

RESET SERIES

# FAITH

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*RESET SERIES: Faith*

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# CONTENTS

Preface . . . . .	1
Biblical Perspective . . . . .	1
Introduction . . . . .	2
<b>I Faith</b>	<b>5</b>
Crucified with Christ . . . . .	9
The Process . . . . .	10
A Great Symbolic Example . . . . .	11
The Place of Sacrifice . . . . .	12
Alive with Christ Within . . . . .	15
Embrace Holy Spirit Promptings . . . . .	16
Reject Old Nature Promptings . . . . .	16
Honor the New Nature . . . . .	16
Conversation and Lifestyle . . . . .	16
The Faith . . . . .	18
Love in Action . . . . .	22
<b>II Faith Reset Personal Audit</b>	<b>29</b>
Faith Reset Personal Audit . . . . .	30
About the Author . . . . .	54



*This series is dedicated to the Glad Tidings  
Tabernacle Family, Key West, Florida.*



**WORKSHOP LOCATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FACILITATOR:** \_\_\_\_\_





# PREFACE

This series was developed to provide, in workbook form, concepts for personal and leadership success. It focuses on two groups. First, men and women who are in leadership positions globally, as a leadership and life-coaching tool. Second, believers who seek biblically-based personal-development study materials.

The concepts are taken from biblical characters, reflecting part of their life's quest and challenges. I hope the series will be welcomed not only by leaders and believers for life-coaching/personal study, but also by Bible training institutes, mission organizations, Sunday school classes, cell groups, prison ministries, and all those who are involved in the maturing of the saints. The author is available, on a limited basis, to conduct RESET-related workshops and seminars.

## **Biblical Perspective**

Successful personal-ministry developmental concepts flow from the pages of the Bible, but are these concepts applicable to believers today? Yes, they are. What then are we to do with these biblical concepts to success? Perhaps the first step is the creation-maintenance of an environment in our ministries and organizations where they are recognized, taught, and encouraged.

Biblically-related success occurs when believers respond in obedience to God's call. They recognize the importance of total obedience, allowing the Holy Spirit to develop their gifts, skills, and character. They carry out their kingdom roles with a deep conviction of God's will and a heightened awareness of the contemporary issues they and their peers face. Above all, they minister as stewards and servants.

We do not stumble across success. Success is a result of deliberate acts. To truly be successful, we must fulfill the will of God for our lives!

The Bible teaches that we can be successful only when we are in the right relationship with God. This right relationship is made possible by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

# INTRODUCTION

Early Saturday, March 14th, 2020, during my personal prayer time, I felt impressed to jot down an outline for this book. As a pastor, I was prayerfully pondering the possible implications for the Faith communities and what our response would be in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. What would ministry look like with the developing restrictions and heartache experienced by our community? After a while, my thoughts began to shift from community ministry only to how can a believer in Jesus Christ reevaluate his or her walk with the Lord and, if necessary, hit one or more reset buttons. *Reset* echoed loudly in my spirit.

I believe this workbook focusing on faith as a possible reset button may become a guide in these unprecedented times, adding value to individuals and leadership teams as a life coaching tool during and after this season of global crisis. This workbook is the foundational one for the other four in the series. Faith reset can easily become an ongoing process for maintaining growth patterns not only spiritually but also holistically.

My writing style is slightly different from my norm. I want to be more direct and personal with reset. The goal is to communicate from my heart to yours. I am convinced we have an opportunity to return to a more simplistic lifestyle and, as the Body of Christ, regain or enhance a Kingdom focus in this season. The faith reset personal audit in part two is intended to create a commitment for change while offering a tool for its fulfillment. I am hoping the five areas of the Reset series will provide clarity of purpose and measurable expectations while reshaping the believer in the moment of crisis for the Glory of God.

Reset presents five areas of personal focus (*Faith, Family, Friends, Finances, and Fitness*). This workbook focuses on the area of Faith; study the five areas in their order because each one builds on the previous. If you step ahead, you will miss the intended impact.

The study format is consistent throughout. The method of study is derived from the acronym STEPS.

# S T E P S

State the Step

Teach the Step

Evaluate the Step

Practice the Step

See the Success



PART I

FAITH



## STATE THE STEP

My faith is anchored in a person, not a set of concepts, promises, or principles.

# TEACH THE STEP

## RESET MY FAITH

I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

—*Galatians 2:20*

Late last year, on a flight from Miami, Florida to Trinidad and Tobago, I was quietly reading my Bible when the person on my left asked what my faith was. I was sure he knew I was a Christian and was curious what fellowship or denomination I belonged to. He wanted to know my *brand of belief*. I stated Pentecostal, and a lively two-hour conversation ensued. We talked about beliefs and concepts, promises, and principles in the Word of God.

