BISHOP DR. ANTHONY COLLINS



AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

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AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

By

Bishop Dr. Anthony Collins

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"To help people know Christ deeply, walk with Him daily, and represent Him faithfully through lives transformed by the presence of God."

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to those who desire to build a spiritual legacy.

To those who are committed to becoming authentic spiritual leaders, leaders who can be trusted to serve, strengthen, and protect the authentic Church.

To those who are called to start and steward ministries that endure, ministries that build, serve, and edify the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

To those who write books, launch businesses, and create works that honor Christ and advance His purposes.

To those who disciple others, who build disciples that build disciples that build disciples.

To the everyday Christian who has not realized their full potential in Christ. I pray that this book is for you.

FOREWORD

In our present world, we are constantly bombarded with information. There are so many voices, all trying to influence our behavior. Yet Scripture reminds us that while Christians live *in* the world, we are not *of* the world. Because of this, our lives must reflect behavior that honors our God and King, Jesus Christ.

I highly recommend the book *Authentic Christian Behavior*, authored by my husband of forty-four years and my father in the ministry, Bishop Dr. Anthony Collin**s**. More than twenty years ago, Bishop Collins and I planted a non-denominational, multi-cultural church that continues to faithfully serve its community today. Over the past decades, Bishop Collins' international ministry has extended across South America, Central America, South Africa, Europe, Australia, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa, impacting lives for the glory of God.

Bishop Collins is a gifted writer and teacher whose ministry has been shaped by walking alongside believers at every stage of spiritual growth—new believers, mature believers, and those in between. This book is written for anyone who calls themselves a Christian, because when a person truly gives their heart to Christ, the real work begins.

Today, many believers are sincere, yet unequipped. They lack a clear, biblical process for walking in victory. As a result, they often find themselves trapped in a repeated cycle of sin, repent, sin, repent—without a strategy for lasting freedom. Bishop Collins often teaches that *"it is not only important to know what God said, but to know what He meant by what He said."* This truth enables believers to understand the character of God and to clearly recognize who they are in Christ.

This book is a practical and powerful resource filled with biblical truth that must be applied to our lives if we are to function as true ambassadors for Jesus Christ.

As children of God, the plan and execution of redemption have already been established. The question is this: *Are you an authentic Christian living victoriously*

in the Kingdom of God? Authentic Christians bear the fruit of the Spirit, walk in freedom, and live in the light of Jesus Christ rather than according to the flesh.

Let this practical work guide you in demonstrating, through your life, that you truly are an Authentic Christian.

J. Gail Collins – International Women's Pastor
Houses of Worship International Christian Partnership

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INTRODUCTION

The God of all the universes, The One and only true living God, the Alpha and the Omega, the One who holds it all in the palm of His hand, the One who spoke it all into existence, declares this:

"Everything I own without contention, without dispute, or argument, I bless supernaturally. My desire is for all humanity, to surrender the opinion that they own anything and instead embrace a strategy of obedience to My word. This is My Principle of Divine Success."

The idea of ownership is a great deterrent to the successful implementation of the strategy of obedience. The purpose of this book is to help us all to know what it looks like when we surrender our humanism (how we feel and what we think) to the strategy of obedience to God's word. Knowing God's word is not simply understanding what He said and forming an opinion about it. It is far more than that. We must move beyond knowing what He said to discerning what He meant by what He said. Only then can we embrace the uncomfortable truth of applying His Word to our lives as part of a genuine strategy of obedience, as we operate in His principle of divine success.

One of the greatest mistakes we can make is attempting to access the blessings of God without both a divine promise and the implementation of a divine process. When we hold fast to God's Word, which contains His promises, and faithfully walk in His process—His principles and strategies—we can live with confident assurance in the outcome God has ordained. Yes, we will receive His promised result. However, without a divine Word and a divine process, our expectations are irrelevant. The outcome may be many things, but it will not be divine, nor will it carry a heavenly blessing.

No matter how desperate we may be for change, breakthrough, or a blessing, it is critical to understand that God does not respond to desperation alone. He responds to a strategy of obedience. He responds to authentic faith in His Word. He responds as we apply His divine process to His divine promise. He responds when we respond to what He meant by what He said.

It is not enough to know what God said. We must understand what He desires us to do based on what He said. We must arrive at conclusions that align with the totality of His Word, His character, and His heart. These conclusions must encompass His love, His holiness, His faithfulness, His wrath, and His compassion, all at the same time. In a word, they must be authentic. They must not be rooted in humanism, but grounded in the Word and Spirit of God.

We need both His Word and His Spirit as the balanced foundation for true wisdom if we are to effectively pursue God's strategy of obedience. The Word without the Spirit produces legalism, while the Spirit without the Word results in "a zeal, but not according to knowledge."

God's desire is for us to be authentic followers of Jesus Christ, revealing that authenticity by making decisions grounded in a strategy of obedience as we operate in His divine principle of success. This authenticity becomes evident only when we understand what God said, discern what He meant by what He said, and allow ourselves to be led by God the Holy Spirit.

From this spiritual posture, we are uniquely positioned to reveal the power of God as we live the abundant life that Christ came, suffered, and died on the Cross to provide for us. This life is most clearly displayed when those around us observe us living in a way that reflects Authentic Christian Behavior.

In the Apostle Paul's epistle to the church at Colossae, written while he was imprisoned in Rome, he seeks both to counteract heretical teaching and to exhort true believers toward Authentic Christian Behavior grounded in an accurate revelation and application of the Word of God. This dual effort, confronting error while exhorting holiness, is desperately needed in Christianity today.

