinthians 13. Have faith.

FAITH – Jesus said: Have faith in God, because it can move mountains (Mk 11:22+)

What is faith? Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and evidence of the unseen (Heb 11:1). Not by might or power, but by God's spirit (Zech 4:6). Faith is the ability to face fear and be calm, clear, caring and courageous. It seems that people can have faith in God, people, or systems, with evidence of values, logic, beliefs, or experience.

Why is faith very important? Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6). We walk by faith, not sight (2Cor 5:7). By grace we are saved through faith (Eph 2:8). Blessed are those who trust and hope in the Lord. They will be like a tree planted near water. They will not fear the heat or drought. Their leaves will be green, and they will not cease bearing fruit (Jer 17:7-8). Faith in God helps us to love, and with courage... consider David and Goliath (1 Sam 17:32-52).

How can we increase our faith? Faith comes by hearing God's word (Ro 10:17). In an honest and good heart, hear God's word, keep it, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15). Trust God and don't lean on your own understanding. Acknowledge God in all your ways and He will direct you (Pro 3:5-6). Read the Bible, pray, and fellowship, regularly.

WISDOM – Jesus said: In an honest and good heart, hear God's word, keep it, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15)

What is wisdom? Bitter envy and strife in your heart, and lies against truth, is not wisdom from above but is earthly, sensual, and demonic. With envy and strife is confusion and evil works. Wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, merciful, fruitful, and without partiality and hypocrisy (Jas 3:14-17).

Why is wisdom very important? Blessed are those who walk in God's word (Ps 119:1-2), and get wisdom, as it can help our health, honor, and wealth (Pro 3:13-17), and helps us avoid foolishness (Pro 14:1-3). Who walks in wisdom will be delivered (Pro 28:26). Wisdom helps us know when to speak up (Pro 29:11). Be transformed by renewing your mind (Ro 12:2). We don't live on food alone, but on God's word (Mt 4:4). Jesus said with his teaching we can have peace in Him. The world gives troubles, but optimism is possible, as Jesus overcame the world (Jn 16:33). Wisdom helps us love better.

How can we get wisdom? Be humble (Pro 11:2) and put on God's armor (Eph 6:14-17). Ask God for wisdom (Jas 1:5), but know that He opposes the proud (Jas 4:6). God's word is truth (Jn 17:17), including the Bible (2 Tim 3:16) and natural laws (Gen 1). Buy truth and wisdom (Pro 23:23). Get advice (Pro 19:20) from wise people (Pro 13:20). Manage your thoughts (2Cor 10:5), and think on good topics (Php 4:8), because knowledge is power (Pro 24:5). Consider your behaviors (Eph 5:15). Be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger (Jas 1:19), for understanding (Pro 14:29).

COURAGE – Jesus said: Let your heart not be troubled or afraid (Jn 14:27)

What is courage? Courage is a state of heart and mind that helps us do what is right, despite fear. God gave us a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2Tim 1:7). Love casts out fear (1Jn 4:18). Do everything as unto the Lord (Col 3:23).

Why is courage very important? Let your light shine so people see your good works and give glory to God (Mt 5:16). Courage helps us to love better, and do what is right, which blesses children (Pro 20:7). Our works reflect our faith (Jas 2:18-20). You can save souls from death (Jas 5:20). In the Lord your work is not in vain (1Cor 15:58). Jesus taught so we can have peace in Him. The world gives troubles, but optimism is possible, because Jesus overcame the world (Jn 16:33).

How can we improve our courage? Walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16). Love God and people (Mt 7:12, Pro 10:12), because love casts out fear (1Jn 4:18). Put on the armor of God (Eph 6:14-17). Strengthen your faith with God's word (Ro 10:17), and hold it in an honest and good heart (Lk 8:15). Know that God is with you (Jos 1:9, Ps 23:4). Improve strengths (Pro 22:29), think ahead (Pro 4:25) and plan (Pro 21:5 and Lk 14:28). Have some close friends (Ecc 4:12).

These virtues seem to reflect 2Tim 1:7, God gave us a spirit of power (faith + courage), love, and a sound mind (faith + wisdom). They also reflect how we build meaning with relationships, faith, strengths, and goals.

4 CORE SKILLS

Thinking, Decision-Making, Willpower, and Communication

THINKING – Whatever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy, think on these (Php 4:8)

What is thinking? To embrace, replace, or investigate, emotions and thoughts, and to organize knowledge. To consider the past for lessons, and to consider the future for potential opportunities and challenges, to make better choices. God gives wisdom (Jas 1:5), which can help with happiness, health, honor, wealth, and peace (Pro 3:13-18), but God opposes the proud (Jas 4:6).

Why is thinking very important? Our thoughts influence our identity, decisions, and relations. Thoughts of the diligent lead to plenty (Pro 21:5). Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war in the flesh (2Cor 10:3). The short-term desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and can keep us from what we want (Gal 5:17). Our spiritual adversaries stir up our desires of the flesh (Mt 4:1-11), to steal, kill, and destroy (Jn 10:10), with temptation (Gen 3:1-4), lies (Jn 8:44), deception and accusation (Rev 12:9-10), and discouragement (2Cor 4:4).

How can we think better? Know God's word and truth (Mt 4:4). In an honest and good heart, hear God's word and keep it, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15). Be humble, God opposes the proud (Jas 4:6). Be transformed by renewing your mind (Ro 12:2). Learn (2Tim 3:16, Pro 12:15), and buy wisdom and truth (Pro 23:23). Walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16). Put on the armor of God (Eph 6:14-17), and Purge sin to be ready for good works (2Tim 2:21). Do not believe every spirit, but test them to see if they are from God (1Jn 4:1). Walk with the wise to become wise (Pro 13:20), and get advice (Pro 19:20). Do not suppress the truth (Ro 1:18). Let the word of Christ dwell in you (Col 3:16). Beware of strong emotions, and thinking biases and fallacies, that distract from truth. Know that we are not our emotions and thoughts; we are what we do with them. We have three basic decisions with each emotion and thought, we can either embrace it, replace it, or investigate it. Consider the process of calm, clear, caring, and courageous thinking.

A practical process for thinking includes being calm, clear, caring, and courageous. Being calm helps us think better. Faith helps us to be calm. Emotions make it a challenge to be calm and clear. Balanced breathing, in a set rhythm, like a four count in, and four count out, helps us be calm. This improves heart and mind coherence, which is when our heartbeat and nervous system become more balanced and aligned. Being clear about our core values, beliefs, and standards also helps us to think clearly. What we care about influences how we act, and how courageous we are. Caring about the truth helps us make good decisions. Caring for people can influence them to care for you (Mt 7:12). Being courageous helps us to live in the Spirit, know and live out truth, and to let our light shine. To increase your thought options, ask more questions that start with "How can I...?" This process seems to be a reflection of 2 Timothy 1:7, God gave us a spirit of power (courage), love (caring), and a sound mind (calm and clear).

DECISION-MAKING – Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and not your own understanding (Pro 3:5)

What is decision-making? Choosing what to do after our thinking. This depends on wisdom, our ability to apply our knowledge and understanding to make better decisions. Choose this day who you will serve. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord (Jos 24:15).

Why is decision making very important? Our decisions determine our future (Pro 14:1). The short-term desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and can keep us from what we want or need (Gal 5:17). We have spiritual adversaries who stir up our desires of the flesh (Gen 3:1-6, Mt 4:1-11, Eph 6:12). If we walk in the light we have fellowship and are cleansed from sin (1Jn 1:7). Jesus gave His teaching so in Him we can have peace. In the world we will have troubles, but we can be optimistic, because He overcame the world (Jn 16:33).

How can we improve our decision making? Be humble, God hates arrogance (Pro 6:1 6-17). Walk in the Spirit to resist desires of the flesh (Gal 5:16), and spend time with people who do. Put on the armor of God (Eph 6:14-17), and learn (Mt 4:4, 2 Tim 3:16). Ask God for wisdom (Jas 1:5) and let the word of Christ dwell in you (Col 3:16). Pray and fast (Acts 14:23). Get advice (Pro 19:20) and walk with the wise to be wise (Pro 13:20). Do not be led away with the error of the wicked, and fall from your steadfastness (2Pt 3:17). A fool says all on their mind, but the wise keep it until later (Pro 29:11). Buy truth and wisdom (Pro 23:23). Focus on your core values, beliefs, standards, and long-term desire, like a vision or a goal. Consider the decision process of clarify, compare, choose, then commit.

A practical process for decision-making is to clarify, compare, choose, and commit. Consider thinking about important decisions often. Thinking about challenges is not fun, but like anything else, the more we practice it the better we can get at it. Keep in mind that challenges always come with opportunities, and opportunities always come with challenges. Some science has given evidence that stress is not always bad for us, if we believe it helps our growth. **Clarify** three to five good options. When important decisions happen we are often tempted to think there are only two options, this or that. When the reality is there are probably other options that include some of this and some of that, and maybe even something other than this or that. The more we carefully think about decisions, the better we understand the probabilities, opportunities, challenges, and the risks and rewards of the different options. **Compare** options, especially their resources needed, risks, and rewards. Some common resources include truth, time, people, and money. When considering the risks and rewards, compare their probability of happening, and their impact if they do happen. Try to narrow the options to two choices. **Choose** an option by taking time to think about future consequences, how loving the options are, and pray about it. Get advice from people you trust. **Commit** to your choice with a plan. The most basic type of a plan is a To Do List, or a Checklist, with some important events added to your schedule. Or a simple list of answers to the "5 W's" of who, what, where, when, and why. Maybe include a basic, how. A Lean Plan is a one- or two-page plan, which includes a simple Goal Plan, like ones you can find on the Resources page at CoreBibleVerses.org. A traditional plan is three or more pages of details. This process seems to be a reflection of 2 Timothy 1:7, God gave us a spirit of power (commit), love (choose), and a sound mind (clarify and compare).

4 CORE SKILLS (page 2)

WILLPOWER— Count it all joy when you face diverse temptations, know that the trying of your faith works patience (Jas 1:2-3)

What is willpower? The ability to follow through on decisions and keep standards. You have a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2Tim 1:7). Willpower is biology (food, activity, and rest), psychology (emotions, and thoughts), and sociology (relationships).

Why is willpower very important? Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war in the flesh (2Cor 10:3). Our short-term desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and can keep us from what we want or need (Gal 5:17). We have spiritual adversaries who stir up our desires of the flesh, and desires of other people (Gen 3:1-6, Mt 4:1-11, Eph 6:12, 1Pt 5:8). Blessed are those who remain steadfast under pressure, for after the test they will receive the crown of life (Jas 1:12). Do not grow weary of doing good, you reap in due season (Gal 6:9). Who has no rule over their spirit is like a city without walls (Pro 25:28). Hands of the diligent make wealth (Pro 10:4).

How can we improve our willpower? With the humble is wisdom (Pro 11:2). Walk in the spirit (Gal 5:16). Put on the armor of God (Eph 6:14-17), and learn (Mt 4:4, 2 Tim 3:16, Pro 12:15). Jesus taught us so we can have peace in Him. In the world we will have troubles, but be optimistic, because He overcame the world (Jn 16:33). Speak encouraging words (Eph 4:29). Physical training is good (1Tim 4:8). Glorify God in body and spirit (1Cor 6:20). Who strives for mastery is temperate in all things, for a corruptible crown, we for an incorruptible crown (1Cor 9:25-27). Eat and think clean, sleep well and exercise. Maintain healthy evening and morning routines.

Practical principles for willpower is to think and eat clean, and spend time with people who do, and start and end each day well. Our emotions and thoughts influence our internal chemicals or hormones, which also influences our mood and energy. Being careful with our consumption of salt, added sugars, and saturated fats, is good for the brain and body, especially as we age. Our relationships also influence our emotions, thoughts, and decisions (including foods). Our morning routine sets a mental and emotional baseline for the day. But our nightly routine influences how well we sleep and our possibility to wake in time, with the energy, to have a good morning routine. Routines can be different for everyone, listen to your body, but know there are some best practices. Morning routine best practices include some water, physical exercise, mental engagement, and clean thoughts and food (positive and unprocessed). Physical exercise can be as simple as a warmup, some stretching, and body weight exercises. You can give your whole body a good quick workout with just four types of body weight exercises: squat jumps or lunges, pullups, pushups, and some core exercise like crunches, reverse crunches, or a plank. If the pullups are difficult, consider a pullup band. Maintain balanced breathing during exercises. Engaging our mind with reading, journaling, goal reminders, and a To Do List or scheduling, can be helpful. The macronutrients, micronutrients, and phytonutrients in our food are the literal building blocks for our brain and body. A good nightly routine may include some exercise, some clean thoughts and food, and a good night's rest. Get free one-page Goal Plans on the Resources page at CoreBibleVerses.org.

COMMUNICATION – There is death and life in our words (Pro 18:21) especially considering inspiration, ideas, values, and beliefs

What is communication? Expressing our emotions, thoughts, and information. Speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15), it calms (Pro 15:1).

Why is communication very important? Words can harm or heal (Pro 12:18). People have joy by their words, and a word in due season is good (Pro 15:23). Who converts sinners hides a multitude of sins (Jas 5:20). With faith, our words can move mountains (Mk 11:22-23), and defend us against spiritual adversaries (Mt 4:1-11, Eph 6:17). We don't war in the flesh (2 Cor 10:3). Our words can encourage people (Eph 4:29). Our feelings, emotions, thoughts, and words could be considered as the bridge between the spirit and flesh.

How can we communicate better? Walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16). Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger (Jas 1:19), which gives understanding (Pro 14:29). Think before you speak (Pro 29:11). Put away bitterness, anger, evil talk, and hatred (Eph 4:24-31). Shun profane and vain talk, they increase ungodliness (2Tim 2:16). God's word is the sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17, Mt 4:1-11), piercing to the division of soul and spirit, and discerns thoughts and the heart (Heb 4:12). Sometimes it is good to answer a fool, sometimes not (Pro 26:4-5). A fool's lips walk into a fight (Pro 18:6). Consider the communication process of, be aware, care, share, then compare.