We explored different religions and their humanitarian efforts globally. It was an interesting exchange but, in hindsight, fell short. To this day, I am unsure if I presented a clear witness of Jesus Christ and my love for the Savior as the anchor of my faith. I, like many others, got caught up in discussing beliefs or doctrines as opposed to whom I believe in. There is nothing wrong with having firm godly beliefs and sharing them. Our beliefs help define our core values and assist in building godly character. But often, believers don't embrace the opportunities to share their relationship or faith in Christ. Religion and relationship can coexist in the same space, but our relationship with Jesus Christ is paramount and should remain that way in our hearts and communications. In my hotel room, a commitment was made to never let that flight experience repeat itself.

In part one of this workbook, my intention is to address faith in Christ as more than a lifestyle but as one's new life or nature, and address some of the challenges associated with this perspective. I will offer advice on how to hit the faith reset button if needed. Let's get started.



## CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

I am **crucified with Christ**, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

—*Galatians 2:20*

Apostle Paul had been emphasizing to believers in his writings that faith and only faith is what rescues us from the grip of sin. Faith in Christ saves, not faith and works or any other combination. I believe this hypothesis to be true. It is biblically-based and, if accepted and acted upon, changes the course of a person's life forever. It develops Christlikeness in the truest sense. From this assumption backdrop, Paul writes, "*I am crucified with Christ.*" Crucifixion paints a vivid picture. It paints a picture of *humiliation, suffering, isolation, and despair*. Crucifixion is the excruciating execution of a person on a cross in full view of the general public. It can be labeled as a permanent public punishment. Crucifixion, a death reserved for the lowest of lowest criminals, was the fate of Jesus Christ for our sins. For Christ, it was the ultimate sacrifice for the world He created.

He came into the world not as creator but as savior. He arrived as the Son of Man to die for it. His death secured salvation by paying the price for sin, and His blood washes away the sins of the repentant. We must personally repent for His sacrifice to be effectively applied. It must become more than a historical event. His provision must be personally received by faith because we are not born into the faith. For Jesus Christ to pay this price, knowing that individuals are free mortal agents (free choice) is difficult for me to fully comprehend. I like you must accept it by faith.

Throughout my lifetime, I have had others take a risk on me, some were sports, career, and business-related. But the risk level God took on behalf of us is simply out of this world, as the older folks would say, "*Thank God for Jesus.*"

Christ was crucified for our sins. By faith, I believe His death paid for my personal sins. So, in that sense, I am crucified with Him. When He was nailed to the cross, my sins were nailed

there with Him. This could be referred to as *crucifixion by identification*. 2 Corinthians 5:21 states it beautifully: “*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*”

A perfect person—Jesus paid the price for a sinful person—me. The results of being crucified with Christ are justification and righteousness. Justification is a two-part process. Our guilt is accredited to Jesus on the cross, and His righteousness is accredited to us. As we mature in our Christian walk, sometimes, these lines may become cloudy with us attributing success to our efforts. When and if this occurs, hitting a RESET button is required. We must always remember what He did and continues to do for us. It is not our righteousness, but His, we have and live by.

Because the righteousness of Jesus Christ is attributed, we are as sinless as He is in the eyes of our Heavenly Father.

Christ’s righteousness is applied to our account. It is not our righteousness but His, and it brings us into right standing and fellowship with God (see Philippians 3:9). We can’t produce this righteousness but are required to walk in this new nature. Walking and living in the new nature becomes a life of righteousness.

As a child, I loved to sit in the living room when my parents entertained company. I always enjoyed the company of adults. On one occasion, I spoke when not spoken to and received a quick “*boy, know your place*” rebuke from my mother. We should always remember our place and role in crucifixion.

## **The Process**

We are first joined to Jesus and enjoy fellowship with our Heavenly Father because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. Jesus’ work on the cross bridged the gap between God and us (see 1 Timothy 2:5), and second, we are invited to make the choice of giving up our former life with its limited or tainted dreams and desires and embrace God’s will. This, in part, is the walk of righteousness.

This process is not forced upon us but rather is a willingly accepted process and is one of the believer’s commitments to his Lord. A Scripture that always amazes me is Philippians 2:5–11, which reads:

<sup>5</sup>Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:<sup>6</sup> Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:<sup>7</sup> But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: <sup>8</sup> And being found in

fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. <sup>9</sup>Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name:<sup>10</sup> That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;<sup>11</sup> And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We live out the mindset in the above Scriptures through the new nature. We are obedient to the promptings of the new nature, knowing that obedience is our responsibility and outcomes are God's. We truly lose our life to find it (see Matthew 10:39).