There are many who profess faith in Christ yet maintain and teach religious opinions that contradict long-held, biblically authentic Christian doctrine. There are even church leaders who refuse to conform to established Christian attitudes, principles, and beliefs. Instead, they attempt to redefine biblical truth, establishing doctrines aligned not with God's Word, but with that which is demonic, all for personal gain.

Many believers have been influenced by false teachers and doctrines, wolves in sheep's clothing, for so long that they struggle to discern the authenticity of God's Word from the teachings of those they follow. They find it difficult to distinguish

between their own feelings and what God truly desires. They resist a strategy of obedience and then wonder why they do not experience divine success.

The reason is simple: they possess neither God's promise nor His process as guardrails for belief and behavior. The outcomes of their decisions are therefore predictable: spiritual chaos, weakness, dysfunction, and failure. Woe to those who sit under these prostitutes of the faith.

In Colossians 1:9-14 Paul writes these words:

(9) And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

(10) so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

(11) being strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy,

(12) giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

(13) He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

(14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

This is the foundation and basis we will use to have a discussion about how to gain and maintain a Godly perspective and thereby reveal our Authentic Christian Behavior, which secures divine success and victory in every area of our lives.

CHAPTER 1

First Things First

"…giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." – Colossians 1:12-14

If we are going to behave authentically as a Christian, as a follower of Christ, we must put first things first. We will not possess the spiritual capacity to exhibit Authentic Christian Behavior until we authentically become Christians. Being an Authentic Christian means that we have been delivered from darkness, translated into the Kingdom of Christ, redeemed and forgiven, all based upon the supremacy of Jesus Christ.

This means that we have accepted the redemptive work of Jesus Christ on the Cross for our sins, by faith. This means that we have faith in Jesus Christ, as the only begotten of God the Father. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that Jesus is God, and that Jesus came and suffered, and died, and rose from the grave for our sins. We believe that Jesus ascended back to heaven and is there now at the right hand of God the Father, interceding for us.

However, we must go beyond mere belief. Even the devil believes these truths. Because of our belief we must ask Jesus to take control of our lives and to become our Lord and Savior. We must fully and unconditionally accept the sacrifice of His life on the Cross for our sins. We must repent of our sins and ask for Christ to forgive us. It is at this incredible moment that we receive God the Holy Spirit into our hearts as an authenticator that we really have been redeemed and forgiven.

We have in fact been born again. A spiritual birth that can only occur as we approach God acknowledging His holiness, His greatness, His sovereignty, and our great need for Him in our lives. We need Him because of our spiritual brokenness. We are sin sick and cannot heal ourselves. We need Jesus!

I am deeply grateful that we do not serve God under a closed heaven. But instead, the heavens are open to us to receive all that God has purposed for us to have. We do not have to go to any man. We can go directly to God, by faith in accordance with His word and have all that Christ has desired for us to enjoy. And the first thing and the most important thing is His presence.

When we accept Christ's redeeming work on the Cross, we are acknowledging our guilt as sinners. We are acknowledging that we have sinned and deserved death in Heaven's great court of law. We deserved death and could not redeem ourselves. The price was too high for us. We did not have the capacity or the resources to compensate for the requirements of the Law. But thank God the Father for Jesus God the Son, for He has redeemed us.

Jesus paid the price that we could not pay. He was the perfect sacrifice that fully compensated the Law of God. Jesus bought us back from our slavery to sin. He recalled us from captivity to freedom. The price of redemption was so high that we can no longer belong to ourselves. True freedom now means belonging to God.

Let us never forget the awesome debt we owe. We now belong to Him. And it is in this place, where we surrender our will to the will of God without dispute, contention, or argument, that we experience complete victory and true success in every area of life. This surrender is motivated by His great love for us, perfectly displayed on the Cross.

"…in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." – Colossians 1:14

Paul reminds us in verse fourteen that the authentic Christian is not only redeemed, but we are also forgiven. All of our sins have been covered by the blood of Jesus Christ. This means that we are justified or declared forever not guilty of our sins. This restoration allows us to live in right fellowship with God as we confess our sins, repent, and receive His forgiveness.

We have been pardoned. We no longer bear any blame. We have been declared not guilty. The power of sin has been put away in our lives, not temporarily, but permanently. Through the Cross, the Lord Jesus Christ broke the power of sin and removed its guilt.

"For sin will not have dominion over you..." – Romans 6:14

The authentic Christian has been rescued from the domain of darkness. God has not left us alone. He has not left us to ourselves. God has not abandoned us. But instead, He has forcefully come to see about us and to take care of us. He has forcibly taken us back. Jesus Christ rescued us by His strong arm as a mighty conqueror. All this was made possible by His atoning death on the Cross.

God has removed us from the domain and authority of darkness and transferred us into the domain and authority of Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. Spiritual darkness no longer has any rights in our lives. Spiritual ignorance, sin, and misery no longer have any rights in our lives. We are dead to the ways of darkness. We have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of Light.

We now live in a realm of holiness, righteousness, wisdom, and joy. We have a new king. His name is King Jesus. We have a new purpose: to honor and glorify His holy name. We have been promoted. We have a new position. We praise and worship Jesus Christ. We are disciples of Christ and His servants from now, until the day we die, and even beyond. We have a new identity in Jesus. We have been transformed. The old has passed. The new has come forth.

We have been transformed by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, transformed as completely as a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. In Christ, we have been given an entirely new identity. Yet this identity cannot be fully understood or faithfully lived out until we first have a correct understanding of who God is.