A practical process for communication is to be aware, care, share, then compare. Communication is dynamic, and can be persuasive. **Be aware** of the situation, intent, emotions, and thoughts, as this can help you adjust your communication. **Care** about other people's understanding and meaning of a topic or situation. Sincerely asking about their thoughts and feelings before sharing yours can help build trust, and it could also reveal their intentions for the conversation and give insight on how to better share your understanding. Many communication books recommend summarizing what someone said, as it shows that we are trying to understand them. When we understand other people's views it empowers us to share. If you anticipate a conversation where you find it difficult to care about their understanding, think of it as a dare to ask them about their understanding. **Share** your understanding and meaning with respect, in a calm, clear, caring, and courageous way. Only be angry when it is necessary. Words can be persuasive, especially when they align with personality, add credibility, evoke emotion, and include logic and practicality. **Compare** the consequences of different understandings and meanings. But do it with respect and empathy. Know that why and how you say things are more impactful than what you say. People can sense intention through body language and tone of voice, which can negate your words. The best intention for most conversations is to build trust, or a feeling of safety. A good way to minimize negative emotions is to keep in mind shared values, or meaning. Our emotions and thoughts are internal communication. We are not our emotions and thoughts; we are what we do with them. We can either embrace them, replace them, or investigate them. The 4 Core Types of Communication are education, entertainment, encouragement, and discouragement. This process seems to be a reflection of 2 Timothy 1:7, God gave us a spirit of power (share), love (care), and a sound mind (be aware and compare).

10 CORE CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

Based on the Nicene Creed (statement of Christian faith) created at the First Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, to unify Christians.

1. One God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

In the beginning God created heaven and earth, as He spoke the universe into existence (Gen 1). One God and Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in all (Eph 4:6). God created humans in His image (Gen 1:27), as a three-part being... a spirit with a soul in a body (1 Thess 5:23). God also gave us a three-part spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Tim 1:7). Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgement (Ecc 12:13-14). Hear God's word, and hold it in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15). The Bible is God's word and is helpful (2 Tim 3:16).

2. One Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father, for our salvation.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, and whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life (Jn 3:16). By one man's disobedience many were made sinners. By one man's obedience many are made righteous (Ro 5:19). Jesus came to fulfill the law (Mt 5:17). Nothing can separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord (Ro 8:38-39). Jesus declared He is the Son of God (Jn 10:36-38). Eyewitnesses heard God declare it (Mt 3:17, Mk 1:11). An angel declared it (Lk 1:35). Demons declared it (Mk 5:7).

3. Jesus came down from heaven, by the power of the Holy Spirit, incarnate from the virgin Mary, as a man.

Behold a virgin will conceive and bear a son (Isa 7:14). An angel told Mary that she would bear a son despite being a virgin, by the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk 1:26-35). Bethlehem, though little, out of you will come the ruler of Israel (Mic 5:2). While Mary was pregnant they moved from Nazareth to Bethlehem and gave birth to Jesus in Bethlehem (Lk 2:4-7), and they later moved back to Nazareth (Lk 2:39).

4. For our sake, Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried, but on the third day He rose from the dead.

He is despised and rejected by men (Isa 53:3). Jesus came unto his own, and they did not receive him (Jn 1:11). He was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors (Isa 53:12). With Jesus they crucified two thieves (Mk 15:27). They found the stone to the tomb rolled away. They entered and did not see the body of the Lord Jesus. Two men stood by in shining garments and asked, why they seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen (Lk 24:2-7 & 46-48).

5. Jesus ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Jesus led them to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven (Lk 24:50-51). When Jesus spoke these things, while they watched, He was taken up out of their sight (Acts 1:9). The Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God (Lk 22:69).

6. Jesus will come again in glory, to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

While they looked steadfast to heaven as He went up, two men stood by in white apparel, and said, men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner as you have seen him go (Acts 1:10-11). The Father has given judgment to the Son (Jn 5:22), to judge the living and the dead (2 Tim 4:1), for an eternal kingdom (Dan 2:44).

7. One Holy Spirit, the giver of life, who spoke through the prophets, and proceeds from the Father and Son.

The Spirit of God made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life (Job 33:4). You send forth your Spirit, and they are created (Ps 104:30). Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pt 1:21). Do you not know, your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit in you, from God, you are not your own (1 Cor 6:19)? Greater is the Holy Spirit in you, than you in the world (1 Jn 4:4). Search a digital King James version (KJV) Bible for the phrases "saith the Lord" and "the Lord said," and you will get over 1,000 results. Let us make man in our image (Gen 1:26). Jesus said He must go away, so the Comforter (the Holy Spirit) will come (Jn 16:7).

8. One holy catholic and apostolic Church.

The word catholic meant universal. In the Bible, the church is referenced as the "body" of Christ. By one Spirit we are baptized into one body (1 Cor 12:13). As the body is one, with many members (1 Cor 12:12). As we have many members in one body, and they have different offices. So we, being many, are one body in Christ (Ro 12:4-5). John told Jesus, Master, we saw someone casting out devils in your name, and he does not follow us, so we forbid him, because he does not follow us. Jesus said, "Forbid him not" (Mk 9:38-39). Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord (Ro 12:19). Leave these men alone, their work may be from God (Acts 5:38-39).

9. One baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

There is one body, and one Spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism (Eph 4:4-5). Buried with Him in baptism, you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead (Col 2:12). Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Act 2:38). Baptism saves us, not as washing of the flesh, but for a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Pt 3:21).

10. The future resurrection of the dead, and the life in the world to come.

The trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible (1 Cor 15:52). Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (Mt 6:20).

FAITH BUILDING

The following is a good overview for new Christians to strengthen their faith as they are being sanctified. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Heb 11:1). Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Ro 10:17). In an honest and good heart, hear God's word, keep it, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15).

Declaration of faith

God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, and whoever believes in Him will have eternal life (Jn 3:16). Declare with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead and you will be saved (Ro 10:9). A common prayer to accept Jesus is something like this... sincerely claim you are a sinner and cannot save yourself, acknowledge Jesus as your Lord and Savior, and declare your faith in His work through the cross, resurrection, and ascension, which paid for your sins, and gives you eternal life with God.

Baptism

Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). The Holy Spirit is our comforter and teacher (Jn 14:26). Baptism saves, not as washing dirt off flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1Pt 3:21).

Relationship with God

You have received the Spirit of adoption, where we cry, Abba, Father (Ro 8:15). You are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God (Eph 2:19).

Fellowship

This builds on a relationship, and could be considered like growing a friendship. Have fellowship with each other and with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ (1 Jn 1:7). As you have opportunity, do good to all, especially to those of the faith (Gal 6:10). Guard your heart, life flows from it (Pro 4:23). Be transformed by renewing your mind (Ro 12:2). Envy and strife in the heart are indicators of earthly, sensual, demonic wisdom. Wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to intreat, merciful, fruitful, and without partiality and hypocrisy (Jas 3:14-17).

Sanctification

The God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray to God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess 5:23). Sanctify them through your truth: your word is truth (Jn 17:17). You will know them by their fruit. Good trees bring good fruit (Mt 7:16-17). Fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Gal 5:22-23). Sanctification can be a lifelong process of improvement of beliefs and behaviors. However, the Holy Spirit can also create quick changes. Sanctification can also be a natural process where the amount of transformation reflects the amount of effort you put into the "Way."

The Way

All major religions share some common practices that are known to help people transform their life. In Christianity these include hearing God's word, prayer (Mt 6:9-13), worship (Lk 4:8, Jn 4:24), fellowship with Christians, fasting (Mt 6:16, Dan 9:3), meditation (Gen 24:63, Ps 1:2), and giving (Pro 3:9, 2 Cor 9:6-7, Mt 23:23). Beware of ideas about the desires of the flesh getting through your mind and settling in your heart, from other people, music, and movies.

Discipleship

Discipleship could be considered as renewing your mind (Ro 12:2), to walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16), put on the armor of God (Eph 6:11), and let your light shine (Mt 5:16). Jesus said He is the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to God but through Him (Jn 14:6). Jesus called on twelve disciples and empowered them (Mt 10:1) to preach, heal, and cast out demons (Mk 3:14-15). At some point in time, after going through a good amount of sanctification and discipleship, it is good to participate in discipling younger, or new Christians. The things you have heard of me among witnesses, commit to faithful men who will teach other people (2 Tim 2:2). Jesus taught His twelve disciples, and He also taught crowds of people, and had many followers listening and watching his every word and action. One time, John told Jesus, Master, we saw someone casting out devils in your name, and he does not follow us, so we forbid him, because he does not follow us. Jesus said, "Forbid him not" (Mk 9:38-39). Make disciples of all nations and baptize them (Mt 28:19).

Sin

Some Christians believe continuous deliberate sin can remove our salvation... For if we sin willfully after receiving the knowledge of truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins (Heb 10:26), and Jesus implied that He can "blot out" people's names from "the book of life." This could explain why Jesus said some people who claim to be Christians will not make it into heaven (Mt 7:21-23). However, some Christians believe, once saved always saved... Jesus said, I gave them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand (Jn 10:28). Either way, the Bible says sin at least disrupts our fellowship... Iniquities separate us from God (Isa 59:2).

MEANING BUILDING

We build meaning in life through faith, strengths, relationships, and goals.

FAITH – Have faith in God, because it can move mountains (Mk 11:22+)

What is faith? Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and evidence of the unseen (Heb 11:1). Not by might, but by God's spirit (Zech 4:6). We walk by faith, not sight (2Cor 5:7). Faith is calm, clear, caring, and courageous. We can have faith in God, ourselves, other people, and in systems. But faith in God best endures corrupt people and systems.

Why is faith very important? Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6). By grace we are saved through our faith in Jesus Christ (Eph 2:8). Blessed are those who trust in the Lord. They will be like a tree planted near water. They will not fear the heat of drought. Their leaves will be green, and they will not fear the heat or drought. Their leaves will be green, and they will not stop bearing fruit (Jer 17:7-8). Having faith in God helps us to be courageous (Jos 1:9).

How can we increase our faith? Faith comes by hearing God's word (Ro 10:17). In an honest and good heart, hear God's word, keep it, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15). Faith comes by hearing God's word (Ro 10:17). Trust God and do not lean on your own understanding. Acknowledge Him and He will direct you (Pro 3:5-6). Read the Bible, pray, and fellowship, regularly.

STRENGTHS – Thoughts and hands of the diligent make rich (Pro 21:5 and 10:4)

What are strengths? Strengths are what we are naturally good at, interests, or skills. Strengths can support higher levels of meaning, which are passion, purpose, and calling. Passion is based on our personal values or topics of significant interest. Purpose is based on our core personality trait or skills. A calling is applying effort to a passion with a sense of purpose. God knitted you in your mother's womb (Ps 139:13). The body is one, with many members (1 Cor 12:12).

Why are strengths very important? Strengths allow us to create, discover, communicate well, and achieve goals. Who is diligent in their work will stand before kings (Pro 22:29). The love of money is the root of all evil (1 Tim 6:10). Let your light shine, so people see your good works and glorify God (Mt 5:16).

How can we improve our strengths? Set and pursue goals. Practice with intention and focus. Don't just automatically go through the motions of improving. Look forward, think of your path, establish your way, and don't stray (Pro 4:25-27).

RELATIONSHIPS – Love God and people, on these depend all the Law and the Prophets (Mt 22:37-40)

What are relationships? To be related, or have regular interactions with a person or group of people. God wants everyone to be saved (1 Tim 2:4 and 2 Pt 3:9). People from all nations and languages will be in heaven (Rev 7:9).

Why are relationships very important? Relationships are where we give and receive truth, love, faith, wisdom, and courage. They can influence our values, beliefs, and health. God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, and whoever believes in Him will have eternal life (Jn 3:16). Where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, He is with them (Mt 18:20). A threefold cord is strong (Ecc 4:12). There is a friend who is closer than family (Pro 18:24).

How can we improve our relationships? Walk in the Spirit to resist the desires of the flesh (Gal 5:16). Walk with the wise to be wise (Pro 13:20). Do not repay evil for evil, but do good to one another (1 Thess 5:15). Vengeance is mine, says the Lord (Ro 12:19). Do to people as you want them to do to you (Mt 7:12). Love covers sin (1 Pt 4:8). Let your speech be gracious, so you may know how to answer each person (Col 4:6). Be quick to hear, slow to speak and anger (Jas 1:19). Think before you speak (Pro 29:11). Do not speak corruptly, but speak what is encouraging (Eph 4:29). Words have power (Pro 18:21). In an honest and good heart, hear God's word, keep it, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15). We do not live on food alone, but on every word of God (Mt 4:4). Pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17). Do not grow tired of doing good, you will reap in due season, if you do not quit (Gal 6:9). Do not give way to the wicked (Pro 25:26).

GOALS – Look forward and think about your path. Establish your way, and do not stray (Pro 4:25-27)

What are goals? A goal is a long-term desire that is measurable, outlined, and dated. Plans of the diligent lead to plenty (Pro 21:5). I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Php 4:13).

Why are goals very important? Where there is no vision the people perish (Pro 29:18). Let your light shine, so people see your good works and glorify God (Mt 5:16). I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Php 3:14). Do not build treasures on earth, but build up treasures in heaven (Mt 6:19-20).

How can we better pursue our goals? Forget the things behind and reach to things ahead (Php 3:13). Love God and people (Mt 22:37-40). Have faith in God (Mk 11:22). Be humble (Pro 11:2) with integrity (Pro 16:8). God hates arrogance and lies (Pro 6:16-17). Ask God for wisdom (Jas 1:5). Buy truth and wisdom (Pro 23:23). Count the cost (Lk 14:28). Seek counsel (Pro 11:14). Do everything as unto the Lord (Col 3:23). Be courageous (Jos 1:9). Let your light shine (Mt 5:16).

These seem to be a reflection of 2 Timothy 1:7, power (strengths), love (relations), and a sound mind (faith and goals).