### **A Great Symbolic Example**

Water baptism is a great symbolic example of the process of being crucified with Christ. By the summer of 1979, I had moved from my parents' home in Nassau, Bahamas, to the island of Grand Bahama and was living in the city of Freeport. My pastor taught on the importance of being water baptized, in that it was an outward sign of an inward cleansing and that the following week there would be one on William's Town Beach.

The thought of being water baptized on a beach was very appealing to me. As a teenager, along with a group of friends, we spent almost every summer afternoon on the famous Cabbage Beach on Paradise Island and did some crazy things in public. The thought of being baptized in public registered well with me. I wanted to take a stand if only for sending a message to myself.

Water baptism is significant because it testifies to one's community the change that takes place when a person accepts Jesus Christ as Savior. Water baptism testifies to the community the believer has been crucified with Christ, buried with Him, and raised together with Him to walk in newness of life (see Romans 6:4–6).

The original Greek verb *baptidzo* means to immerse, which is a picture of burial. We go under, our old nature or man is buried (crucified), and we as believers now walk in the new nature. We are spiritually born again, and our regenerated spirits should influence our souls (mind, will, and emotions). We rise from our burials to live a new life by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, water baptism is an outward expression of an inward cleansing.

We are not cleansed by the water but by the precious blood of Jesus shed upon the cross of Calvary (see Hebrews 9:22; Ephesians 1:7). Water baptism gives a believer greater resolve to continue walking his or her life out in the presence of others. Every believer should be water baptized. Conducting water baptism services is one of my greatest privileges as a pastor.

## The Place of Sacrifice

We all know what it is to sacrifice, whether it is on behalf of our own dreams or for the benefit of others. Jesus said in Luke 9:23, *“And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow after me.”*

This statement makes it clear that the believer, to follow Jesus, must live a sacrificial life. We are to daily have a mindset that is ready to forgo if called upon by our Savior. I see this as living in a state of readiness. I believe at different seasons in our walk, we are called upon to make sacrifices, and this is seen in this *“deny himself”* principle. It is a principle for all times and seasons.

Late in the year of 1976, I was a recent high school graduate and a new convert, having during the summer accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. I was also a pugilist, and on November 19th, had the most difficult choice to make at that time in my life as a believer. I had fought on the undercard of the second Elisha *Obed vs. Sammy Barr* bout at the famous Nassau Stadium, Nassau, Bahamas.

In the dressing room after my bout, I received a visit from the late Angelo Dundee (trainer of the late Muhammad Ali) inviting me to train under his watchful eye at the 5th Street Gym, Miami, Florida. My regimen of four hours of training six days a week was about to pay off. As I sat there with small cuts burning under my eyes, I heard the still small voice of the Lord. I had heard His voice before on this very subject and turned a deaf ear but felt this night He was demanding a response. I left the stadium joyfully answering the call to ministry, and as they say, *“the rest is history.”* We all have places, times, and seasons of sacrifice. Do you need to hit a RESET button?

The crucified life with Christ is a life that allows love for Christ to swallow up all other loves if requested. Not that we do not have other loves, but they must be seen in proper perspective. Matthew 10:37–38 speaks to this and will be covered in the next workbook on Family RESET.

Another aspect of the crucified life is accepting the role of a bondservant. A bondservant is one who, upon receiving his or her freedom, chooses to remain a slave to their master. Apostle Paul referred to himself as a bondservant of Jesus Christ. Paul, in his greetings of Romans 1:1, gives us a glimpse of three areas of the crucified life with Christ. *“Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God.”*

1. **Choice**—Servanthood at the highest level
2. **Call**—Knowing one’s kingdom purpose
3. **Commitment**—To a consecrated life

As we grow in our new nature/faith, there will be times that we will need to reflect on where we stand with our crucified life and perhaps hit a reset button.

Here are some questions I frequently ask myself:

- *Am I still more in love with the Lord than His promises?* It is very easy to arrive at that place in our relationship with the Lord, where because we are familiar with His patterns that we put our relationship with Him on automatic pilot. Just focusing on His promises at the expense of quality time with Him in prayer and meditation.
- *Am I hearing the Lord's voice clearly and obeying in all matters of the heart?* In John 10:27, Jesus states, "My sheep hear my voice." We hear His voice by faith and obey because of love (see John 14:15).
- *Am I responding to fears and insecurities through the lens of my faith in Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord?* We all, at times, experience fear and insecurity. We must not respond to them through the experiences gained through the old nature. We must see life through the lens of the new nature.
- *Am I rightly responding to the Lord's promptings?* We all had a feeling, nudge, or intuition, and when we discern, they are from the Lord, we should seek council. We seek counsel from the Lord, Bible, and mature believers.
- *Am I still thankful for the place God's grace holds in my life?* Grace is God's unmerited and unlimited favor. We don't deserve it, and there is more than we will ever need. We should remain thankful.
- *Am I still totally trusting the Lord with my past, present, and future?* As expectations and stakes rise in our lives, it is tempting to worry about the various seasons in our lives. Remember, God sees the past, present, and future all at one time. Continue to trust Him with the totality of your life.