We gain that understanding through the Word of God and prayer. These are not religious exercises, but the God-ordained process through which we come to know His Word, His character, and His Spirit. Through this growing understanding, we discover a foundational truth: God loves us deeply and is fully committed to our spiritual fruitfulness and increase.

From this place of revelation, trust begins to grow, even when we do not understand God's ways. As trust increases, faith increases. And because faith is the currency of heaven, obedience increases as well. With obedience comes greater revelation of God's word manifested in our lives.

Once we come to this proper understanding of who God is, we are finally able to discover and walk in who we truly are in Christ. We learn our rights and privileges as authentic children of God. We learn how to operate with the keys of the Kingdom of God. We learn how to advance God's Kingdom, bring Him glory, and walk in His purpose, power, and victory.

This is not an optional or elite calling. This is God's design for every believer. This is His plan for us to live an undefeated life, not untouched by trials, but victorious through faith, obedience, and transformation in Jesus Christ.

We struggle with sin now not because we must**,** but because at times we choose to. When we come into full spiritual awareness, when we truly understand that we are no longer who we once were, but have been fully transformed in Christ—something clicks. We *get it*. We really get it.

We realize that sin no longer has dominion over us. Its power has been broken, not because of our strength, but because we are no longer that person, the power of Christ has changed us.

We were once liars, but we have been transformed, so now we speak the truth. We were once sexually immoral, but we have been transformed, so now we pursue purity and holiness. We practice righteousness because we are the righteousness of God in Christ.

This is the revelation that changes everything: Behavior follows identity**.**

The moment we truly grasp who we are in Christ, we recognize that sin no longer controls us. And because this is true, we do not *practice* sin, not out of fear or legalism, but because it no longer aligns with who we are.

Holiness is not about pretending. It is about living consistently with our new nature. This is Authentic Christian living: walking in freedom, obedience, and victory because of who Christ has made us to be.

"We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin." - Romans 6:6

Authentic Christians reveal the inheritance that has already been purposed for those who qualify. We are qualified to receive the inheritance of God by birthright as a saint of God, as one who is an authentic spiritual child of God. This reality is validated by the indwelling power of God the Holy Spirit because of our faith in Jesus Christ, having received Him as our Lord and our Savior.

It is our faith in the blood of Jesus Christ's death on the Cross that qualifies us to both receive and reveal the inheritance of God. It is the indwelling presence of God the Holy Spirit that authenticates, validates and qualifies us. This is the way that God equips us with supernatural power to accomplish His will thereby bringing Him great glory.

The inheritance of God is the birthright of the authentic child of God, of the saints of God. First and foremost, our inheritance is Jesus Christ Himself. Through Him, we are granted deep and intimate access to His presence. It is His presence that breaks every bondage and secures victory in every circumstance of life.

This inheritance includes, but is not limited to the following: eternal salvation, deliverance from the penalty, power, and ultimately the presence of sin, joy, peace, love, prosperity, suffering, power, holiness, protection, courage, and

strength. To receive and live a life that reveals and identifies us as part of God's inheritance will automatically call us to a place of spiritual peculiarity.

This calling brings us to a place where we are required to serve and honor our new risen King Jesus. We will automatically go against the world, against the culture, against the norm. We will operate as ambassadors for Christ. We will operate as priests of the Most-High God. We are zealous to do God's work. We are quick to praise, worship, and honor the One who called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light, not only in the church, but every day, in every area of life, regardless of the perceived cost.

"No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and the world." – Luke 16:13

We must reveal what Christ has deposited within us. If we truly are authentic Christians God has placed His Holy Spirit, His glory inside of us, and it must be revealed. We are pregnant with a holy thing, a holy deposit of God the Holy Spirit. It will come out. It must come forth. It will be revealed because we continually open our hearts to the word of God by the power of God the Holy Spirit.

The glory is made manifest because we choose to believe and apply the truth of God's word to our lives. We seek to know what God has said and what He meant by what He said. His glory within us is revealed as our faith grows through the disciplined pursuit of spiritual practices: Bible study, participation in church gatherings, prayer, fasting, fellowship with the saints, and more.

As our faith matures, our spiritual endurance increases. Our tenacity deepens. Our Christian actions, attitudes, and behaviors are transformed and strengthened. The inheritance of the saints is revealed regardless of our location or circumstances. By the power of the Word of God and the Spirit of God, we become people of spiritual integrity who consistently exhibit Authentic Christian Behavior.

"Every moment spent in obedience to God is a moment spent in preparation for our next spiritual promotion, our next miracle, our next breakthrough, and our destiny. Our disobedience aborts God's great design for our lives."

This reality places us at a crossroads of great spiritual consequence. It is a moment of both great opportunity and great danger, for it is also a place where spiritual deception can easily take root. When we profess to be Christians yet live lives that reveal no inheritance, no evidence of God's glory, our profession must be examined.

If we claim to possess saving faith in Jesus Christ while holding spiritual beliefs or opinions that contradict the doctrines of Scripture, we are in error. If we refuse to conform our lives to the long-established biblical principles and attitudes revealed in the Word of God, the authenticity of our relationship with God is rightly called into question.

At that point, divine observation leads us to one of two sobering conclusions. First, we may be deceived. We may have believed a lie, assuming we are saved when we are not. We may be religious, even deeply so, yet lack an authentic relationship with God the Father through faith in Jesus Christ, God the Son, as Lord and Savior.