ENCOURAGING BIBLE VERSES

2 Timothy 3:16 – Scripture is from God, and it is good for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.
Genesis 1:26-27 – God made us in His image, male and female, and gave us dominion over earth.
2 Timothy 1:7 – *God gave us a spirit not of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind.*
John 3:16 – God so loved the world and gave His only Son, and whoever believes in Him will have eternal life.
Ephesians 2:8 – By God’s grace we are saved through faith, not by our works, it is a gift from God.
Romans 10:19 – Confess that Jesus is Lord, believe in your heart God raised Him from the dead, and you will be saved.
John 1:17 – The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus.
Matthew 5:17 – Jesus fulfilled the law for us. **Philippians 4:13** – I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Romans 7:6 – We are released from the law, to live in the new way of the Spirit, not the old way of the written code.
Matthew 22:37-40 – *The greatest commandment is to Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and second is like it, love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and prophets.*
1 Corinthians 13:4-7 – Love is patient and kind, it is not envious, boastful, arrogant or rude; it is not aggressive, irritable, or resentful; it does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in truth. Love bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things.
1 John 3:18 – Love in deed and truth. **John 15:13** – No one has greater love than to lay down their life for their friends.
Galatians 5:16-17 – Walk in the Spirit and you will not indulge the desires of the flesh. For the flesh is against the Spirit.
Proverbs 3:13-18 – Wisdom and understanding are better than gold and brings blessings, health, happiness, and peace.
Ecclesiastes 9:16 – *Wisdom is better than strength.* **Proverbs 28:6** – *Better are the poor upright, than the corrupt rich.*
Ephesians 2:10 – We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works that God ordained for us.
Proverbs 15:3 – God sees everything, He keeps watch on the evil and the good. **Romans 2:11** – God is not partial.
Psalms 91:2 – God is my refuge and my fortress. In Him I trust. **Psalms 91:11** – God’s angels watch over us.
Isaiah 40:31 – Who wait on the Lord renew their strength; they will run and do not get tired, walk and not faint.
Romans 12:2 – Do not be conformed to the world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.
2 Corinthians 10:5 – *You can govern your thoughts.* **1 Peter 5:7** – *Cast your anxiety on God, He cares for you.*
Philippians 4:5-7 – Be reasonable. Don’t worry, pray with thanksgiving, and the peace of God will guard your mind.
Philippians 4:8 – Think about what is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent and worthy of praise.
James 1:19 – *Be quick to hear, slow to speak and anger.* **Proverbs 14:29** – *Being slow to anger gives understanding.*
Proverbs 18:21 – *Death and life are in the power of our words, and who love them shall eat their fruit.*
Proverbs 15:1 – *A soft answer turns away anger.* **Proverbs 4:23** – *Guard your heart, life flows from it.*
Proverbs 21:5 – Thoughts of diligent lead to plenty. **Proverbs 10:4** – The hand of the diligent makes rich.
Joshua 1:9 – Be strong and courageous, God is with you. **Proverbs 3:6** – Acknowledge God and He will direct your paths.
Psalms 23:4 – Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, because God is with me.
Galatians 5:13 – You are called to liberty. Don’t use it as an opportunity for the flesh, but by love serve one another.
Galatians 5:22 – Fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, goodness, and faith. **1 Peter 4:8** – Love covers sin.
Galatians 6:9 – Let us not grow tired of doing good, we will be rewarded in due time, if we do not give up.
Matthew 7:12 – *Whatever you want done to you, do to others.* **Zechariah 4:6** – *Not by strength, but by God’s Spirit.*
Jeremiah 29:11 – God has good plans for you. **Isaiah 55:9** – God’s ways are higher than our ways.
Matthew 5:1-10 – Blessed are the poor in spirit, who mourn, the meek, who hunger for righteousness, and the merciful.
John 4:10 – If you knew the gift of God, and who is telling you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and he would give you living water (the woman at the well) (Jesus kindly asks us to come to Him, even those living in sin).
John 16:33 – In Jesus we may have peace. The world gives troubles, but we can be optimistic, Jesus overcame the world.
John 10:10 – Our spiritual adversaries try to steal, kill, and destroy, but Jesus came to give us life, in abundance.
James 4:6-7 – *God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee.*
Ephesians 6:10-17 – *The armor of God helps us to fight our spiritual adversaries... The belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the Gospel, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, the word of God.*
Proverbs 17:22 – A joyful heart is good medicine. **Proverbs 13:20** – Walk with the wise to become wise.
1 Thessalonians 5:11 – Encourage each other and build one another up, just as you are doing.
Mark 11:22-23 – Have faith in God. You can move mountains with your words, if you do not doubt, but believe.
Hebrews 11:1 – Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of the unseen.
Romans 10:17 – Faith comes by hearing God’s word. **Mark 10:27** – Anything is possible with God.
Luke 8:15 – *Those who hear God’s word and hold it in an honest and good heart will bear fruit with patience.*
Proverbs 4:25-27 – Look forward and consider your path, and let your ways be established.
Romans 8:28 – *All things work together for good, to them that love God, and who are called according to His purpose.*
Romans 8:38-39 – *Nothing can separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord.*
Luke 19:10 – Jesus came to seek and save the lost. **Luke 15:4-7** – A good shepherd will leave the flock for one lost sheep.
Matthew 11:28 – Jesus said... Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest.
John 8:36 – Who Jesus sets free, is free indeed. **Ephesians 4:23-24** – Renew the spirit of your mind and put on a new self
Colossians 3:9-10 – *Put off the old self and deeds, put on the new self, renewed in knowledge of the image of the creator*

CHRISTIAN WISDOM GUIDE

SITUATION

Identity: We are made in God's image (Gen 1:27), as a spirit with a soul in a body (1Th 5:23). God gave us a spirit of power, love and a sound mind (2Tim 1:7). We are His workmanship (Eph 2:10), with power in our thoughts (2Cor 10:5), words (Pro 18:21), and actions (Pro 10:4). Have faith (Mk 11:22), God loved the world and gave His only Son, and whoever believes in Him will have eternal life (Jn 3:16). Greater is the Holy Spirit in us, than us in the world (1Jn 4:4).

Our Headquarters (heart and mind): Guard your heart, life flows from it (Pro 4:23). The heart can be deceitful (Jer 17:9). God can give us a new heart and spirit (Ez 36:26). Keep God's word in an honest and good heart, and be patient for results (Lk 8:15). God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble, and exalts them in due time (1Pt 5:5-6). The humble have wisdom (Pro 11:2). Wisdom is better than strength (Ecc 9:16). Blessed are those who get wisdom, as it helps with our health, honor, and wealth (Pro 3:13-17). The wise seek knowledge (Pro 18:15), counsel (Pro 12:15), and God (Jas 1:5). Be sanctified and self-controlled (Jn 17:17, 1Th 4:3-8). Govern your thoughts (2Cor 10:5). Do not conform to the world, but be transformed by renewing your mind (Ro 12:2). Think on what is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, commendable, virtuous, and praiseworthy. (Php 4:8). Knowledge is power (Pro 24:5).

Circumstances

Truth: God spoke the universe into existence (Gen 1), and God is over all and in all (Eph 4:6). God's word is truth (Jn 17:17), and is helpful (2Tim 3:16). The truth will set you free (Jn 8:32). Truth helps us use time wisely (Ecc 8:5). Buy truth (Pro 23:23). Speak truth in love (Eph 4:15). God's anger is against those who suppress truth (Ro 1:18). God hates arrogance, lies, shedding innocent blood, wicked plans, and who stirs up conflict (Pro 6:16-19).

Health: Our body is the Holy Spirit's temple (1Cor 6:19). God's words give life and health (Pro 4:20-22). Physical training is good (1Tim 4:8), many sweets are not (Pro 25:27). A joyful heart is good, like medicine (Pro 17:22). A plant-based diet is good for some people (Gen 1:29, 9:3, Dan 1:11-15). Don't judge diets (Ro 14:2-3), God doesn't (1Cor 8:8).

Relationships: Love God and people (Mt 22:37-40). Do to people as you want done to you (Mt 7:12). There is a friend who is closer than family (Pro 18:24). Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers (2Cor 6:14).

Time: Prioritize and make the best use of time (Eph 5:16), tomorrow is unknown (Jas 4:14). Teach us to number our days so we apply our hearts to wisdom (Ps 90:12). Walk in wisdom around those who are without, redeeming time (Col 4:5). The hand of the diligent will rule (12:24). Those diligent in their work will stand before kings (Pro 22:29).

Emotions: Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger (Jas 1:19). Being slow to anger gives understanding (Pro 14:29). A cool spirit gives understanding (Pro 17:27). Don't fear (Ps 23:4) or be anxious (Mt 6:34). Faith, hope, and love abide, but the greatest is love (1Cor 13:13). Share feelings of other people (Ro 12:15).

Thoughts: Transform your mind (Ro 12:2). Manage your thoughts (2Cor 10:5) and think on good topics (Php 4:8). What we focus on influences us (Ro 8:5-6). The wise are careful, the foolish are careless (Pro 14:16). We are not our emotions and thoughts, we are what we do with them (2Tim 1:7, Gal 5:16, Eph 6:11). Think before you speak (Pro 29:11)

Money: Wisdom is better than wealth (Pro 3:13-18). Life is not in possessions (Lk 12:15). Better is the poor and upright, than the corrupt and rich (Pro 28:6). God and diligence brings wealth (Deu 8:18, Pro 21:5, Pro 10:4). Honor God with your wealth (Pro 3:9) and invest (Mt 25:27). The love of money is the root of many evils (1Tim 6:10).

Allies

Holy Trinity: Our help comes from the Lord (Psa 121:2). All things are possible with God (Mk 10:27). God's love is steadfast and endures (Ps 117), and He delights in mercy (Mic 7:18). God sent Jesus to save our soul (Jn 3:16, Ro 5:19). Jesus is the way, truth, and life (Jn 14:6). Who abides in Jesus, and Jesus in them, will bear much fruit (Jn 15:5). Greater is the Holy Spirit in us, than us in the world (1Jn 4:4). The Holy Spirit is our comforter and teacher (Jn 14:26).

Angels: Can help us (Psa 91:11-12), warn us (Mt 1:20), and interact with us in human form (Gen 19:1, Heb 13:2).

Other People: Love God and love people (Mt 22:37-40). Greater love has no one, than to lay down their life for their friends (Jn 15:13, Pro 18:24). Love in actions and truth (1Jn 3:18). Love covers sins (1Pt 4:8). Help people as you have opportunity, especially those of faith (Gal 6:10). Hate stirs up anger, but love covers offenses (Pro 10:12).

Adversaries

Our Flesh: Short-term desires of the flesh are a daily concern and they are against the desires of the Spirit (Gal 5:16-17). The flesh wars against the soul (1Pt 2:11). The desires of the flesh include lust, idolatry, witchcraft, anger, envy, division, and drunkenness (Gal 5:19). Pride (Pro 11:2) and foolishness (Mt 25:1-13) also work against people.

Other Spiritual Forces: We struggle against wicked spiritual adversaries (Eph 6:12). Our adversary is the devil (1Pt 5:8) who attempts to steal (fitness, fruit of the Spirit, fellowship, and freedom), kill (body), and destroy (legacy), with temptation (Mt 4:1-11), lies (Jn 8:44), discouragement (2Cor 4:4), deception and accusation (Rev 12:9-10). The devil can disguise himself (2Cor 11:14-15). God's word is our sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17, Mt 4:1-11).

Other People: All humans have free will (Gen 1:28). The world often promotes desires of the flesh, and pride (1Jn 2:16). People can be tempted by wicked spiritual forces (Eph 6:12). Jesus said, we will have trouble in the world (Jn 16:33), go and share the Gospel and baptize people (Mk 16:15-16), but don't judge those who don't believe it (Jn 12:47).

CHRISTIAN WISDOM GUIDE

STRATEGY Be, Know, and Create

Walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16), put on the armor of God (Eph 6:11+), and let your light shine to glorify God (Mt 5:16).

TACTICS

Foundation of Being (4 Core Virtues) – Live in the Spirit (Ro 8:9), and let the Spirit live in you (1Jn 4:4).

Love – Jesus said: Love God and love people, on these depend all the Law and Prophets (Mt 22:37-40). For those who love God, all things work together for good (Ro 8:28). Prophecy, knowledge, and faith, without love, is nothing (1Cor 13:2). Love covers sins (Pro 10:12, 1Pt 4:8). Love rejoices in truth (1Cor 13:6). Speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15).

Faith – Jesus said: Have faith in God, it can move mountains (Mk 11:22-23). Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6). Blessed are those who trust and hope in the Lord (Jer 17:7). Faith comes by hearing God's word (Ro 10:17), and when we keep it in an honest and good heart, we bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15).

Wisdom – Jesus said: In an honest and good heart, hear God's word, keep it, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15). We do not live on food alone, but on every word of God (Mt 4:4). Blessed are those who get wisdom, as it helps our health, honor, and wealth (Pro 3:13-17). Seek wise advice (Pro 15:22, 27:17), and think (2Cor 10:5, Php 4:8).

Courage – Jesus said: Peace I give you, not as the world gives. Let your heart not be troubled or afraid (Jn 14:27). Love casts out fear (1 Jn 4:18). Be strong and courageous, God is with you (Jos 1:9). I will fear no evil; God is with me (Ps 23:4). Faith and our words can move mountains (Mt 17:20). Our works reflect our faith (Jas 2:18-20).

Art of Knowing (4 Core Skills) – We do not live on food alone, but on every word of God (Mt 4:4).

Thinking – Be sanctified in truth, in God's word (Jn 17:17). Do not be conformed to the world, be transformed by renewing your mind (Ro 12:2). Manage thoughts (2Cor 10:5). Think about what is good (Php 4:8). Hear God's word, hold it in an honest and good heart and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15). Be humble, God hates arrogance (Pro 6:16-17). We are not our emotions and thoughts; we are what we do with them. Embrace them, replace them, or investigate them.

Decision-making – God gives wisdom (Jas 1:5), which is better than strength (Ecc 9:16), and gold (Pro 16:16). Trust in the Lord, and not your own understanding (Pro 3:5). Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and your needs will be met (Mt 6:33). Do not be anxious, but pray with thanksgiving, and give your requests to God (Php 4:6). An eye for an eye (Ex 21:24) was meant to limit punishments not promote them. Jesus said turn the other cheek (Mt 5:39). However, Jesus seemed to also approve of self-defense, as He told his disciples to buy a sword (Lk 22:36).