Let me here make a comment on responding to the promptings of the Lord. On April first, I taught this material by online streaming and confessed that, at times, I don't respond rightly to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Before I went to bed, I asked the Lord to forgive me for this and help me hit the reset button.

On April second, sitting in my office working on this workbook, I felt a prompting to visit the bank and make a small deposit on my personal account. I had received a gift and

thought perhaps there was a bill unaccounted for. I was about to resist the prompting and then remembered my *RESET* the night before.

Now, I am not advocating you follow every prompting, but you should know the ones from the Spirit and those you follow (see Matthew 13:16). At the bank service window, a quick thought came to me concerning the small business stimulus relief packet for those affected by the coronavirus. The thought was I should speak with a friend at the bank and make an appointment for a church application. To my amazement, upon turning around, he was walking towards me with applications in his hand. Ironically, I did have a bill that needed to be paid. A Holy Spirit prompting may have more than one purpose.

Do you need to pause and hit a *faith reset button*?

## ALIVE WITH CHRIST WITHIN

I am crucified with Christ, **nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.** And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

—*Galatians 2:20*

Crucifixion with Christ is the death or separation of the old nature in us from us. We then are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live from the new nature. Salvation does not render us empty and void but rather reconnects our spirit with God's. This reconnection allows us to live in a truer sense. It allows us to live out our godly purpose, which is truly life more abundant (see John 10:10). The old nature, if left in control, *kills, steals, and destroys* our God-given purpose. We are empowered within to live as regenerated spirit beings; therefore, the walk of the believer is a living/dying life—dying to the old nature and living through the new nature.

It is important to remember that death does not mean nonexistence but rather separation. We are separated from our old nature. The old nature is still alive but purposely separated from us by the Lord.

When we are joined to Christ, His power working within through the person of the Holy Spirit makes us dead to sin and the works of the flesh. The new nature takes authority, and we then are Spirit-led. If we then walk in the Spirit, allowing our decisions and choices to be Spirit-led, we will not please the desires of the old nature (see Galatians 5:16; Galatians 15:25).

It is very important to understand Paul's audience in Galatians is believers, not non-believers, and he is giving advice on how not to need a *faith reset button*. A faith reset button will only be necessary in this area if we fall back into embracing the old nature. That reset then would be confessing our failure, repenting of it, and recommitting to live and walk in the new nature.

Galatians 5:16: This, I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

What does it mean to walk in the Spirit? The flesh or old nature has promptings that are contrary to the promptings of the Spirit. To walk in the Spirit is to:

## Embrace Holy Spirit Promptings

Before we were regenerated, we had goals and desires. Not all those goals and desires were ungodly. Our new life in Christ may for seasons contain some of those old goals and desires and, at other times, be replaced by new ones. The point I am trying to make is that we don't stop living. When I walked away from the fight game and answered the call to ministry, I started to sense desires to engage in certain types of ministry. I even had dreams of them. Some have been fulfilled, and others will be in time am sure.

I know those recognized desires were placed there by God and represent His purpose for my life. I see these as Holy Spirit promptings. I still had some pre-salvation desires; an example would be marriage. As we walk in the Spirit, we will see God's will manifest.

## Reject Old Nature Promptings

If the old nature is not kept, so to speak, under our feet, it will resurface and wreak havoc in our lives and in the lives of those around us. I have found the best way to keep the old nature under my feet is by submission. Submission is giving up reliance on my strength and submitting to God. Here is a Scripture that bears this out. James 4:7 states, "**Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**" That verse needs no further explanation.

## Honor the New Nature

The believer's life is one of show and tell. When we honor the new nature within that honor is displayed in the life we live. When Shena and I became American citizens, we were asked to pledge our allegiance to the flag and the nation. It was quickly pointed out that we could only have full allegiance to one nation. This experience left me with a sobering feeling. This is food for thought. In a sense, there are two nations within us, old nature and new nature. We can't flip flop between the two and display love for Christ or successfully walk in the Spirit. We are required to pledge our allegiance to the new nature and what it requires of us. Jesus said, "*If you love me, you will keep my commandments*" (see John 14:15).