Second, we may be genuinely saved but severely backslidden. Having once walked with God, we have drifted away. In this case, what is needed is a renewed encounter with God, a fresh touch, a new wind, and a renewed fire of the Holy Spirit.

The greatest deception of them all is when we lie to ourselves, when we are confident in our salvation, but we can show no consistent tangible signs of His glory.

"Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that He appeared in order to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps sinning has either seen Him or known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you.

Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God."
1John 3:4-10

"Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and cast out demons in Your name, and do many mighty works in Your name? And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness."
Matthew 7:21-23

The greatest strategy we can adopt is wholehearted obedience to the Word of God. This strategy leads to victory and true success in every area of life. It begins with acknowledging our absolute need for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Until we surrender our lives to His leadership and authority, we can accomplish nothing of eternal value and remain destined for separation from His presence. Therefore, it is imperative that we get this one thing right, even if we get nothing else right.

Take a moment now to ask Jesus to come into your heart and take control of your life, ensuring that you are truly positioned correctly before God. This is not a formality; it is a matter of eternal significance. If you find yourself unwilling to pray the prayer of salvation, that reluctance should be taken seriously. It may indicate that your spiritual condition is not what you believe it to be.

Below is a prayer you may use to declare Jesus Christ as your Lord and to surrender your life fully to Him.

Father, in the mighty name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I thank You for the gift of salvation and forgiveness through Your precious Son. Now, Lord Jesus, I invite You into my life. Please forgive me of all my sins. I repent of all my unrighteousness. Jesus, I receive You into my life as the Lord of my whole life. Come into my heart,

my soul, my mind, and my body. Change me on the inside. Lord Jesus, You are my Lord and my personal savior; help me rebuke the enemy, for Your name's sake. You are my advocate; please intercede on my behalf. Lord Jesus, I surrender totally to You. Use me as you will. It is written that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord. Lord Jesus, please be the Lord in my life, and in my prayers as I pray in Your precious name. Amen.

In conclusion, Paul's prayer is not centered on character formation. Ultimately, it focuses on what Jesus has already accomplished on the Cross, who Christ eternally is, and what our appropriate response to Him must be. Spiritual maturity is never sustained by human effort alone; it is sustained by revelation. It is sustained by a clear understanding of deliverance, redemption, and the absolute supremacy of Christ.

Before we were strengthened, before we were patient, before we were joyful, something decisive occurred, we were delivered. Paul speaks in the past tense. This is not a future hope; it is a completed act. Scripture does not minimize darkness. It identifies it as a power, an organized authority that once held us captive, if we are now authentic Christians. Darkness is not merely ignorance; it is dominion.

Before we were united with Christ, we were not simply lost; we were bound. God did not negotiate with darkness. He did not reform it, manage it, or coexist with it. He delivered us from it. Salvation is not self-improvement; it is a rescue. Deliverance was not gradual, it was decisive. We were removed from one realm and placed into another.

Because we have been delivered, darkness no longer has rightful authority over us. It may harass, accuse, or attempt to intimidate, but it does not rule us. Understanding this truth is essential for spiritual confidence and effective spiritual warfare.

Yet deliverance is only half of the story. God does not rescue us and leave us without a home. He transfers us. The word translated carries the meaning of relocation, reassignment, and transfer of authority. Salvation is a change of citizenship. We now live under a new King, a new authority, and a new system of values. We do not merely believe in a kingdom, we belong to one.

This kingdom is neither harsh nor distant. It is ruled by “His dear Son.” The word *dear* speaks of affection, delight, and intimate relationship. In Jesus Christ, authority and love are perfectly united. Spiritual growth accelerates when believers live as kingdom citizens rather than spiritual refugees, when obedience flows from belonging rather than fear.

Our position in the Kingdom of God rests upon redemption. Redemption means that a price was paid for our freedom. That freedom was not purchased through human effort, moral behavior, or good intentions, but through the blood of Jesus Christ. The Cross is not symbolic; it is substitutionary. As a result, our forgiveness is neither partial nor conditional. In Christ, our sins are forgiven fully, finally, and freely.

Where forgiveness is understood, guilt loses its authority. An Authentic Christian who continually struggles with condemnation is, at that point, struggling to understand redemption.

It is therefore essential that we put first things first and make, and keep, the main thing the main thing. May the grace of Christ abound toward us as we seek to honor Him and to live lives worthy of our Lord, our Savior, and our King.

CHAPTER 2

The Practical Spiritual Approach

"And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding…" – Colossians 1:9

Now that we have been qualified to live authentically in a way that honors Jesus Christ and brings Him glory, by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, we are prepared to move forward to the next step. I believe that in every God-desired spiritual outcome, there exists a divine process. God establishes a specific way that guarantees the outcome He intends.

We see this clearly in Scripture as we understand that God is a covenant God. He operates through covenant relationships. In simple terms, this means *if we do our part, then we can count on God to do His part*. This "*if–then*" reality is evident in the divine processes of salvation, generosity, marriage, and many other areas of life. When we obey God according to His Word, He is faithful to respond according to His Word.

In fact, this truth goes even deeper. If we discover an authentic "*if–then*" promise in Scripture that applies to our specific situation, and we faithfully do our part, it is accurate to say that God is not only willing to do His part, He is obligated by His own Word to do so. There is no stronger guarantee than anchoring our lives to the Word of God itself.

Because of this, it is not merely spiritually practical to follow the processes, principles, and strategies established by Christ—those designed to lead us into the abundant life He died for us to live, but it is also spiritually powerful. There is nothing God desires more than for His creation, particularly humanity, to function

as authentic Christians, true followers and disciples of Jesus Christ, revealing both His truth and His power.