Willpower – Blessed are who remain steadfast under pressure, for after the test they receive the crown of life (Jas 1:12). Walk in the Spirit to resist the flesh (Gal 5:16). We wrestle against wicked spiritual forces (Eph 6:12), with the armor of God (Eph 6:14-17, Mt 4:1-11). Thoughts and hands of the diligent lead to plenty (Pro 21:5, 10:4). Physical training is good (1Tim 4:8). Do not grow tired of doing good (Gal 6:9). Discipline builds righteousness (Heb 12:11).

Communication – There is power of death and life in words (Pro 18:21). Words can harm or heal (Pro 12:18). God's word is the sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17). Be quick to hear, and slow to speak and anger (Jas 1:19), for understanding (Pro 14:29). Speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15). Avoid profane and vain talk (2Tim 2:16). Do not speak corruptly, but speak what is encouraging (Eph 4:29). Know when to answer a fool (Pro 26:4-5). A fool's lips walk into a fight (Pro 18:6).

Science of Creating – Do everything for the glory of God (Col 3:23)... Do what you can with what you know and have.

We create products, ideas, and experiences. The experiences we create with people can last their entire life.

Aspire: To aspire is to add a vision or a plan to a desire. God gave you a spirit, not of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind (2Tim 1:7). Where there is no vision people perish (Pro 29:18). Count the cost (Lk 14:28). Seek counsel (Pro 11:14). Look forward, think about your path, establish your way and do not turn from it (Pro 4:25-27). Thoughts of the diligent lead to plenty (Pro 21:5). God's ways are higher than ours (Isa 55:9). Love God and all things work out (Ro 8:28).

Believe: Faith can move mountains (Mk 11:22-23). Faith comes by hearing God's word (Ro 10:17). The Bible is inspired by God and is helpful (2Tim 1:7). God's word is truth, and sanctifies (Jn 17:17). We do not receive because we do not ask, or we ask for our desires of the flesh (Jas 4:2-3). We ask and receive because we keep His commandments (1Jn 3:22). Commit your work to the Lord, trust in Him, and He will make it happen (Pro 16:3).

Commit: Do not grow tired of doing good (Gal 6:9). The hands of the diligent make wealth (Pro 10:4). The love of money is the root of all evil (1 Tim 6:10). Better is a little with integrity than great revenue with corruption (Pro 16:8). Fellowship with other Christians (Acts 2:42). Our commitments depend on our habits, standards, and character. Choose this day who you will serve... As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord (Jos 24:15).

Discover: Get wisdom (Pro 3:13-35) and learn (Pro 1:5-7, Mt 4:4). Buy truth and wisdom (Pro 23:23). Test spirits, so you know which are from God (1Jn 4:1). Respect who is doing God's work, and don't work against them (Acts 5:29-39). Be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Ro 12:2). God's word is a light to our path (Ps 119:105).

The Complete Wisdom Model builds on our 4 Core Resources of truth, health, relations, and time, with a Foundation of Being (4 Core Virtues), the Art of Knowing (4 Core Skills), and the Science of Creating (The Wisdom System, to aspire, believe, commit, and discover). Consider a free one-page Growth Plan or Goal Plan on the Resource page at CoreBibleVerses.org.

SCRIPTURE FOUNDATION GUIDE

FOUNDATION

Salvation: God so loved the world, that he gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life (Jn 3:16). Confess Jesus is Lord, believe God raised Him from the dead, and you will be saved (Ro 10:9-11).

Believe: Jesus was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification (Ro 4:25). By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one will many be made righteous (Ro 5:19). Don't fear, believe (Mk 5:36).

Prophecy: A virgin will bear a son (Isa 7:14 / Mt 1:23). Bethlehem will bear the ruler of Israel (Mic 5:2 / Lk 2:4-7). He was despised and rejected (Isa 53:3 / Jn 1:11). He was numbered with the transgressors (Isa 53:12 / Mk 15:27).

Relationship with God: We are a spirit with a soul in a body (1Th 5:23). God gave us a spirit not of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind (2Tim 1:7). God knows our heart (Pro 21:2). Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He rewards them who diligently seek Him (Heb 11:6).

Grace: Grace and peace to you (Ro 1:7). All have sinned (Ro 3:23). By God's grace are you saved through faith (Eph 2:8), not because of works (Ti 3:5). The law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (Jn 1:17).

Truth: God's word is truth (Jn 17:17), which created all things (Gen 1). God judges everyone equally (Ro 2:11), even our secrets (Ro 2:16). God's wrath is against those who suppress the truth (Ro 1:18). Worship in spirit and truth (Jn 4:24).

Sin: Christ Jesus freed us from the law of sin and death (Ro 8:2). Who is without sin can throw the first stone (Jn 8:7).

Repent: Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins, and receive the Holy Spirit (Ac 2:38).

Confess: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us, and cleanse us from unrighteousness (1Jn 1:9).

Baptism: Be baptized in the name of the Lord (Ac 10:48). Buried with Him through baptism, raised by faith (Col 2:12)

Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit comforts us and teaches us (Jn 14:26). You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Ac 1:5). The Holy Spirit dwells in us (2Tim 1:14). Greater is the Holy Spirit in you than you in the world (1Jn 4:4).

New Covenant: Prophecy of a new covenant (Jer 31:31). The ministry of righteousness exceeds the ministry of condemnation (2Cor 3:9). If righteousness came by law, Christ died in vain (Gal 2:21). Serve in newness of Spirit (Ro 7:6).

New Life: Put on a new self in the likeness of God in righteousness and true holiness (Eph 4:24).

Courage: Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, or discouraged, God is with you wherever you go (Josh 1:9).

Trust: Blessed are those who trust in the Lord (Jer 17:7). Cast your cares upon Him (Php 4:6).

Faith: Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by God's word (Ro 10:17). Jesus said, Have faith in God (Mk 11:22). Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Heb 11:1). Faith, hope, and love abide (1Cor 13:13).

Hope: Hope that is seen is not hope (Ro 8:24). With people this is impossible; but with God all things are possible (Mt 19:26). Be sober and hope to the end (1Pt 1:13). The Lord has plans for you, for peace not evil (Jer 29:11).

Love: Love suffers long and is kind; love envies not; love brags not, is not puffed up or behaves badly, is not demanding, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil; rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in truth (1Cor 13). Nothing can separate us from the love of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord (Ro 8:38-39). Let us not love in word; but in deed and in truth (1Jn 3:18). No person has greater love than to lay down their life for their friends (Jn 15:13). Let all things be done with love (1Cor 16:14). Bear with one another in love, and maintain unity of the Spirit in peace (Eph 4:2-3).

Commandments: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it, love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the Law (Mt 22:37-40).

Joy: God of hope fill you with joy and peace (Ro 15:13). The joy of the Lord is your strength (Neh 8:10).

Peace: Grace and peace to you (Phm 3). A mind stayed on God has peace (Isa 26:3). Blessed are peacemakers (Mt 5:9).

Pray: Our Father in heaven, Your name be honored. Your kingdom come. Your will be done in earth as in heaven. Give us our daily bread. Forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not to temptation, deliver us from evil (Mt 6:9-13).

Praise and Worship: O praise the Lord, all nations: praise Him, all people! (Ps 117:1). I will sing praise unto God, in church (Heb 2:12). Worship God in spirit and truth (Jn 4:24). You shall only worship the Lord your God (Lk 4:8).

Respect: Whatever you want done to you, do to other people (Mt 7:12). Let nothing be done through conflict or pride; but with humility, esteem other people better than yourself (Php 2:3) Do not grumble against one another (Jas 5:9).

Wisdom: The wise seek knowledge (Pro 18:15). God gives wisdom (Jas 1:5). Wisdom is better than gold (Pro 3:15) and might (Ecc 9:16). Wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, merciful with good works, not partial or hypocritical (Jas 3:17). The wise seek counsel (Pro 12:15). You will be judged by how you judge (Mt 7:2).

Authority: Obey God before human authority (Acts 5:29). One God and Father of all, above all, in all (Eph 4:6). Authority is from God... not for a terror to good works, but to the evil... they do not bear the sword for no reason (Ro 13:1-4).

Justice: The weightier matters of the law are justice, mercy, and faithfulness (Mt 23:23). Judge righteously (Pro 31:9).

Forgive: Be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God has forgiven you (Eph 4:32).

Be: Loving (Mt 22:37-39), faithful (Mk 11:22), strong and courageous (Jos 1:9), and wise (Mt 4:4). Be humble (Jas 4:6). Be transformed (Ro 12:2). Fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace and faith (Gal 5:22-23). Be skilled (Pro 22:29).

Know: Know the truth, and the truth will set you free (Jn 8:32). Jesus did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it (Mt 5:17). Jesus came to give life, in abundance (Jn 10:10). Greater is the Holy Spirit in you, than you in the world (1Jn 4:4).

Do: Keep God's commandments in your heart (Pro 3:1). Be doers of the Word, not hearers only (Jas 1:22). Trust the Lord with all your heart (Pro 3:5). Works reflect our faith (Jas 2:18). Make disciples and baptize (Mt 28:19).

SCRIPTURE FOUNDATION GUIDE

OPPORTUNITIES

Allies: The Holy Spirit (Ac 1:8), Jesus, God (Jn 10:30), and angels (Ps 91:11). Friends can be closer than family (Pro 18:24).

Heart: Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew in me a right spirit (Ps 51:10, Ez 36:26). Guard your heart, it holds the issues of life (Pro 4:23). A joyful heart is good like medicine (Pro 17:22). The Lord considers the heart (Pro 21:2).

Mind: Do not conform to the world; be transformed by renewing your mind (Ro 12:2) Do not be easily upset (2Th2:2).

Emotional Intelligence: Govern your spirit (Pro 25:28). Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger (Jas 1:19), for better understanding (Pro 14:29). Rejoice with those who rejoice (Ro 12:15). Know how to answer each person (Col 4:6).

Freedom: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2Cor 3:17). Walk in the Spirit to resist the flesh (Gal 5:16).

Words: Words have the power of death and life (Pro 18:21). A soft answer turns away anger (Pro 15:1). Speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15). Speak evil of no one (Ti 3:2). Let your yes be yes; and your no be no (Jas 5:12).

Thank: Giving thanks always for all things unto God (Eph 5:20). Every good gift is from above (Jas 1:17).

Think: Manage thoughts (2Cor 10:5). Think on good topics (Php 4:8). Thoughts of the diligent lead to plenty (Pro 21:5).

Discern: Do not believe every spirit, but test them (1Jn 4:1). That you may prove what is good (Ro 12:2).

Plan: Look forward and think on your path (Pro 4:25-26). Who, desiring to build, does not first count the cost (Lk 14:28)?

Prepare: Purge sin to be ready for good work (2Tim 2:21). Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him and He will act (Ps 37:5). Put on the armor of God (Eph 6:14-17). May God sanctify and preserve your spirit, soul and body (1Th 5:23).

Focus: We are His workmanship (Eph 2:10). We all have a gift (1Pt 4:10). Look forward, consider your path (Pro 4:25-27).

Be Aware: Wisdom is better than strength (Ecc 9:16). Be careful, not foolish (Eph 5:15). Good behavior is rewarded (Mt 24:45). Fear not who kills the body, but who can kill the soul (Mt 10:28). No one knows the time of the end (Mt 24:36).

Be Honest: The Lord hates arrogance, lies, shedding innocent blood, wicked plans, and who stirs conflict (Pro 6:16-19).

Be Humble: Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time (1Pt 5:6, Jas 4:10).

Be Diligent: Diligent hands make wealth (Pro 10:4). Add to your faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance... (2Pt 1:5-6).

Be Patient: Who is hasty sins (Pro 19:2). Rejoice in hope and be patient in tribulation, continuing in prayer (Ro 12:12).

Be Blessed: (Mt 5:3-9). Who honors Jesus is blessed (Lk 7:23). Nations whose God is the Lord are blessed (Ps 33:12).

Relations: Walk with wise people to be wise (Pro 13:20). Walk in the light as He is in the light, have fellowship and be cleansed (1Jn 1:7). You are no longer strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, of the household of God (Eph 2:19).

Spouse: Husbands love your wife as yourself and wives respect your husband (Eph 5:33).

Parents: Train children (Pro 22:6), and discipline them (Pro 13:24), but do not provoke them to anger (Eph 6:4).

Children: Honor your father and your mother (Ex 20:12), listen to their teaching (Pro 1:8), and obey them (Eph 6:1).

Habits: In an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bear fruit with patience (Lk 8:15).

Build Up: Do not speak corrupting talk, only what builds up (Eph 4:29). Think before you speak (Pro 29:11).

Submit and Resist: Submit to God and resist the devil (Jas 4:7). Lord teach me Your way and lead me (Ps 27:11).

Seek Help: My help comes from the Lord (Ps 121:2). I can do all things through Christ (Php 4:13) and the Holy Spirit (Ro 8:11). Be strong in the Lord and in His power (Eph 6:10). Why do you sit alone (Exo 18:14)? Seek advice (Pro 11:14).

Help People: Bear other's burdens (Gal 6:2). Help the fatherless and widows (Jas 1:27). Pray and intercede (1Tim 2:1).

Give: Glory to God (1Cor 10:31). It is more blessed to give than receive (Ac 20:35). Give thanks in all things (1Th 5:18).

Persevere: Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord (1Cor 15:58). Do not be weary (Gal 6:9).

Serve: As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord (Jos 24:15). Use your gifts to serve people (1Pt 4:10).

Save: Jesus came to save the lost (Lk 19:10). Go into the world, and proclaim the gospel (Mk 16:15) and save (Jude 23).

CHALLENGES

Adversaries: Desires of the flesh, like lust, envy, and anger (Gal 5:17-21). The devil (1Pt 5:8) and evil spirits (Eph 6:12).

Conflict: If someone sins against you, talk with them about it alone (Mt 18:15). Forgive, as God forgave you (Eph 4:32).

Resist Pride: God opposes the proud (Jas 4:6). God hates arrogance (Pro 6:16). Be humble, not proud (Pro 18:12).

Resist Envy: A peaceful heart heals, envy rots (Pro 14:30). Put away hate, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and insults (1Pt 2:1).