## Conversation and Lifestyle

I have grown to understand that not everything that is okay or acceptable for a believer is okay or acceptable for me in my ministry position. Two examples would be politics and consumption



of alcohol. I don't flirt with either. Philippians 2:12–16 is loaded with helpful advice in this area. We work out our salvation in daily living as God works His will within us. I may have the right to do anything permissible for the believer, but not everything may be beneficial for me in the position I hold (see 1 Corinthians 6:12). Walking in the Spirit is conversation and lifestyle crafted by God for you.

## THE FAITH

I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, **I live by the faith of the Son of God**, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

—*Galatians 2:20*

Our text states, in part, we live by the faith of the Son of God. This word “the” is very important in relation to the subject here on natures. You have just read my thoughts on “the flesh.” It appears Paul’s intention is to again point out the flesh as the old nature and now the faith as the new nature. The twist is that we are still in the flesh (body) and receive a new nature (the faith). This can seem somewhat confusing, but hopefully, it is cleared up for you in this short section on the faith. Nature, as inherent features, is emphasized here. The flesh—the nature altered as a result of the fall of the first Adam in the garden. Everyone is born with this fallen nature. The faith is our new nature given to us by the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, the second Adam. This new nature, *the faith* rests upon Christ as did the sins of the world. We are to take up this cross while daily denying ourselves (old nature) and follow Jesus Christ (Luke 9:23).

When Paul adds the Son of God, he is reminding his readers that Jesus Christ’s divine sonship is the source of His life-giving power. The perfect Son of Man died for us, and the Son of God shares His life-giving power with us. We are always to embrace this power as our new nature and walk in it under all circumstances. Only the regenerated (those who accepted Jesus Christ as Savior) have this new nature. So, then, the new nature for the believer is the faith living within our body that replaces the old nature (original sin). Flesh is old nature but also referred to as the flesh or body.

The believer, as everyone does, lives in a body. However, the believer lives in a body by the new nature—the faith, while the unbeliever lives in a body by the old nature—the flesh.

During my forty years of ministry, I have seen my share of conflicts. Once I overheard one lady say to another lady, “*I will lay my Bible down and whoop you upside the head, and then*

*pick my Bible back up.*” What she was really saying is you make me so angry I am going to step outside of my new nature and deal with you according to the old nature. I would think every believer has had a similar thought at least once. Acting on those thoughts is sin.

Jesus Christ was born as the Son of Man with our old nature with one exception. His human nature had no original sin. He was born of the seed of the Holy Spirit, not man. Adam’s nature before the fall was one of innocence, Adam failed the test, which would have led to perfection. Jesus Christ, the second Adam, passed that test.

A perfect man had to live and die for a sinful world for redemption to become a possibility. Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, is that perfect man and lived His life dependent on the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in obedience to His Heavenly Father. As the Son of Man was tempted in all things and remained spotless (see Hebrews 4:15).

Hebrews 2:14–18 explains it beautifully:

<sup>14</sup> Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; <sup>15</sup> And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. <sup>16</sup> For verily, he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. <sup>17</sup> Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.

Jesus Christ’s victory was obtained and sealed by responding rightly to the temptations He faced. He shows us how to respond to the tempter of our souls and the old nature within. (see Mark 7:15–23). His offering of His life as the ransom payment for our sins created the new nature possibility for us. When tempted by the devil, He responded with, *man cannot live by bread alone...* (see Matthew 4:4). Surely, He saw Himself being tempted as the Son of Man, relying on the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. We are to see ourselves as children of God, also relying on the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

When I accepted my first pastorate, one of the elders asked me what appeared to be a simple question. He said his support of me would rest on my answer. The question was, “*Could Jesus have sinned?*” That was never covered in our Bible Institute. I quietly and prayerfully responded, “*It is not whether He could or could not, but whether He would.*” I went on to explain because of Jesus’ intimacy with the Father, He chooses not to. It was the best theological answer I had as a twenty-three-year-old, and I still hold to that view. That elder served faithfully as

one of my deacons for four years. What or who are you intimate with? Intimacy often creates commitment.

The faith is the nature that must be adhered to if we are going to live a godly life. This nature is to become natural to the believer because the old things should be dismissed as we create a new life through the faith (see 2 Corinthians 5:17).

At times in the church, I have been guilty of focusing so much on the gifts of the Spirit that I neglected to teach on the fruit of the Spirit. I believe the gifts give us the power or spiritual ability to, in part, fulfill purpose, while the fruit gives us godly character. Truly fulfilling purpose is impossible without the right attitude and the balance of both. We may experience measures of success but not God's expectations for our lives.

An achievement is a goal that has been reached, and an accomplishment may be a project completed within that goal. Do I just want to celebrate levels of success or fulfilled purpose from God's viewpoint? If we have faith to move mountains and have not love (the faith nature ruling), we are really nothing (see 1 Corinthians 13:2). Gifts of the Spirit have their place but must be balanced out with love for godly achievements to be reached.