I want to address one foundational principle of the Kingdom of God that we must embrace if we are to exhibit Authentic Christian Behavior. There are many who are truly saved, authentic Christians, yet they do not consistently demonstrate Authentic Christian Behavior. Their minds have not been renewed. They are experiencing a spiritual identity crisis.

They do not truly know who God is. As a result, they possess a diminished view of Him. And because they do not know who God is, they do not know who they are in Christ. They discount the Word of God and the power of God, and in doing so, they severely hinder the work of God in their own lives. Their unbelief, lack of knowledge, and absence of divine vision become barriers to spiritual growth.

These individuals live in constant dispute, contention, and argument with God over His Word and over who truly has authority in their lives. They debate whether there are areas where it is acceptable to go their own way. In certain areas, they live in rebellion against God, yet from their perspective, they believe they have valid excuses.

They hide behind familiar clichés such as, "*God knows my heart*," "*God is not finished with me yet*," or my personal favorite, "*I know I'm not what I should be, but I'm glad I'm not what I used to be*." These statements often represent the cries of stagnant, mediocre, and rebellious Christians attempting to justify their refusal to fully apply the Word of God to their lives.

We all need continual reminders of the blood-drenched Cross and the immeasurable love of Jesus Christ. Our fallen nature is never satisfied; it always seeks to expand its influence. We must either put it to death or be destroyed by it. We must remain vigilant against the subtle perversion of calling right what God has clearly declared wrong, even if that perversion comes through passive acceptance.

How is it possible that some Christians remain spiritually immature, shallow, petty, competitive, and divisive? The answer is simple: they have not understood or embraced the biblical process of *application*. This is the practical spiritual framework through which the Word of God is applied to our lives to produce guaranteed, divinely positive results.

The biblical process of application is a continuum consisting of three essential activities:

1. Knowing what to do
2. Knowing how and why to do it
3. Then actually doing what is required

Let us begin with the first step, knowing what to do. To accomplish this, we must continually acquire knowledge of God's Word as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. We must know what God has said, and we must understand what He meant by what He said. We must discern what God intends and desires for us to do.

This requires an active pursuit of both the Word of God and the Spirit of God—that is, His presence. We must cultivate a posture that relentlessly seeks accurate spiritual knowledge and correct information. Above all else, we must be anchored in the truth of God's Word.

Jesus is the Truth. He is the Word of God made flesh. The Holy Scriptures are Truth. The Holy Spirit is Truth.

"When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth…"
John 16:13

Here are some foundational truths that we need to be convinced of:

- Jesus is real, He is God, He alone is the Savior of the world.
- The passionate powerful prayers of the righteous impact God.
- Authentic Christians are the righteousness of God.
- What we believe will determine what we do.
- Our identity comes from who God says we are.
- We are spiritual children of God by spiritual rebirth.
- As Authentic Christians we are members of the body of Christ.
- We are complete in Christ Jesus. We have everything we need.
- Everything works together for the good of the Authentic Christian.
- Nothing can separate us from the love of God, in Christ Jesus.
- Authentic Christians are citizens of heaven.

- Authentic Christians have not been given a spirit of fear. We don't make decisions based upon fear, but based upon the Word of God.
- Authentic Christians have been appointed to bear good spiritual fruit.
- Authentic Christians are God's temple by the indwelling God the Holy Spirit.
- Authentic Christians are empowered to do all things through Christ.
- Our mission is to be obedient to the Word of God, no matter what.
- We are called to be kind, loving, and encouraging of others.
- We must have unity, harmony, and fellowship with God, for it is there that He commands a blessing.
- We must repent of our sins and we must forgive others.
- We must submit ourselves to the authority of Christ and to those who God has put in authority over us.
- We must have a humble spirit.
- Authentic Christians are free from the bondage of sin.
- In Christ Jesus, we are blessed and the evil one cannot touch us.

Once we have committed to step one, the continual acquisition of accurate spiritual knowledge, we are prepared to move into step two. In this stage, we seek to understand *why* the knowledge of God's Word matters and *how* it is to be most effectively applied to our lives.

To operate correctly in step two, we must adopt the proper mindset and perspective. This is a critical point in the process, and it is also a place where many people become stuck. At this stage, we can feel confident and accomplished. We have gained knowledge. We know spiritual things. We may even know more than those around us. We can quote Scripture and recount Bible stories.

However, this can be a dangerous place if we are unwilling to move forward. Step two requires that we understand *why* the knowledge we possess is important and *how* to practically apply it to our lives so that God's desired outcome is achieved. The danger lies in becoming informed without being transformed.

At this point, information has increased, but inward change has not occurred. Our thinking remains largely unchanged, and as a result, our behavior remains largely

the same. We may know more about the Word of God, yet still carry the same rebellious attitudes and patterns of behavior. Our minds have not been renewed, and we remain conformed to the world in far too many areas of life.

Nevertheless, we often feel better about our spiritual condition because we can now impress others with our knowledge. We have been informed, not in order to be transformed, but in order to perform and impress. God, however, is not impressed. Above all else, He desires our transformation into His likeness. Step two is the bridge that leads to transformation and to the outward revelation of that transformation through Authentic Christian Behavior.

For many, this step presents a significant obstacle. The first and most important question that must be answered is this: *Why should I apply the knowledge of God's Word to my life?* While the answer may seem obvious, many people struggle to respond honestly and clearly.