Resist Anger: Resist anger, it can result in evil (Ps 37:8). Put on the new life, in righteousness and holiness... Be angry but do not sin, or let the day end with anger... Put away bitterness, anger, evil talk, and hatred (Eph 4:24-31)

Resist Fear: Fear no evil, God is with you (Ps 23:4), and is your refuge and fortress (Ps 91:2). Do not fear, believe (Mk 5:36). Be courageous and He will strengthen you (Ps 27:14). All things work for good, for those who love God (Ro 8:28).

Respect Your Body: Your body is a temple (1Cor 3:16). Exercise is good (1Tim 4:8), many sweets are not (Pro 25:27).

Respect Alcohol: Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whoever is deceived by them is not wise (Pro 20:1).

Respect Sex: Marriage is honorable (Heb 13:4). For this cause will a man leave his father and mother, and will unite with his wife: and they will be one flesh (Mt 19:5). How fair and how pleasant are you, O love, for delights (Sng 7:6).

Respect Money: The hand of the diligent makes rich (Pro 10:4). Love of money is the root of all evil (1Tim 6:10). Better is the poor who walk upright, than the corrupt and rich (Pro 28:6). The borrower is servant to the lender (Pro 22:7).

Delay Gratification: Who has no rule over their spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls (Pro 25:28).

CHRISTIAN DAILY PRAYER

I believe in the Holy Triune of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and I believe the Bible is God's word. The Bible says, God spoke the world into existence, God made us in His image, and there is power in our thoughts, words, and actions. I have faith in God, I know I am saved by His grace, in Jesus, who fulfilled the law for us. I know God gave us a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind, and offers the Holy Spirit to teach and guide us, and that our desires of our flesh are against the Spirit. I know life guarantees us change, opportunities, challenges, and choices. I repent of my sins, humble myself, pray, draw near to God, cleanse my hands, purify my heart, and ask for wisdom and willpower. I will be strong and courageous, submit to God, resist my flesh and adversary, and sanctify myself in truth.

Father God in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Father God, I praise You, and want to glorify You. I love You, trust You, and worship You. You are my fortress, my refuge, and my avenger. I know I am Your workmanship, and I will be open to waiting on You. I will pursue knowledge of Your word, Your ways, and myself, for favor with You and other people, and to be healthy. I am a light in the world, and I will strive to be positive, calm, and clear. I will seek wisdom, with courage and caring. I know You give wisdom and from Your mouth come knowledge and understanding, and they are better than gold, and add years to my life, with peace. I know You feel that deceptive practices are terrible, and You hate arrogance, lies, who sheds innocent blood, who creates wicked plans, who does evil, a false witness, and who stirs up trouble between friends. I will guard my heart, thoughts, and words, knowing I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I will serve in the new way of the Spirit, for nothing can separate me from Your love through Jesus.

Lord Jesus, I declare You as my Lord and Savior, and I believe that You were raised from the dead by God. With Your crucifixion I put away my old self, and I crucify my pride, fear, and desires of the flesh. With Your resurrection I put on my new self with humility, courage, and desires of the Spirit. With Your ascension I accept my place and power in You. I am not condemned, but I am justified, redeemed, and free. As challenges arise, I will overcome and have peace in You, knowing You overcame the world. I will strive to do what's right, to apply love and discernment with humility, and a positive and grateful attitude, understanding light dawns in the darkness for the upright. In You, I am forgiven, and I am a citizen of heaven. I will strive to forgive, speak life, help build people up, be diligent, and work as if unto the Lord. I understand I am a spirit with a soul, in a body, and I am God's temple for the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit, I accept your help to guide my choices. Greater is the Holy Spirit in me, than me in the world. I will grow myself and grow in fellowship with other people. I will strive to improve my thoughts, knowledge and emotions, being quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger, which gives understanding. I understand the wise are careful but the foolish are careless, and a soul without knowledge is not good. I understand people who hate stir up anger, but love covers offenses. I will strive to be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, and exercise kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. I will strive to help people as I have opportunity, and walk in the light, with humility, guided by the Golden Rule and the Silver Rule. I am grateful for my life, and the good things to come. I am worthy.

I will be strong in the Lord and put on the armor of God. I understand our works reflect our faith, the diligent are rewarded, but the love of money is the root of many evils. I will strive to not be conformed to the world, but to be transformed by renewing my mind and discerning God's will. I am not fearful, I am powerful and loving, with a sound mind. I will strive to live with grace, truth, and integrity, and make good use of my time. I will pray and keep alert with perseverance. I am hopeful and capable, and I will strive to strengthen my faith, spirit, mind, body, and fellowship, and seek the truth and speak the truth in love. I am loved by God and Jesus, and I am blessed. Great is God's steadfast love and faithfulness. I will love God and people, be steadfast, proclaim the gospel, and help people, including strangers, widows, the fatherless, and the poor. Father God, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, for your glory. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

CHRISTIAN DAILY PRAYER (with Scripture)

I believe in the Holy Triune of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:26), and I believe the Bible is God's word (not just because 2 Timothy 3:16 says so, but there are hundreds of places in the Bible that claim, "says the Lord," "the Lord said," and "God said"). The Bible says, God spoke the world into existence (Gen 1), God made us in His image (Gen 1:27), and there is power in our thoughts (Pro 21:5, 2Cor 10:5), words (Pro 18:21, Mk 11:23), and actions (Pro 10:4). I have faith in God (Mk 11:22, Hb 11:1), I know I am saved by His grace (Eph 2:8), in Jesus (Jn 3:16) who fulfilled the law for us (Mt 5:17, Ro 5:19). I know God gave us a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2Tim 1:7), and offers the Holy Spirit (Ez 36:26) to teach and guide us (Jn 14:26, 16:13), and that our desires of our flesh are against the Spirit (Gal 5:19-21). I know life guarantees us change (Pro 27:1, Jas 4:14), opportunities (Pro 22:29, Eph 2:10, Lk 8:15, 21:13), challenges (Gal 5:17, Eph 6:12, Jn 16:33), and choices (Gen 1:28, Ro 8:28, 2Cor 10:5, Pro 18:21). I repent of my sins (Acts 3:19), humble myself (Mk 23:12, Jas 4:6), pray (Mt 5:44, 6:9-13, 1Th 5:17), draw near to God, cleanse my hands and purify my heart (Jas 4:8), and ask for wisdom (1Kings 3:7-9, Jas 1:5) and willpower (1Cor 10:13). I will be strong and courageous (Deu 31:6, Jos 1:9, 1Chr 28:20) submit to God and resist my flesh (Gal 5:17) and adversary (Jas 4:7), and sanctify myself in truth (Pro 8:10-11, 18:15, Mk 9:7, Jn 8:32, 17:17, 1Cor 1:30, Php 4:8).

Father God in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever (Mt 6:9-13). Father God, I praise You (Mt 6:9, Ps 117) and want to glorify You (1Cor 10:31). I love You (Mt 22:37), trust You (Jn 4:18, 14:27), and worship You (Jn 4:24, Lk 4:8, Ro 12:1). You are my fortress, my refuge (Ps 18, 46, 91), and my avenger (Pro 24:29, Ro 12:19, Gal 5:10). I know I am Your workmanship (Eph 2:10), and I will be open to waiting on You (Isa 40:31). I will pursue knowledge of Your word (Pro 3:1, Jn 1:1, Eph 4:23-24), Your ways (Isa 55:8) and myself (1Cor 12:8-10, Eph 4:7-13, Ro 12:3-8) for favor with You and other people (Pro 3:1-4), and to be healthy (Ex 23:25, Pro 3:1-8, 4:20-22). I am a light in the world (Mt 5:14), and I will strive to be positive (Gal 5:22, Pro 17:22), calm (Pro 14:29), and clear (2Cor 1:17, Pro 6:16-17, Eph 4:15). I will seek wisdom (2Chr 1:11-12, Ps 49:3, Ps 111:10, Pro 3:13-17, 8, Mt 7:2, Jas 1:5, 3:17), with courage (Josh 1:9, 2Sam 10:12, Acts 23:11, Jn 16:33) and caring (Mt 22:37-40, Mk 6:34, Lk 10:33, Lk 15:20). I know You give wisdom (Jas 1:5) and from Your mouth come knowledge and understanding (Pro 2:6), and they are better than gold (Pro 8:10-11), and add years to my life, with peace (Pro 3:2). I know You feel that deceptive practices are terrible (Pro 11:1, 20:10, 23:10), and You hate arrogance, lies, shedding of innocent blood, who creates wicked plans, who does evil, a false witness, and who stirs up trouble between friends (Pro 6:16-19). I will guard my heart (Pro 4:23), thoughts (2Cor 10:5) and words (Pro 21:23, Jas 3:2, Col 4:6), knowing I am fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps 139:14). I will serve in the new way of the Spirit (Ro 7:6, 8:3-4), for nothing can separate me from Your love through Jesus (Ro 8:3-4, 37-39).

Lord Jesus, I declare You as my Lord and Savior, and I believe that You were raised from the dead by God (Ro 10:9). With Your crucifixion I put away my old self (Eph 4:22), and I crucify my pride, fear, and desires of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21). With Your resurrection I put on my new self (Eph 4:22-24), with humility (1Pt 5:6), courage (2Cor 5:6, Php 1:20), and desires of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). With Your ascension I accept my place and power in You (Eph 1:15-23). I am not condemned (Ro 8:1), but I am justified, redeemed (Ro 3:24), and free (Jn 8:31-36, Ro 8:2, Gal 5:1). As challenges arise, I will overcome and have peace in You, knowing you overcame the world (Jn 16:33). I will strive to do what's right (Mt 7:12, Ps 112, Pro 11:1, 6:16-19) to apply love and discernment (Php 1:9) with humility (1Pt 5:6, Jas 4:10), and a positive and grateful attitude (1Th 5:18), understanding light dawns in the darkness for the upright (Ps 112). In You I am forgiven (Eph 4:32, 1Jn 2:12) and I am a citizen of heaven (Php 3:20). I will strive to forgive (Eph 4:32), speak life (Pro 18:21), help build people up (Ro 15:2, 1Cor 10:23, 1Th 5:14), be diligent (Pro 12:24, 2Pt 1:10, Mt 28:18-20), and work as if unto the Lord (Col 3:17, 1Cor 10:31). I understand I am a spirit with a soul, in a body (1Th 5:23), and I am God's temple for the Holy Spirit (1Cor 3:16, 6:19).

Holy Spirit I accept your help to guide my choices (Jn 14:26, 16:13, Ro 8:11, Pro 3:3-4, Ro 8:6). Greater is the Holy Spirit in me, than me in the world (1Jn 4:4). I will grow myself and grow in fellowship (Eph 4). I will strive to improve my thoughts, knowledge (2Cor 10:5, Ro 12:2), and emotions (Pro 25:28), being quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger (Jas 1:19), which gives understanding (Pro 14:29, 28:1). I understand the wise are careful but the foolish are careless (Pro 14:16), and a soul without knowledge is not good (Pro 19:2). I understand people who hate, stir up anger, but love covers offenses (Pro 10:12). I will strive to be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, and exercise kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control (Gal 5:22-23). I will strive to help people as I have opportunity (Gal 6:10) and walk in light (1Jn 1:7), with humility (Eph 4:2, Php 2:3), guided by the Golden Rule (of caring and honesty Mt 7:12, Lk 6:31) and the Silver Rule (of personality and circumstance, Col 4:6, 1Cor 9:19-23, Pro 25:11). I am and grateful for my life (1Th 5:18) and the good things to come (Ro 8:28). I am worthy (2Cor 3:5)

I will be strong in the Lord (Eph 6:10) and put on the armor of God (Eph 6:14-17). I understand our works reflect our faith (Jas 2:18), the diligent are rewarded (Pro 10:4, 21:5), but the love of money is the root of many evils (1Tim 6:10). I will strive to not be conformed to the world, but to be transformed by renewing my mind and discerning God's will (Ro 12:2). I am not fearful, I am powerful and loving, with a sound mind (2Tim 1:7). I will strive to live with grace, truth (Jn 1:17), and integrity (Titus 2:7-8), and make good use of my time (Eph 5:16). I will pray, and keep alert with perseverance (Eph 6:18). I am hopeful (Jer 29:11) and capable (Php 4:13), and I will strive to strengthen my faith (Lk 8:15), spirit, mind, body (1Tim 4:8, Ro 12:2) and fellowship (1Cor 1:9, 2Cor 13:14, 1Jn 1:3), and seek the truth (Mt 7:7), and speak the truth in love (Eph 4:13-16). I am loved by God (Jn 3:16, Ro 8:38-39) and Jesus (Jn 13:34, 15:9), and I am blessed (Ps 1:1-3, Eph 1:3). Great is God's steadfast love and faithfulness (Ps 117). I will love God and people (Mt 22:37-39), be steadfast (Ps 119:5, 1Cor 15:58), proclaim the gospel (Mk 16:15), and help people (Gal 6:10), including strangers, widows, the fatherless, and the poor (Ex 22:21-25). Father God, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven (Mt 6:10), for your glory (1Cor 10:31). In Jesus' name I pray (Eph 5:20). Amen.