Another sobering thought for me is found in Matthew 7: 21–23;<sup>21</sup> Not every one that saith unto me, LORD, LORD, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. <sup>22</sup>Many will say to me in that day, LORD, LORD, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?<sup>23</sup> And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. The faith is the only nature that will please God because it comes from God. I love the fact that Jesus gives us what we need to please God. I am thankful for the gifts and fruit of the Spirit.

Several years ago, I made a decision that was unpopular with some of my peers. One of my colleagues confronted me and began the confrontation with "*Brother Johnny, you're an anointed teacher (gift), but I think you had the wrong spirit (nature) in how you made that decision.*" That remark stopped me in my tracks and reinforced my need for balance. May the gifts always flow in balance with the fruit. How do you want to be seen and remembered as a believer? Don't allow the intrapersonal war to adversely affect your interpersonal relationships.

James, the brother of Jesus, writes in James 4:1, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?"

This is a perfect reference to the possible ongoing conflict between the two natures.

The visible or logical cause for arguments may appear to be of external circumstances and nature; however, the true cause is the war within against the lusts or pleasures of the old

nature. We may have positional peace with God but have it lacking in ourselves because of disobedience.

The war within often leads to fights without. This often occurs when we seek self-gratification at the cost of others. Have you ever witnessed someone refuse to do what was in the best interest of family, team, or community? They refused, knowing the decision would be detrimental to all involved.

During the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic, I regularly weighted my desires and fears in the scale of godly perspective. Like everyone else, I had personal concerns centered on family and finances.

In reflection, my war within was fueled by fear. If I am courageous enough to press through fear and personal desires making difficult decisions with respect to what is best for others, then how will it leave me? Those types of questions were floating around in my head. I am thankful for the grace of God that is greater than our fears or current situations.

We have the Spirit of power, love, and soundness of mind (see 2 Timothy 1:7). I truly acknowledge and appreciate the truth that for us as believers, obedience is our responsibility, and outcomes God's.

When isolated, some experiences we endure may not appear positive, but God weaves it all together, and in the end, ALL things will work out for our good (see Romans 8:28). They work for our good when we are obediently following the Lord through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Here are a few faith reset questions:

- Am I looking at life's present challenges through the lenses of the new nature?
- Is the Holy Spirit's power my power source in this season of my life?
- Am I allowing my inner war in this season to spill over into an outer fight with others?
- Am I always pressing through my fears and being obedient to the Spirit and God's Word?

## LOVE IN ACTION

I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who **loved me and gave Himself for me.**

—*Galatians 2:20*

Why did Jesus Christ die for us? Paul states because He loved us. A lot throughout the ages has been written about the subject of love, from songs to poems, to other forms of declarations. We have heard it said that there is nothing like a mother's love. My mother's love for us was incredible, and Shena's love for our children is equally incredible. However, when I experienced the love of Jesus Christ for me, it left me in awe.

I love Him because He first loved me (see 1 John 4:19). His love for me was not fully appreciated until I repented of my sins and accepted Him into my life. Perhaps you were like me. I didn't realize how wicked I was until after experiencing the forgiveness of God. Not until we are convicted and drawn by the Holy Spirit do we feel the weight of our sin (see John 16:18).

To think Christ loved us while in our sinful state, and His love was seen in action by His death for us. Romans 5:8 <sup>8</sup>*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, **while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.***

God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) demonstrated love towards fallen mankind by sending Jesus Christ on a death mission.

I am sure we all have been asked to show or prove our love for a person or cause, and perhaps fallen short of their expectations. When I reflect on the love shown towards me by God, it leaves me in admiration. It would have been so much easier for God to have simply started over. But love never gives up.

There are so many Scriptures on love that I would want to share here, but for the sake of focus, will only share one portion of Scripture.

1 John 4:16– 19: <sup>16</sup>*And, we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.* <sup>17</sup>*Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.* <sup>18</sup>*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.* <sup>19</sup>*We love him because he first loved us.* <sup>20</sup>*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?* <sup>21</sup>*And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.*

The above Scripture explains love as it relates to God, others, and us. Here are some points stated positively:

- *We are intimate with God's Love.* We have experienced the love of God in a personal way and have come to believe in it. We have experienced it through the sacrificial life of Jesus Christ. Jesus not only died for our sins but also took on a body and a new role (see Romans 8:34) He limited Himself for eternity so that we may take hold of the new nature. So, as believers, we experience His love in saving and keeping us. Anything that attempts to pry us away from His love should be resisted. I have come to believe in God's love because of its purity and consistency.
- *We live in love; therefore, we live in God.* Our environment or seedbed for spiritual nurturing is the love of God. We live because of His love, and we remain in His love as we serve His purpose for our lives. What can separate us from His love? (see Romans 8: 38–39). John 15:7 states, *"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."* Our new nature and God's Word shape our desires. Anything asked from this combination is granted. This, to me, is new life.
- *We have boldness because of perfect love/God.* Our future is secured as we remain in Him. When the world is judged, the believer is not judged because of the righteousness of Christ. This gives us boldness now and carries over into the time of judgment upon the earth. I am learning to live out 1 Corinthians 4:5. Love sees the good in others as well as their potential, and this allows us to leave judgment to God. God, one day, will make public what is privately known by Him.
- *We reflect God in the world.* The God of heaven is reflected through us in the world. We are His reflectors because as He is, we are, because of His grace applied to our lives. He is love, and so are we to be. We are lights in the world (Matthew 5:14) and shine His

image. In high school, I was taught that the moon has no light of its own but reflects the light of the sun. We are called to reflect the Son of God in His fullness (see Matthew 5:16). Strive to be a full moon reflection.

- *We walk in perfect love and not fear.* Perfect love will not allow fear to occupy space in our hearts. God's love is both perfect and mature. We have the favor of walking in His perfect love. We live in hope because of His love in our hearts (see Romans 5:5).
- *We love God because He loved us first.* We can only respond to God's love after recognizing it. He reaches us with His love in tangible ways. We have not sought Him out; rather, He came looking for us, and we are thankful.
- *We walk in the commandment of Love.* We love others with the same degree of love we have for ourselves. Love for the seen must be as pure as the love for God. This is because we must see others through the lens of God's love. God's love demonstrated in and through us is attracting others to Him.

The morning while finishing this writing, I received a WhatsApp call from Rev. Patrick Paul, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God in The Bahamas, including the Turks and Caicos Islands. After exchanging pleasantries, we settled in on a conversation about the believer's maturing process.

We talked about biblical characters and their journeys in the faith. Rev. Paul shared some insights on Abraham and the maturing process in his life. We agreed that often overlooking the fact that there is a process leads to misinterpreting the call on a person's life. Even Abraham, the father of the faith (see Galatians 3:16), had his reset moments.

An example of misinterpreting a call is the life of Joseph in the Old Testament. He became prime minister of Egypt and a successful leader; however, his call was to reunite and provide for his family. His call was to live out the generational call upon his family.

Even though God was always with him, he had his moments of maturing as he hit the family and gift reset buttons. Reset buttons are not exclusively about repenting of sin but also about adjustments in attitudes, thinking, and actions. Keep this in mind as you now approach the evaluate section.



## EVALUATE THE STEP

To evaluate means to look over or inspect and see the good and bad in something. When you evaluate here, you will briefly review faith and set some goals for improvement in areas of concern.

### *Personal Discovery*

What concerns you the most about your faith?

Which aspect of faith reset is most difficult for you, and why?

Name three persons who you feel would give you godly advice regarding a possible faith reset. Make an appointment to see at least one and seek advice or steps to overcome that which most hinders your faith reset.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## PRACTICE THE STEP

As we learn and develop steps to success, it is important for us to walk in these steps. By practicing, they become a part of our everyday life and ministry. The step we have just studied is faith reset. How can we practice this step? We practice it daily by evaluating our thoughts and actions. Conduct a daily personal inventory, allowing the Holy Spirit to search the inward parts, revealing what is in your heart.

As revelation comes, write down your personal adjustments. This will be accomplished over a period of time. We were created in God's image and gifted with, among other qualities, the ability to be creative as we walk in fellowship with our Creator and serve others.

### ***YOUR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENTS***

List ten adjustments that you will make to ensure you always live and serve in the new nature. Be specific.

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4. \_\_\_\_\_
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6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

***Practice, Practice, Practice.*** It is important to practice this exercise often and continually make the necessary adjustments to ensure you continue developing in this area. God is interested in us having longevity in our personal and professional lives and endeavors. Practice this step and maximize opportunities and manage challenges that flow into your life and ministry. Practice still makes perfect.

## SEE THE SUCCESS

Success may be instant and progressive. True success is derived from facing the seasons of our lives God's way. Faith reset may very well set the stage for a productive and meaningful journey. A faith reset will most assuredly reduce the time spent off track.

I encourage you to observe others in life and ministry as they model the concepts presented in faith reset. Don't be afraid to glean from other believers and successful leaders. I believe faith reset is part of a believer's/leader's lifeline. I encourage you to follow through on further developing this step in your personal life and leadership roles.