Some fail to see that applying God's Word is truly best for them. They evaluate their spiritual condition through a lens of rational comfort, saying, "*Everything is fine the way it is. There is no need to make the changes God's Word requires*." Their attention is fixed on what they believe they will have to give up.

They justify their choices with statements such as, "*I enjoy drinking, and I don't get drunk that often*," or "*I like the relationship I'm in. It's not wrong if we're committed to each other, besides, everyone is doing it*." In these moments, they value what they currently possess more than what God desires to give them in exchange for their sin. They are unconvinced that obedience to God's Word will actually result in something better.

Change feels too risky. Like Adam and Eve, they believe they can go their own way, contrary to God's Word, without experiencing serious consequences. They rationalize sin as normal, harmless, or insignificant. "*It's just a little sin*," they say. "*This holy living thing isn't for me. God knows my heart*."

The truth is sobering: some have been spiritually ill for so long that they no longer desire healing. They do not want to be perfected in the Spirit; they want to be validated in the flesh.

The reasons we must apply the knowledge of God's Word to our lives are many. First, disobedience, failure to apply God's Word, creates separation from the

presence of God and halts spiritual growth. It hinders the movement of God in our lives and suppresses the power of the Holy Spirit.

Second, disobedience brings a curse, while obedience brings blessing. Obedience positions us to receive all that God has purposed for us.

Third, obedience is what is best for us personally and what is best for the Kingdom of God. So many positive outcomes are connected to obedience. Our obedience reveals the power of God, the love of God, and the character of God. In doing so, it provides the greatest opportunity for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

In Numbers chapter thirteen, we can see the negative and positive consequences of not understanding "why" it is important to apply God's word to our lives.

"At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land. They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. They gave Moses this account: 'we went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. The Amalikites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan'. Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, 'We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.' But the men who had gone up with him said, 'We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are.' And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, 'The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are great in size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.'" - Numbers 13:25-33

As we know, the spies effectively persuaded the entire nation to disregard the Word of God, placing greater confidence in what they saw, what they thought,

and how they felt. This account illustrates the consequences of failing to understand *why* we must apply God's Word to our lives.
When we do not understand the "why," several negative behaviors emerge:

1. We focus more on what we see, hear, and feel than on the Word of God.
2. We develop low spiritual self-esteem and a distorted sense of identity.
3. We become problem-focused rather than solution-focused.
4. We fear people and their opinions more than we fear God.
5. We lack true confidence in God's Word, offering only lip service to it.
6. We develop a spirit of "cannot," even when God has clearly said, "You can."
7. We cultivate a spirit of drama, anxiety, and gossip instead of peace and calm.

By contrast, when we *do* understand the "why" behind applying God's Word, we see markedly different outcomes:

1. We place the Word of God first, and everything else becomes secondary.
2. We live with a clear awareness of what we are capable of as we follow God's Word.
3. We are not intimidated by the enemy or by the opinions of others; we care more about what God has said than what people think or do.
4. We remember what God has already done in our lives, which strengthens our confidence that He will continue to be faithful.
5. We quiet confusion and fear by speaking the truth of God's Word and standing firmly upon it. We remain calm in the face of trials and can be trusted to lead in a way that honors God.

Every day, each of us makes choices that determine which kind of leader we will be.

Once we have answered the question *"Why should we apply God's Word to our lives?"* the next question naturally follows: *"How do we apply the Word of God to our lives?"* The answer is straightforward, though not always easy. It requires intentionality and commitment.

There are two essential steps. First, we must acquire accurate knowledge of the Word of God as it applies to our specific situation. Whether the issue involves relationships, finances, sexuality, personal decisions, or any other area of life, Scripture contains God's instruction. If we struggle to discern that instruction, we

should pray and ask Christ to lead us to a spiritually mature believer, someone whose life reflects the fruit of the Spirit and who will not dilute the truth of God's Word. Such a person can help us rightly understand what God requires of us.

We should not be surprised when God's will challenges us. More often than not, it is not what we would have chosen. It is not the path we would naturally prefer. God's desires are frequently larger than we are, and that very reality confirms their divine origin.

This is the critical moment when we must be led by the Holy Spirit rather than by our flesh. What matters most is no longer what we think, how we feel, or what others say. What matters, now and always, is what God desires. His ways are not our ways, and He is not like man. Human logic cannot be successfully applied to divine commands.

Once we have clearly understood what God is calling us to do, through His Word and by His Spirit, the only thing left is to trust Jesus Christ. We can fully trust Him to do exactly what His Word declares.

If doubt arises, we need only look to the blood-drenched Cross. Consider that Jesus, though fully God, humbled Himself to become human. He lived a perfect life, endured rejection, persecution, false accusation, abuse, and death on a cross, all for our sins. He did this while we were still in rebellion against Him and His Kingdom.

Jesus entered our condition and bore our burden, proving both His love and the love of the Father for us. There are many things we may legitimately question in life, but Christ's love, faithfulness, and care for us are not among them.

Therefore, trust Jesus, because He alone is truly trustworthy.

"Brothers, do not be children in understanding. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature." – 1Corinthians 14:20

Step three in the divine process of application is the development of wisdom, spiritual integrity that empowers us to do what we know we should do according to the Word of God. Like the first two steps, this step is not a destination but a continual process. Each step is part of an ongoing journey rather than a single moment of arrival.

At this point, we possess accurate information, the knowledge of God's Word. We also understand the *why* and the *how*, the purpose and the method for applying that Word to our lives. What remains is obedience: the wisdom to do what God desires us to do.