BIBLE CREDIBILITY

Be ready to give an answer for the hope that is in you, with humility (1 Pt 3:15). If people ask why you believe in the Bible, telling them that was how you were raised, or Christianity transformed you, or it works for you, are bad answers with no evidence of God's power. A better answer would be, *the Bible is a collection of respectable historic documents, and the Gospels are eyewitness accounts about the supernatural life of Jesus, including His death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven.* The Bible says, it is inspired by God, and it is helpful (2Tim 3:16). Search a free digital King James Version (KJV) Bible for the phrases "saith the Lord" and "the Lord said," and you will find over 1,000 results. Jesus said we are sanctified in truth, and God's word is truth (Jn 17:17). Not only is the Bible God's word, but I also offer the idea that when science is done well it reveals God's natural laws, and these are also truth, because... *God's word created the universe (Gen 1), and God is above all, through all, and in all (Eph 4:6).*

Consider how modern science claims to have proven that the universe is expanding. This means if we went back in time, there would be a specific point in time where the universe had a beginning. The two explanations for this are either the universe spontaneously burst into existence from nothing, or it was deliberately created... *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth (Gen 1:1).*

There are also many cosmological constants and universe "fine tuning" that seem to be evidence pointing to a Creator. It's my understanding that if the distance of the earth from the sun was just a little bit further or closer, it would be too cold or too hot. Then there is the force of gravity, if it was just one percent more, or less, there would be too much pressure or not enough pressure to sustain human life. Consider how the earth seems to be perfectly placed in the Milky Way Galaxy with a clear view of the universe, allowing us to study the universe. *Consider the beautiful photos from the Hubble telescope... The heavens declare the glory of God (Ps 19:1).*

Consider how quantum physics seems to be providing evidence of a spiritual world that we cannot see. The theory of tunneling claims that particles can travel through solid barriers. The theory of uncertainty claims that particles in motion should have a predictable path of travel, but they can change directions, seemingly for no reason. The theory of entanglement claims particles can maintain an unseen connection despite being separated by a vast physical distance. The theory of a universal field claims there might be some kind of energy that connects all things... *God is above all, through all, and in all (Eph 4:6).*

The Old Testament makes the claim, God said He would make a new covenant with us (Jer 31:31-34, which is confirmed in Jn 1:17, Ro 7:6, 2 Cor 3:6-8). *This came through Jesus who was the final sacrifice for our sins, and fulfilled the Law (Mt 5:17) with love (Jn 3:16), and refocuses us from rules to relations (Mt 22:37-40).* This is explained in the New Testament. There are many prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament, which was written hundreds of years before Jesus. Some of the more obvious and profound prophecies include that a virgin will bear a son (Isa 7:14, confirmed in Mt 1:23 and Lk 1:26-35). Bethlehem will bear the ruler of Israel (Mic 5:2, which was confirmed in Lk 2:4-7). Jesus was despised and rejected (Isa 53:3, and later in Jn 1:11). Jesus was numbered with transgressors (Isa 53:12, and later in Mk 15:27).

No respectable historians discount the Bible as a historical document, as it was copied often and accurately, compared to other ancient texts we believe to be true. Respectable historians believe Jesus was a real person, many just don't believe He is the Son of God. *Consider the many people in the Gospels who claimed Jesus is the Son of God.* Jesus declared He is the Son of God (Jn 10:36-38, 17:1). God claimed it during the baptism and transfiguration of Jesus (Mt 3:17, 17:5, Mk 1:11, 9:7), an angel (Lk 1:35), John the Baptist (Jn 1:29), disciples of Jesus (Mk 1:1, Jn 1:49), demons Jesus rebuked (Mt 8:29, Mk 3:11, 5:7, Lk 4:41 and 8:28), and a Centurion at the crucifixion of Jesus (Mk 15:39). It seems the devil knew Jesus is the Son of God, but unlike the demons Jesus rebuked, he phrased it as a question (Mt 4:3 and 4:6, Lk 4:3 and 4:9), to try and plant doubt in His identity, as the devil does with people to this day.

Special note to the fact that the New Testament was written by, or with, eyewitnesses of Jesus, or by the Apostle Paul who had a personal experience with Jesus (Acts 26:12-21). Paul was called Saul, a devoted Pharisee who persecuted early Christians, until Jesus called on him. Paul went on to write most of the books in the New Testament. The Gospels of Matthew and John were written by Matthew and John, disciples of Jesus. The Gospel of Mark was written with the Apostle Peter. The Gospel of Luke was written with the Apostle Paul. Most of the Apostles were persecuted for their faith, but they never denounced it, they died declaring their faith.

Modern science claims that humans are all unique considering our genetics. God knit us in our mother's womb (Ps 139:13). Our experiences also add to our uniqueness. Modern science also claims that humans are all the same, considering we are made from natural elements found on earth, mostly (about 95 percent) oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, and nitrogen. The rest are trace elements found in the earth. *God made humans from dust of the earth and His breath of life (Genesis 2:7).* Consider that God's breath of life is oxygen, which makes up over 50 percent of our body. Think about that, over half of your physical body is unseeable oxygen that can't be felt, contained inside our cells... *God made humans in His image (Gen 1:27), as a spirit, with a soul, in a body (1 Thess 5:23).*

Our spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2Tim 1:7) is reflected in our three core personality traits to do, love, and think, that manifest as our inner worker/warrior, lover, and thinker. While we have all three parts, we naturally prefer one or two. Our spirit of power, love, and a sound mind could also be considered as our three core types of intelligence, physical, emotional, and rational. Consider such differences as complementary. Each has received a gift, use it to serve each other (1Pt 4:10). Husbands love your wife as yourself, and wives respect your husband (Eph 5:33).

BIBLE CREDIBILITY (page 2)

Consider that we have unseen spiritual allies that can influence the lives of humans, including the Holy Trinity and angels (Ps 23), but we also have our short-term desires of the flesh (Gal 5:17), and spiritual adversaries (Eph 6:12) that work against us. *Jesus said, the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but Jesus came that we may have life, abundantly (Jn 10:10).* This thief is commonly considered to be the devil. To steal, kill, and destroy, could be considered as his strategy, and his main tactics include temptations (Gen 3:1-6, Mt 4:1-11), lies (Jn 8:44), discouragement (2Cor 4:4), deception and accusations (Rev 12:9-10). Our strategy could be considered to walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16), be strong in the Lord and put on the armor of God (Eph 6:10+), and let your light shine, to Glorify God (Mt 5:16). Many people, if not most, have experienced “coincidences” that were too coincidental, or they had an experience that some people would say was a miracle, or they have had moments where they said or did something that was out of character, either unusually calm, smart, or honorable, or unusually angry, dumb, or dangerous. These could all be considered interventions from spiritual allies or adversaries.

While the Bible has examples of the devil trying to influence people in person, with Adam and Eve and Jesus in the wilderness, it also has examples where he can try to influence people while not being present or visible (1 Chron 21:1 and Jn 13:2). If you have an idea to influence someone, or especially if someone else asks you to do so, consider the future consequences. The book of Job is about spiritual warfare. Job was a righteous man who suffered terribly because of the devil. But he stayed true to his faith in God, despite his wife telling him to curse God and die (Job 2:9), and his friends demanding that Job was responsible for his suffering (Job 22:5). God eventually rebuked Job’s friends who misunderstood the situation (Job 42:7-9), and God restored Job (Job 42:10-17). We naturally want to believe in a just world where people get what they deserve, which is why fairness and the idea of meritocracy are so powerful and loved. The idea that the wicked flee when no one pursues (Pro 28:1), should not be confused with people feeling unjustly accused. Paul wrote in his letters that he does not lie (Ro 9:1, Gal 1:20). Many people have witnessed miracles, have had unbelievable “coincidences,” or moments where they had very strong emotional reactions that were out of character, whether good or bad. These could be considered indicators of spiritual intervention or influence. *We are not our emotions and thoughts; we are what we do with them.*

Consider how science supports habits (Lk 8:15), goals (Pro 4:25-27), growth mindset (Php 4:13), a positive attitude (Pro 17:22), faith (Mk 11:22), and emotional intelligence. The Bible gave us many emotional intelligence principles over two thousand years ago, including the Golden Rule. Jesus said, do unto others as you would have them do unto you (Mt 7:12). Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger (Jas 1:19), because being slow to anger gives great understanding (Pro 14:29). Speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15), because, a soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs it up (Pro 15:1). Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep (Ro 12:15). *Love each other earnestly because love covers many sins (1Pt 4:8).* Consider that people who do not believe in God claim they don’t need God to know right from wrong. God put His law in every human heart (Jer 31:31-33). While people can claim morals without God, they can’t justify them without some higher power to hold them accountable.

One of the most important tips in the Bible is how it tells us that we have the power of death and life in our words (Pro 18:21). Not surprising since God spoke the world into existence (Gen 1), and made us in His image (Gen 1:27). You might think that death and life in words is a bit hyperbolic, or an exaggeration. *Consider that our words can literally cause the death or life of ideas, inspiration, values, and beliefs, and over time, a continuous speaking of positive or negative words can affect people’s health.* Consider the stories of Adam and Eve, and Jesus, being tempted by the devil, these were battles of words and thoughts, meant to corrupt their love of God and faith in God. While it worked with Adam and Eve, Jesus modeled how to resist such thoughts (Mt 4:1-11), by knowing and speaking God’s word, our sword of the Spirit (Lk 8:15 and Eph 17). Our soul’s future, or salvation, depends on our words (Ro 10:9).

Consider how Jesus said the greatest commandments are to love God and love people, because all the Law and the Prophets depend on these (Mt 22:37-40). This is remarkable considering, if everyone really loved God and loved people better. The more people would work out their differences, and we would not need laws. How? Probably something to do with the more we love God, the more faith and wisdom we would have. *The Bible tells us that love rejoices in truth (1Cor 13:6), and to speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15).*

Jesus said if we have faith in God and do not doubt, then we can tell a mountain to move, and it will move (Mk 11:22-23). Consider that Jesus regularly taught with parables and metaphors. Consider the mountains Jesus was referring to as big achievements or challenges. *Faith empowers us with belief, and the more we believe something is possible the more likely we are to act in ways that will invite, and even create, opportunities.* While the more we believe something is not possible the more likely we are to act in ways that will invite, and even create, challenges. This idea of faith and the power of our words is also in Matthew 17:20. There are also many timeless and priceless lessons and practical principles in the stories of the Bible. Check the Core Bible Characters page for popular Bible characters.

There are three basic truthviews, spiritualism, naturalism, and relativism. Spiritualism believes we can know truth through nature, our senses, and the spirit. Naturalism believes we can only know truth through nature and our senses. Relativism believes there is no such thing as truth and everything is just a social construct, and we all have personal truth. However, saying something is a “personal truth” is like saying it is an “opinion fact.” It just does not make sense, and it is illogical. All people’s beliefs are based on how our feelings, emotions, and thoughts, interpret our experiences. Every experience has many truths, which can affect people differently based on their feelings, beliefs, and environment. Important beliefs cannot be absolutely proven true, so we are left with comparing the evidence for beliefs. The question is, how much of a belief is based on feeling and how much is based on fact, and can you explain the factual evidence for your beliefs? The heart can be deceitful (Jer 17:9). God can give a new heart and spirit (Ez 36:26).

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE BIBLE

The story of the Bible could be summarized as, a loving and just God created the universe including humans, but they disobeyed God and became sinful, so God sent His Son Jesus to die for our sins, which was the most impactful way to redeem us, and continue being a loving and just God. This is a good answer if someone asks you, “Why Christianity?”

Mary and Joseph, the parents of Jesus Christ, left Nazareth of Galilee to give birth to Jesus in Bethlehem around 5-3 BC. Later, they moved the family back to Nazareth. Jesus started his ministry around 30 years old, and was crucified about three years later. Afterwards, his disciples went on to start Christianity, which became the largest religion on earth, despite being persecuted. As the Christian Church grew after the death of Jesus, there were inaccuracies of the teaching of Jesus. This eventually led to the Nicene Creed. This gave churches an official doctrine foundation. Many churches still refer to this today. The main points of the Nicene Creed include belief in one God, the maker of heaven and earth. Belief in the Lord, Jesus Christ, the Only Son of God, who, for our salvation, came to earth as a man, was crucified, died, and was buried. On the third day God raised Him from the dead, and He ascended into heaven to be with God. Jesus Christ will come again, with glory, and judge all people on earth, and bring heaven to earth. Belief in the Holy Spirit, who has spoken through the Prophets. Belief in one Catholic Holy Church, and belief in one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

The early churches were groups of followers of Jesus who met to learn about the good news and teachings of Jesus, to disciple new believers, and share life. The first official church was, and still is, referred to as the Catholic Church. The word Catholic meaning universal or united. Like most organizations, as it grew over time, it became more complex. John Wycliffe (born 1328), Martin Luther (born 1483), and John Calvin (born 1509), had many disagreements with church doctrines and traditions, and eventually started the protestant movement. The protestant movement brought new protestant doctrines and traditions. Many of the larger protestant denominations include the Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, Anglican, Episcopal, Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Nondenominational Churches.

The Christian Bible includes sacred Scriptures of Judaism, the main religion of the Jewish people of Israel. The Hebrew Bible of Judaism makes up the Christian Bible Old Testament. Early records of the Old Testament were written on scrolls of dried leaves or animal skins, and were rolled up for storage. The books of the Christian Bible were written by about 40 authors, on three continents, over the course of about 1500 years. There are 39 books in the Old Testament. The oldest book of the Old Testament is Genesis and is believed to be written around 1420 BC. The most recent book of the Old Testament is Malachi and is believed to be written around 430 BC. The Old Testament has many prophecies about Jesus confirmed in the New Testament (Isa 7:14 / Mt 1:23; Mic 5:2 / Lk 2:4-7; Isa 53:3 / Jn 1:11 and Mt 13:57; Isa 53:12 / Mk 15:27). The Old Testament also has a prophecy about God’s New Covenant (Jer 31:31 / Jn 1:17, Ro 7:6, 2 Cor 3:6).

There was about 425 years between the last book of the Old Testament and the birth of Jesus. There are 27 books in the New Testament. The first four books of the New Testament are referred to as the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These record some of the life of Jesus. Then there are the rest of the books of the Bible, including the book of Acts, along with letters from Christian leaders, which are called the epistles. The New Testament books were all written within about 100 years, shortly after the death of Jesus. Most of the epistles were written by Paul, a former Pharisee who persecuted Christians. Paul converted to Christianity after an encounter with Jesus (Acts 9). A couple of Jesus’ brothers wrote the books James and Jude.

As the Christian Bible became more popular, different translations were created. There are basically two approaches to translation, a literal word by word translation, or a thought-by-thought translation (paraphrase). One of the most popular translations, is the King James Version (KJV) Bible, finished in 1611, after about seven years of work by a group of Christian leaders. The KJV is a literal word by word translation, but it can be difficult to understand, being written in Old English. The KJV copyright is public domain, so it is available free online. Other popular Bibles include The Message, which is an easy to understand paraphrase Bible. The New International Version (NIV) is more in the middle of the word by word and paraphrase spectrum. The English Standard Version (ESV) is the most recent effort to clarify the Bible, as a word-by-word translation, published in 2001. It was done by a large team of scholars and teachers, over many years.

If you search a digital KJV Bible for the phrases, “saith the Lord,” “the Lord said,” and “God said,” or search a digital ESV Bible for the phrases, “says the Lord,” “the Lord said,” and “declares the Lord,” you will find over 1,000 results. There are also some great study Bibles with helpful notes that explain some hard to understand verses, and articles based on the topic of the study Bible. William Tyndale sacrificed his life to get the Bible translated into English and mass printed so more people, like you and I, could read it. Our Father in heaven had the Bible made for us all, including you.