You may wish to develop the habit of keeping a journal. Document your steps, pausing at times to reflect, readjust, and ready yourself for future success. Practice the step, see the success.

The second part of this workbook contains your faith reset personal audit. This audit is designed as a personal development tool. It will allow you to further evaluate your life with respect to the concepts presented and design an improvement plan. I highly recommend you take the audit.

PART II

FAITH RESET PERSONAL AUDIT

## FAITH RESET PERSONAL AUDIT

Please read each of the following statements. Circle the number that best describes how true each statement is of you.

### *Crucified with Christ*

1. I always appreciate Christ's work on the cross.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
2. I always choose to deny myself when called upon by the Lord.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False
  
3. I always live out the concepts of Romans 1:1.
  1. True
  2. More true than false
  3. More false than true
  4. False

4. I always rightly respond to the Lord's promptings.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

5. I am totally trusting the Lord with my past, present, and future.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

### ***The FAITH***

1. I always respond rightly to the temptation I face.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

2. I always maintain the proper balance between the gifts and fruit of the Spirit.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

3. I always rely on the Holy Spirit's power for daily living.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

4. I always press through my fears God's way.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

5. My inner wars never turn into outer fights with others.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

### ***Love in Action***

1. In this season of my life, I am maintaining intimacy with God's love.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False



2. I live my life with faith boldness regardless of the circumstances.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

3. I am always a reflector of God in the community where I live or serve.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

4. I am always striving to live out my faith through God's perfect love, regardless of the challenges I face.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

5. Others would describe me as God's love in action.

1. True
2. More true than false
3. More false than true
4. False

***Total Your Score***

Total the numbers and place them in the spaces provided, then multiply them by the given number.

	True	More true than false	More false than true	False
# of Questions	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Score:	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Total:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Add the numbers together and read the results of your audit.

***If Your Total Score Is***

- 15-25** The three faith areas are engrained in your personal life and leadership role.
- 26-35** You are practicing the three areas. If your total score is closer to 35, you need to pay more attention to one or more of the areas.
- 36-45** You need to continue to work on developing all three areas.
- 46-60** Others probably do not view you as a sincere believer. You may want to take some time to rethink your relationship with the Lord.

*Personal Improvement Steps*

The purpose of this exercise is to focus on identifying areas that need improvement and developing a plan for the same.

**Step One:** List an area where your score is a 3 or 4.

*Crucified with Christ*

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My score is:

**Step Two:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. Refer to your personal adjustments list of ten to draw your information for developing the plan.





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*Personal Improvement Steps*

The purpose of this exercise is to focus on identifying areas that need improvement and developing a plan for the same.

**Step One:** List an area where your score is a 3 or 4.

*The Faith*

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My score is:

**Step Two:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. Refer to your personal adjustments list of ten to draw your information for developing the plan.

*Personal Development Plan*

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*Personal Improvement Steps*

The purpose of this exercise is to focus on identifying areas that need improvement and developing a plan for the same.

**Step One:** List an area where your score is a 3 or 4.

*Love in Action*

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My score is:

**Step Two:** Develop a plan for personal improvement. Refer to your personal adjustments list of ten to draw your information for developing the plan.

*Personal Development Plan*

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You have now completed your personal development plan. As you begin to implement your plan, it will be wise to continually review and seek guidance from the Holy Spirit. Your plan will assist you in moving forward in your walk in the Spirit. It is important to strengthen your weak areas and build upon your strengths. This process may be repeated as necessary.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jonathan is the lead pastor of Glad Tidings Tabernacle, Key West, Florida, chief visionary of the CTC Network, and a metropolitan bishop with Global United Fellowship overseeing the Caribbean. Jonathan also serves as Dominican Republic representative for the *Caribbean Israel Leadership Coalition*.

Jonathan and his wife, Shena, have three adult children: Jonathan, Stephen, and Joyanne. Two daughters-in-law, Sherry and Violet, and four grandchildren.

**Jonathan's personal strategic philanthropy policy:** I feel strongly about helping causes related to faith and education that specifically address the needs of clergy and people of other countries who need help with the fulfillment of purpose and personal empowerment to change. I envision fulfilling my strategic philanthropic goals with faith-based ministries that are multidisciplinary-oriented, are visionary in nature, and whose areas of influence are regional in scope.

JONATHANCAREY.ORG

**How to support** Jonathan and Shena Carey, founders of the CTC Network, serve throughout the Caribbean focusing on:

- HOPE chaplaincy
- Short-term mission trips
- Vision building conferences

World Outreach serves as their home-base office. They serve administratively in many ways, handling mailing lists and online donor relations. World Outreach allows Jonathan and Shena to focus on their mission of developing leaders and transforming communities in The Bahamas and the Caribbean.

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