To walk in this wisdom, we must first acknowledge a fundamental reality. We have a natural problem that can be solved only by a supernatural remedy. By nature, we are content with man-made success. We desire the benefits of obedience without the sacrifice obedience requires. So much so, in fact, that we redefine spiritual success in ways that are completely foreign to the character of God.

Humanism teaches that we can possess divine power without pain or suffering. It tells us that giftedness excuses disobedience and that spiritual success is measured by numbers, influence, and financial gain. God says otherwise. God says, *no pain—no power*. He commands, "Be holy, for I am holy." Jesus teaches that true spiritual success is measured by obedience that multiplies the Kingdom of God.

Though we struggle naturally to walk in the wisdom that most honors God, He has graciously provided a supernatural remedy. God is calling us out.

Just as He called Abraham, He is calling us out. Just as He called Moses, David, and Jacob, He is calling us out. None of these individuals were spiritual heroes before God intervened in their lives. Abraham was called out of comfort. Moses was called out of both palace and desert, out of power and out of obscurity. David was called out while tending sheep in a lowly and unnoticed place. Jacob was called out of deception and a dark destiny; he was a thief when God encountered him.

And God is calling us out.

It does not matter where we are spiritually, where we live, or what we are currently doing—God is calling us out. He is calling us out of spiritual mediocrity. He is calling us to lay down our excuses and take hold of divine vision and purpose. He is calling us out of being "closet Christians" and "Sunday saints." Jesus is calling us to allow His light to shine through us, fully and continuously, for His glory. He is calling us to use our platforms as platforms for Him. He is calling us to advance the cause of Christ, not the cause of men.

Will we accept the call to a spiritual journey marked by greatness and excellence for God? Will we dare to walk in the favor of God? Will we refuse to be satisfied until the fire of the Holy Spirit burns within us, unquenchable and alive? Will we persist until that inward fire ignites an outward flame, so that all who encounter us see it and marvel? Will we dare to reveal the greatness of God and the reality of His inheritance, alive within us, to all people?

God is calling us out. The question remains: *What will our response be?*

"You who are busy learning the Scriptures but not living them are like a man counting other people's cattle while owning none of his own."
—Wise saying

God has placed Himself within the authentic Christian. He is calling us to be filled with His holy presence to overflowing, so that His life spills into the lives of everyone we encounter. Do not be surprised when the world responds to authentic Christian behavior by calling it foolishness. The world will often mock, oppose, and speak abusively against those who refuse to participate in its ways of evil.

But wisdom walks forward anyway—obedient, aflame, and unashamed.

> *"Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does." – 1Peter 4:1-6*

When we commit to walking in divine wisdom and living as authentic Christians, we must ask an honest question: *Is it safe?* The world will oppose us, just as it opposed Jesus Christ. Yet, there is no safer place to be than in the will of God.

Will it cost us? Most certainly.
Will it be inconvenient? Absolutely, if we are doing it correctly.
Will we be popular? Not with the world, but assuredly with God.
Will Jesus protect us? Without question.
Will it be enriching? Yes, in every way imaginable.
Will God bless us? Yes, beyond our greatest dreams.
Is it worth it? Without hesitation, yes.

God's strategy of obedience is the greatest strategy we could ever adopt. We will never regret standing firmly on the Word of God. There is no greater joy than hearing our Savior say, *"Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your Master."*

Obedience is the required heart posture of the authentic Christian**.** God's love assures us that He cares deeply about our joy, our peace, our satisfaction, and our prosperity. He is a good Father who delights in blessing His children.

But God is not *more* concerned with these outcomes than He is with our obedience to His holy Word. In fact, obedience is the guaranteed pathway to them. Our joy flows from obedience. Our peace is sustained by obedience. Our satisfaction is rooted in obedience. Our prosperity, spiritual and otherwise, is secured through obedience.

God does not call us to obey in order to withhold His blessings. He called us to obey to position us for them. Obedience aligns us with His will, keeps us within His covering, and opens our lives to the fullness of what He has already promised. This is not restriction. This is freedom. This is the life of the authentic Christian: obedient, aligned, and blessed.

Now is the time for us to embrace the pain of transition, from one level of glory to the next. Now is the time to make up our minds and adopt a fully committed posture. It is time to move into a higher, more spiritually prosperous place in Jesus Christ, all for His glory.

It is time to stop turning back from our spiritual destiny simply because the path is uncomfortable or inconvenient. It is time to fully embrace the challenge of our enemy. It is time to confront what has long been attacking us, that we may join Jesus not only in the fellowship of His sufferings, but also in the power of His resurrection.

It is time for the sleeper to awaken. It is time to rise and soar to new heights for the glory of Jesus Christ, our risen King.

The biblical process of divine application is a gift from God to all His spiritual children. It is a key that operates within the Kingdom of God. When used rightly, it unlocks and secures spiritual doors, granting access to abundant life, spiritual success, spiritual victory, and spiritual prosperity.

Do not disregard this great principle. It will prove to be either your ruin or your reward.

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."
Matthew 6:33

CHAPTER 3

A Life That Reveals Alignment With God

"…so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;" – Colossians 1:10

The question before us is simple yet profound: *Are we saved or not?* If we are truly saved, it will be impossible not to reveal it. Salvation inevitably manifests itself.

When we are saved, we possess the indwelling power of God the Holy Spirit. He imparts vision and insight, provides comfort, reveals truth, and supplies supernatural focus and strength. He enlarges our capacity to love, strengthens our willingness to serve, and ignites within us a passion for the worship of Jesus Christ. He works all things together for our good and empowers us to live a victorious life.