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A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE LIFE OF JESUS

According to each chapter of the Gospel of Matthew

1) An Angel tells Joseph his wife was pregnant by the Holy Spirit, and they should name him Jesus, and that he will save people from sin. **2)** Jesus is born in Bethlehem, and wise men brought him gifts. An angel tells Joseph to take his family to Egypt. After a while, an angel tells Joseph to move the family back to Israel. They moved back to Nazareth, in the region of Galilee. **3)** John the Baptist (cousin of Jesus) is baptizing people when Jesus comes to him to be baptized. As Jesus was baptized God spoke from heaven and declared Jesus is His Son. **4)** Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to fast for forty days, and was tempted by the devil. Temptation one was food, and Jesus responded, It is written, man does not live on bread alone, but by every word of God. Temptation two was to get Jesus to put himself in harm's way to tempt God to miraculously intervene and save him. Temptation three was pride, as the devil offered Jesus status. In all three times Jesus replied with God's word after saying, It is written. Jesus then told Satan to be gone, and he left. Jesus begins his ministry, calls his first disciples, starts teaching and healing, and draws big crowds. **5)** Jesus gives his famous speech, the Sermon on the Mount, or the Beatitudes, which continues through chapter seven. Jesus said, Blessed are... the poor in spirit, who mourn, the meek, who hunger for righteousness, the merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, and who is persecuted for righteousness, or for the sake of Jesus. He said, you are the light of the world. Let your light shine so people see your good works and glorify God. Jesus did not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them. Be careful with anger. If you look at another with lust, you commit adultery in your heart. Be careful with divorce, and oaths. Turn the other cheek. **6)** Give to the needy. Pray like this: Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed by your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. Jesus said to fast quietly. Lay up treasure in heaven. Do not be anxious, seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and your needs will be met. **7)** Judge not, so you will not be judged. For how you judge, you will be judged. Ask and it will be given, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened. Do to people as you want them to do to you. Jesus warns of false prophets, and says you will know them by their fruit. Not everyone who claims to believe Jesus is Lord will get into heaven, but those who do the will of God. Whoever hears the words of Jesus and does them will be like a man who built his house on rock. Whoever does not do them will be like a man who built his house on sand. **8)** Jesus continues teaching and healing. Jesus calms a storm. Jesus casts out demons. **9)** Jesus forgives sin and heals. A woman is healed by her faith, after she comes up behind Jesus and just touches his clothes. Jesus raises a girl from death. **10)** Jesus sends out his disciples, after a speech with some instructions and warnings. **11)** Jesus continues teaching. **12)** Jesus heals on the Sabbath. Some leaders claim Jesus is casting out demons by the power of the devil. Jesus replied, a kingdom divided cannot stand. **13)** Jesus tells stories of the sower, and others. Jesus returns to his hometown of Nazareth, but they did not believe in him. **14)** Jesus feeds five thousand. Jesus walks on water, and calls Peter to come, and Peter walks on water until he becomes afraid. Jesus continues to heal. **15)** Jesus continues to teach and heal, and feeds four thousand. **16)** Jesus continues to teach, and asks Peter, who do you say I am? Jesus foretells his death and resurrection, and Peter takes Jesus aside to rebuke him, and says such a thing will not happen, then Jesus rebukes Peter. Jesus says to take up your cross and follow him. For whoever would save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for his sake will find it. **17)** Jesus invites Peter, and the brothers James and John to witness his transfiguration. **18)** Jesus says whoever humbles themselves like a child will be great in heaven. Jesus shares a story of the shepherd who leaves 99 sheep to look for one lost sheep. Jesus says if someone sins against them, they should talk about it in private. Jesus shares a story of the servant who was forgiven, but refused to forgive another, so he was put in prison. **19)** A rich man addresses Jesus as Master, not Lord, and asks, what must he "do" for eternal life. Their talk ends with him walking away sad. Jesus said it is difficult for rich people to enter the kingdom of heaven. The disciples ask Jesus, who then can be saved? Jesus tells them, with man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. **20)** Jesus shares a story of the master who hires different people to work for him at different times of the day, but for the same price. Those who worked more, complained, but were reminded that they agreed to the price. **21)** Jesus cleanses the temple. Jesus says our faith can move mountains. **22)** Jesus shares a story of the wedding feast. Jesus said the greatest commandments are to love God and love people. Which all the law and prophets depend. **23)** Jesus gives seven woes to the religious leaders. **24)** Jesus teaches on the signs of the end times, and says the one who endures to the end will be saved, and concerning that day, no one knows. **25)** Jesus shares a story of the ten virgins with lamps, and the three servants who received different amounts of talents. Jesus teaches about the final judgment. **26)** The last supper. Jesus foretells of his betrayal and Peter's denial. Jesus prays in the garden of Gethsemane. Judas guides some leaders, and others, to arrest Jesus, and betrayed Him with a kiss. Peter physically defends Jesus, but Jesus stops him. Jesus was questioned by the high priest, and was labeled a blasphemer for claiming to be the Son of God, and was sentenced to death. **27)** Jesus is delivered to the Governor, Pilate, who said Jesus did not deserve death. Some leaders manipulated a crowd to insist Jesus be crucified. Jesus is mocked, and put in the place of a criminal and is crucified with two other criminals. Jesus is buried in a guarded tomb. **28)** After Jesus was resurrected he first met with Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James. Some leaders bribed the guards to tell people the disciples stole the body. Jesus met with his disciples and gave them the Great Commission.

CORE BIBLE CHARACTERS

Adam and Eve: Adam was created by God from the dust of the earth and breathed life into him. God put Adam in the Garden of Eden where He created Eve. Eve gave in to the serpent's temptation of her pride, as Adam passively watched, and ate the forbidden fruit, and unleashed sin into the world. Their troubled child, Cain, committed a terrible sin. Gen 1+

Noah: Built the Ark that saved his family (8 people total) and animals from the great flood, that God sent because of human corruption. God created the rainbow as a sign of His promise that He would never flood the earth again. Gen 5+

Abram/Abraham: Faithful and successful man, with family challenges. He had a tough conversation with his nephew, Lot, to seek peace between their people. Later, Abraham battled to save Lot. His wife Sarah struggled to conceive, and told Abraham to have a child with her maid, Hagar. Hagar and Sarah ended up having a conflict, and Hagar fled, but later came back. Sarah finally gave birth to Isaac. God blessed both children. God tested Abraham. Genesis 11+

Jacob/Israel: A quiet man who stayed with the tents. His jealousy of his brother Esau (a skilled hunter) made Esau want to kill him, but their mom intervened and convinced Jacob to deceive his father, Isaac. Jacob was later deceived by his father-in-law, Laban, as Jacob grew their wealth. Jacob wrestled with God, and reconciled with Esau. Gen 25+

Joseph: Was the favored younger son of Jacob. Joseph gave his father a bad report of his brothers, and told his family of a dream where they bowed to him. Most of his brothers hated him, and sold him as a slave in Egypt. Joseph was wrongfully imprisoned for sexual assault. His humility, honesty, and diligence got him released, and he became a high government official. Joseph's brothers eventually bowed to Joseph, they reconciled, and moved to be with him. Gen 37+

Moses: Orphaned as a child and adopted by the Queen of Egypt. He learned the ways of the Egyptian royal family, when the Jewish people were enslaved by Egypt. Moses killed an Egyptian and fled. He reluctantly answered the call from God to go back and convince the Pharaoh of Egypt to free the Jewish people. He led his people out of Egypt and through the wilderness, parted the Red Sea, and received the Ten Commandments. He grew his faith as he served. Exo 2+

Deborah: A wife, prophetess, and a faith filled judge, who led Israel, before they had kings. She not only led and judged Israel for about 40 years, but she also went to war with Israel's army, to free their people. She gave God the glory. Jdg 4+

David: Youngest son of Jesse, a shepherd, who practiced with his sling. He was anointed to be the next King of Israel, despite his father's unbelief. David killed the giant Goliath and became a hero. He became a successful army leader, and many people loved him, including King Saul's son, Jonathan. But King Saul became jealous and tried to kill him. David fled and eventually became a successful King, but made some bad choices, and a son tried to take his throne. 1 Sam 16+

Solomon: God asked him what he wanted, and he just asked for wisdom to lead well. God gave him wisdom, along with much love, respect, and prosperity. Finished God's temple and the Song of Solomon, but still made mistakes. 1 Ki 1+

Elijah: Solely confronted many false prophets, to show the power of the true God. Tried to influence King Ahab to turn to God, but his wife Jezebel worshipped idols, and wanted to kill Elijah. Taken up into heaven by a whirlwind. 1 Ki 17+

Nehemiah: Gave up a good life directly serving King Artaxerxes to go back to Jerusalem to help rebuild it. A faithful and wise leader who convinced other leaders to stop taking advantage of their people. Avoided traps from enemies. Neh

Esther: Lost her parents. Her humility helped her become queen. Learned that a King's official planned to kill the Jewish people, and risked her life to stop him. He ended up hanging from the gallows he made for Mordecai, the Jew. Est

Job: A faithful, righteous, and successful man. Had tragedies that took his children, health, and wealth. His wife told him to curse God and die. His friends said he must have sinned to deserve it. Job maintained his faith in God and his integrity, but he did regret being born. God finally said Job didn't deserve the tragedies, restored him, and rebuked his friends. Job

Isaiah: Claimed prophecies about Jesus. Like other prophets, he held the leaders and the people accountable, and was sometimes hated for it. He constantly called on people to worship God, not idols. He had some unusual behaviors. Isa

Daniel: A wise and faithful man who fearlessly honored God while serving a few different kings, over time. Some of the King's officials became jealous of Daniel and had him thrown into a lion's den, but God delivered him unharmed. Dan

Mary and Joseph: Faithful parents of Jesus. Both were told about Jesus by an angel, but they humbly brought Jesus into the world. They had more children after Jesus. Joseph taught Jesus carpentry. Mary witnessed the crucifixion. Mt 1+

Jesus: Loving, faithful, wise, humble, and courageous human Son of God. He cried, got angry, and spent time alone to pray. As He loved, taught, and healed people, He grew a large following. As He claimed to be the Son of God and forgave people of sin, it angered some religious leaders, who demanded the local authorities crucify Him. God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day. He went to heaven soon after, and God sent the Holy Spirit. Jesus paid for our sins, as the final sacrifice, fulfilling the Old Covenant, with God's love. Jesus offers the New Covenant, eternity with God. Gospels

Simon/Peter: A fisherman and first disciple with his brother Andrew. When the religious leaders brought soldiers to arrest Jesus, Peter drew his sword and fought for Jesus, but Jesus stopped him. After Jesus was arrested, Peter followed them. People recognized Peter, but he denied Jesus, three times. Jesus forgave him. Helped with the Gospel of Mark.

Saul/Paul: Persecuted Christians as a Pharisee, until Jesus called him. Most disciples struggled with his conversion. Courageous and humble, beaten and stoned. Traveled to share the good news. Survived a shipwreck and locals claimed he was blessed, then cursed, then blessed. Wrote most of the New Testament, and helped with the Gospel of Luke.

John: Only disciple not martyred. Focused on the divine nature of Jesus, in the Gospel of John and book of Revelation.

Matthew: Called by Jesus, despite being a tax collector (a disliked job). Wrote about Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew.

Mary Magdalene: Jesus saved her, and she followed Him, saw His crucifixion, and was the first to see Him resurrected.

Nicodemus: Talked with Jesus and said that he and other Pharisees believed Jesus was from God. Spoke up for Jesus.

CAREFUL THINKING

Careful thinking compares information for evidence of truth, and compares tradeoffs and probabilities to make good choices. Choices are more time sensitive and less thought out, while decisions are less time sensitive and more thought out. Our resources and relationships influence the tradeoffs and probabilities. Core tradeoffs are realism and idealism, individualism and collectivism, freedom and safety. We are sanctified by truth; God's word is truth (Jn 17:17). Truth is our most valuable resource, as it allows us to use our time well (Ecc 8:5). While the Bible is God's word (2 Tim 3:16), natural laws are also part of God's word (Eph 4:6), because God's word created the heavens and the earth (Gen 1). When science is done well, and follows the scientific method, it reveals God's natural laws, or truth. Know that some people do not believe in truth. I've learned some verses in the Bible are universal absolutes, or promises, while others are probabilities.

Thinking is our internal communication, and it's influenced by our feelings, emotions, and thoughts. Thinking influences our beliefs, which influence our future choices and decisions. We can overthink things to the point of anxiety, especially if we focus on the negative aspects, but like any skill, the more we practice the better we get at it. While thinking, keep in mind, basic human motivations, that include power (for basic needs), pleasure, pain, and meaning. Our basic human needs include physical, emotional, mental, and social aspects. The Bible tells us to think on what is true, honest, just, pure, lovely and good, and things that are virtuous and praiseworthy (Php 4:8), which involves desires of the Spirit, including love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, and temperance (Gal 5:22-23). Some of our most important thinking includes questions no one can answer for us are: Is God real to me? Who is Jesus to me? What is a meaningful life to me? What am I willing to trade for it? How do I want to be remembered? What am I doing about it?

A personal truth testing method is using, "If this... then that..." or, if _____ happens, then _____ will be the outcome. This is not as accurate as the scientific method. But it can still help us to renew our mind (Ro 12:2) and discern spirits (1 Jn 4:1). We can also use this to check a new habit on our health (food, activity, or sleep). Science claims that our choices and decisions are usually more influenced by emotions, and we don't even know it. It takes work to truly govern our emotions with logic, but it is helpful. Another good way to consider a decision is to ask how you will feel about it in a year, or ten years. Or, if you are so bold, ask yourself what would Jesus do. It is important to use the personal truth testing method objectively, without careless thinking, or without bias or fallacy. It may also help if we discuss issues with trusted family or friends. Jesus said: where two or three come together in my name, I am with them (Mt 18:20).

Biases and fallacies are corrupt and lazy thinking that tempt us to disrespect truth. Confirmation bias tempts us to disrespect truth that does not align with our values and beliefs. Conformity bias tempts us to disrespect truth, with fear of rejection. Causation bias tempts us to think people's actions are always the cause of their situation. In most cases, we share responsibility with our environment, for our situation. Some common fallacies include the temptation to misrepresent an argument, like claiming a small fact is very significant, to feel that emotions reinforce the facts about the topic, or to feel that an individual's personal traits or history is important to an unrelated topic.

Thinking often includes doubt or frustration, because our knowledge is limited. If someone has a thinking session on an important topic, without any doubt or frustration, it may be arrogance, ignorance, or great clarity of meaning, or they might be getting some help from the Holy Spirit. Doubt is natural and can be overcome. While the Bible says doubt that leads to being double minded is bad (Jas 1:6-8), Jesus understands doubt and can forgive us for it (Mk 9:23-29). Do not mistake humility for doubt. Brothers count it joy when tempted; know the trying of your faith works patience (Jas 1:2-3).

All disagreements have competing beliefs. Some competing beliefs are based on different truths that seem to oppose or contradict, when they really just complement or contrast. Understanding how some truths complement but don't contradict, can help us live better and see life clearer. Consider how every human is unique and the same. Science says we are unique in our genetics, and especially when combined with our experiences. The Bible hints at our uniqueness (Ps 139:13). We are also the same considering we are all made of the same elements of the earth (Gen 2:7), as a spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess 5:23), with a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Tim 1:7).

Be strong and courageous (Jos 1:9), and ask for what you want (Jas 4:2). Ask and it will be given to you (Mt 7:7, 21:22, Jn 15:7). Delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart (Ps 37:4). We ask and don't receive because we ask for our desires of the flesh (Jas 4:3), or it is not in alignment with God's will (1 Jn 5:14). However, the Bible also tells us to be humble (1 Pt 5:6) God's ways are higher than our ways (Isa 55:9). Trust in the Lord and don't lean on your own understanding. Acknowledge God in all your ways and He will direct your paths (Pro 3:5-6). All things work together for good, for those who love God (Ro 8:28). We can be strong and courageous and ask for what we want, and still trust God and be content if we do not receive it. We can be grateful for our needs being met, and enjoy pursuing our passion. We can have peace while being diligent, serving people, and pursuing meaningful goals. Patience can be powerful.

CAREFUL THINKING (page 2/3)

Science claims that our emotions reside in our brain. I offer the idea that our feelings are held in our heart, and they reflect our important values. The heart holds the issues of life (Pro 4:23), which I believe are values and feelings that create our intention and intuition (feelings that we can't quite explain), and is usually rooted in what we love. While our mind holds our logical beliefs, and creates instinctive survival emotions. It is important to understand our own core values and beliefs and how they affect us. Science has evidence that our body is mainly energy (spirit and soul) that is influenced by our breathing, feelings, emotions, and thoughts. The more we can breathe evenly, feel positive (gratitude, love, joy, or peace), manage emotions, and think positive, the better our energy and immune system.

Faith is usually considered in the view of a spiritual world, but we can have faith in ourselves, in other people, and in systems. Hope is just a belief that some effort, or work, is worthwhile, even if we are unsure of a good outcome. Faith is hope with evidence of values, beliefs, or strengths. Faith often includes confidence, which is often connected to a person's identity, and competence or skills. You can have a competent person in a job, who does not feel very confident asserting themselves. You can also have a very confident person with good communication skills who is not competent at their job, but they cover it well with their confidence. However, in most cases increasing competence increases confidence. I believe faith in God starts by believing that He loves us (Jn 3:16), wants good for us (Ro 8:28), and is with us (Jos 1:9). We can also have faith in a system, which is believing the system was designed on important values and beliefs. But faith in a system also requires some faith in the people running the system, or having another system to check it. People's bad behaviors can corrupt a good system. Faith in God best endures corrupt people and systems.

It seems that some core collective values to build a meaningful community include being responsible, respectful, and reasonable, which could be considered a reflection of our spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Tim 1:7). Responsible people accept that they have a duty to themselves and others, just as they expect other people to take care of themselves and help others. Respectful people respect the truth and people, just as they expect other people to respect the truth and respect them. Reasonable people pursue truth, to grow and build a meaningful life. Reasonable people balance humility and integrity, as they understand that people can be influenced, but also have responsibility. They are not legalistic, and they are not resentful of rules or have fluid morals. For those who love God, all things work for good (Ro 8:28). Salvation depends on individual faith (Eph 2:8).

Passion, purpose, and calling are higher levels of meaning. Passion is based on our interests. Purpose is based on our gifts, strengths, or skills. A calling is having passion and purpose. While passion and purpose may seem unachievable for some people, just building meaning, with faith, strengths, relationships, and goals, is still a good life. Meaning building is personal, as we are all unique. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (Php 2:12). Meaning is our most worthy motivator, especially if it is rooted in the desires of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23), and worthy goals. When it comes to meaning building, it is natural to want to compete, as healthy competition challenges us to grow and improve.

Even watching other people compete is enjoyable to most people. Competition in sports, arts, and science, is very popular. Consider all the different annual competitions, championship games, and awards and ceremonies. People naturally enjoy cheering for favorite athletes, teams, entertainers, or professionals, who they resonate with. Consider how many of the major industries have some sort of annual competition. Competition seems especially popular in the industries of sports, music, and art (particularly entertainment).

However, competition can become unhealthy. How can we resist competition tempting us to sin? Keep in mind that the four major religions (over 70 percent of the population) has some form of the Golden Rule, to do to other people as you want them to do to you (Mt 7:12). I offer the idea this is based on character, which is reflected with the values of humility and integrity (Pro 11:2-3). I offer the idea of a Silver Rule, to do to other people as they want done to them. I offer the idea this is based on personality and circumstance (Col 4:6, 1Cor 9:19-23, Pro 25:11). Then there is a Platinum Rule, do to other people as you want them to do to your loved ones. The main value for healthy competition is integrity, which seems to naturally include fairness and honesty. Integrity has many challenges, mostly from desires of the flesh.

Our main challenges come from our desires of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21). Our best defense is a good offense with the desires of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). Because when we walk in the Spirit we do not fulfill desires of the flesh (Gal 5:16). This is a daily struggle for all of us. If there is ever a moment of uncertainty it can help to consider if the desire is more rooted in the moment, or in the future. In other words, will it fulfill a short-term pleasure or help with a long-term meaningful goal? Building a strong sense of meaning helps to overcome motivations of power, pleasure, and pain. Some of our most meaningful goals can be to strengthen our faith and relationships. The best ways to strengthen faith in God is to regularly hear or read His word (Ro 10:17 and Lk 8:15), and put on the armor of God and pray (Eph 6:14-18), every day. Do good to as you have opportunity, especially to those of the faith (Gal 6:10). Love God and people (Mt 22:37-40), mainly through deeds and truth (1 Jn 3:18), if you want to be loved (Mt 7:12). Love also covers sins (1 Pt 4:8).

CAREFUL THINKING (page 3/3)

When building meaning through relationships it can be helpful to understand other people's core personality type, which I believe is reflected by our God given spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Tim 1:7). This reflects our internal worker/warrior, feeler, and thinker. While we all have these traits, we all tend to prioritize one or two. These can also be considered where our different intelligences are rooted. I offer the idea that there are three core types of intelligence, physical, emotional, and intellectual. Physical intelligence can manifest in better physical skills, like in sports, or better understanding mechanical aspects of how things work. Entire books have been written about emotional intelligence, and how important it is to connect with people, because we are naturally more emotional than we are logical. Intellectual intelligence reflects the traditional definition of intelligence, like being good at math, or understanding more complex ideas. While the three core intelligences usually align with their similar personality type, it seems self-evident that we all have all three types of intelligence, so we can intentionally grow any of them as we please.

Worker/warriors value skills and achievements, and probably prefer to connect with people by doing things with them. They are probably more assertive and comfortable with risk. When probably prefer to talk about achievements, or help people talk about solutions to problems. They often have more physical intelligence, and enjoy functional aspects of things, and are more likely to take something apart and see if they can fix it, if it is not working right. They are more likely to enjoy physical competition, if not personally then through other people, like sports. They probably resonate more with language focused around doing.

Feelers value relationships and stability, and probably prefer to connect with people by talking about stories focusing on feelings and emotions. They are probably less assertive, and risk averse. They often have more emotional intelligence, and might not enjoy competition as much, because it usually ends with a winner and a loser. They tend to be more likely to talk with people about experiences and exploring the feelings and emotions around them. They probably resonate more with language focused on feelings and meaning.

Thinkers value logic and thinking, and probably prefer to connect with people by talking about ideas and concepts. They probably reflect the traditional definition of intelligence, which is more about the intellect. They value analyzing ideas or issues, and probably prefer to connect with people by talking about ideas and interests. They often have more intellectual intelligence, and are probably more likely to enjoy competitions that involve the mind and thinking. They probably resonate more with language focused around thinking and understanding.

I recall reading about how core beliefs and behaviors of men and women can change as they age and their hormones change. It seems that the traits of being introverted or extroverted, or assertive or passive, is not naturally reflected in one of the core personalities, as each personality type can include people with each trait. This is probably influenced by their upbringing and environment, along with their confidence, mainly their knowledge and communication skills. It is also probably influenced by each individual they are in relationship with. It seems people can be more introverted and passive around some people while being more extroverted and assertive around other people.

However you want to improve in your life, someone has probably already done it and shared how they did it. Learning from other people can save us years of trial and error. There are many very successful people who have shared their "secrets" in books (physical, digital, or audio), podcasts, and online videos. Knowledge from other people may reveal shortcuts to understanding how to get what you want, but there are no shortcuts for doing the necessary work. One of the most helpful changes I've made in my life is a structured morning routine that includes some exercise, reading the Bible, prayer, and reviewing goals, or the day's schedule or To Do List. Of course, it helps to set an evening routine that helps you unwind and get to sleep in time to wake up early enough for a morning routine. New lifestyle changes can be challenging, but they are usually worth it even if it takes years, or a whole "season" of life.

Many people have found it helpful to join, or start, a growth group, where people get together to help each other grow and achieve goals. Whatever you want to do, I offer the idea that properly setting a goal can help you focus and anticipate future opportunities and challenges. Goals can also help you build meaning by helping you think about how to build faith, strengths, and relationships, and align them towards your goal. You can find a free Goal Plan on the Resources page at the CoreBibleVerses.org website. Look forward, consider your path, and do not turn from it (Pro 4:25-27). The plans of the diligent lead to plenty (Pro 21:5). The wise seek counsel (Pro 12:15), and knowledge (Pro 18:15).

CLOSING THOUGHTS

The Bible has transformed many lives, and strengthened faith of many people, and it can do the same for you, if you believe it can. Reading the Bible has raised questions about God and the Bible, but it has provided me with a lot more helpful knowledge, faith, and peace. I challenge you to read two chapters of the Bible each day, and finish it in two years. I recommend starting with the New Testament, then the book of Proverbs, then the rest of the Old Testament. Some of my favorite study Bibles include the Apologetics Study Bible, The Life Applications Study Bible, and the English Standard Version Study Bible. You might also find it helpful to read this book regularly. I recommend memorizing specific verses that are important to you, in this season of your life. When we die, God will judge us. Our soul is eternal, and it is an individual responsibility. God loves you, had the Bible written for you, and offers you salvation as a gift of His grace.

There are some truths that seem to oppose each other, when they really complement each other. Think of how we are all the same and different. Consider we all have the same basic human needs and motivations, but we are also unique considering our identity and experiences. God's love for each of us is just one part of God's love for the world. I've found it helpful to balance a courageous faith that God loves me and wants to answer my prayers, with a humble contentment knowing that God also loves everyone else in the world (Jn 3:16), and His ways are higher than our ways (Isa 55:9). This results in a kind of diligent humility, where I find joy in doing my best, and worrying less. This helps focus my faith, and trust that all things work together for good to those who love God (Ro 8:28).

Some foundational verses for leaders (including parents). **Leadership Growth:** To whom much is given, much is required (Lk 12:48). Leaders are held to high standards (1Tim 3:1-7). Families will have challenges (Lk 12:52-53), husbands love your wives, and wives respect your husbands (Eph 5:33). Children are a blessing (Psa 127:3-5), raise them in discipline and instruction in the Lord (Eph 6:4). Mercy and truth preserve the king (Pro 20:28). With many counselors there is safety (Pro 11:14). Without a vision, the people perish (Pro 29:18). Provide for your people willingly, not with greed, and not controlling, be an example (1Pt 5:3). Look for people who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place them over people (Ex 18:21). Be fair to your people (Eph 6:9). God hates corrupt business practices (Pro 20:23). Better is a little with righteousness than great revenue with injustice (Pro 16:8). Consider carefully before working against Christians, because you might be working against God (Acts 5:29-39). Everyone has a gift to serve (1Pt 4:10, Gal 5:13). Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord (Ps 33:12).

Being a life-long learner helps with our growth, wisdom, and peace, that builds joy, or meaningful happiness. I learned the 4 Core Virtues of love, faith, wisdom, and courage, are very similar to the 4 Core Ways to Build Meaning, with relationships, faith, strengths, and goals. I believe there are shortcuts in life. When we gain knowledge from other people, it can save us years of personal experience, of trial and error. But there is no shortcut for doing the necessary work, or no shortcut for reading the entire Bible. I've spent over 10 years creating this document, and over five years creating the website CoreBibleVerses.org. That website also has more helpful information about Christianity, and a Christian Resources page, with a list of study Bibles, great Christian books, and links to other Christian resources and church resources, including free one-page goal and growth plans. If you found the website or this book helpful, I would appreciate it if you let me know through the Contact page on my website. It would also help if you saved the site as a favorite and shared it. If you found the site or book very helpful please consider supporting my work with a donation (on the Home, or About page).

The Way: Live, Learn, and Love

With grace and truth, the better our lives will be:
Individually and collectively, apply them and see.

With caring and courage, the more we know:
Individually and collectively, apply them and grow.

With love and wisdom, we improve humanity:
Ideally and practically, working towards unity.
With our words and actions, echoing in eternity.
- Jason A. Krause

The Lord bless you and keep you:
The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you:
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace (Numbers 6:24-26).