We may, at times, drift away from God, but we will always return. We may struggle with sin in certain areas of our lives, but we will continue to repent and wage war against it. A true child of God can never grow comfortable with sin, because sin is fundamentally opposed to our spiritual nature. It contradicts who we are at the deepest level.

With this understanding, it becomes essential that we establish a clear and practical spiritual standard, one that defines what others should see and experience in our lives when we are walking in Authentic Christian Behavior.

Based on Colossians 1:10, a life that is authentically aligned with the character of Jesus Christ, His Word and His Spirit, will result in at least four visible outcomes:

1. living a life worthy of the death of Jesus Christ
2. living a life that fully pleases Christ
3. bearing good spiritual fruit
4. increasing in the knowledge of God (which, as we have noted, is step one in the biblical process of divine application)

In this chapter, we will address the first three outcomes. The fourth will be explored in the following chapter.

Spiritual maturity is not measured merely by belief, knowledge, or experience, but by how one walks, how one lives day by day in response to Jesus Christ. To walk worthy does not mean earning salvation. Rather, it means living in a way that reflects the immeasurable value of what has already been given. A worthy walk is not about perfection. It is about alignment, with Christ, with His gospel, and with the calling we have received to honor Him and advance His Kingdom. While it is not about achieving perfection, it *is* about possessing a sincere desire to honor Jesus above all else.

If we are truly operating as authentic Christians, we will increasingly live lives worthy of the death of Jesus Christ. This means there are certain things to which we are fully committed, and other things from which we are fully committed to abstain. Living a holy life, the life to which God calls us, begins with honest transparency before Him. We must "own the truth" about who we really are spiritually when we come before God.

We stop attempting to manipulate God through complaints about our woundedness, about how others have hurt us and how we believe we deserve better, and instead begin our prayers by acknowledging our waywardness. We are no longer afraid to admit that we have been wrong in many areas of our lives. We have transgressed God's Word and taken His love, care, and provision for granted. We bring our true inward condition before Jesus Christ and confess that our spirits are impoverished without Him.

We stop trying to hide the sickness of our souls, believing that if we could somehow conceal it, we might preserve a good reputation before both God and people. We abandon childish behavior, pouting, resisting, and protesting when things do not go our way, in hopes of eliciting a response from God that suits our desires. Most importantly, we stop defending ourselves against the Word of God

and finally embrace the pain of transformation, the pain of becoming who God has called us to be.

It is a sobering and powerful declaration to say aloud, *"I want to live a life that is worthy of the death of Jesus Christ."* Say it now. Then turn it into a prayer: *"God, please help me live a life that is worthy of the death of Jesus Christ."*

When we truly consider who Jesus Christ is and the price He paid for our sins, a debt we could never repay, we recognize that we owe Him everything. All He asks in return is that we live lives worthy of His sacrifice on the Cross. Colossians describes this as a worthy life, a life God Himself would approve, admire, and value. It is a life that carries eternal weight and kingdom significance.

A worthy life bears testimony to the goodness of Jesus Christ. It points others to God's love and grace for humanity. It contributes meaningfully to the Kingdom of God and positively impacts those we encounter. Such a life is intentional about advancing Christ's Kingdom. It reflects excellence, spiritual integrity, and diligence. We become worshipers rather than complainers, legacy builders rather than consumers, world changers rather than bystanders.

A worthy life reveals the love of God, the grace of God, and the power of God. It is faithful and consistent. It can be relied upon. It says "*yes*" to God's purposes. It takes the Word of God seriously, not as a religious exercise, but as a matter of life and death. We genuinely strive to live lives worthy of the death of Jesus Christ.

Paul's exhortation to live worthy is not about comparing ourselves to others, but about consistency with the character and Word of Christ. The question is not, *"How do I appear?"* but rather, *"Does my life reflect Jesus?"* A worthy life carries eternal significance. It contributes to God's purposes rather than merely consuming spiritual resources. It seeks first the Kingdom of God and invests in what lasts. Such a life is not loud or self-promoting, but it is profoundly effective.

A worthy life builds up rather than tears down. It strengthens faith rather than draining it. Wherever an authentic Christian goes, something improves: clarity, peace, truth, hope, love. Our credibility is found in the consistency between what we profess and how we live. A worthy life does not collapse under scrutiny. Integrity is what remains when there is no audience to impress.

Excellence matters to God. It is time for us to stop hiding the poverty of our spirits and covering our inner weakness. God is calling us to repentance rather than self-defense. He is calling us to stop excusing spiritual immaturity and to begin addressing it. It is time to grow up spiritually. It is time to stop acting like stubborn, spoiled children. It is time to let go of false appearances, to stop resisting spiritual growth, and to step fully into the life to which God has called us.

"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." – Philippians 1:27

When we genuinely give God our best, when we offer our fullest effort to live a life worthy of the death of Jesus Christ, we are, by necessity, pressing into full agreement with God. We become aligned with the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the person of God. This alignment reveals the preeminence of God in our lives.

He is first, because He *is* first, and rightly so. Our mission becomes singular: to please God in all things. We may not accomplish this perfectly, but imperfection does not negate intent. Our foremost desire is to honor God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit above all else. We worship God alone. There are no other gods. Our lifestyle makes His preeminence unmistakably clear.

Follow us closely. There is no pretense. We are not performing or pretending to be something we are not. Who we are on Sunday is who we are on Friday night. Observe us in the workplace, there are no contradictions there either. We do not set our standard according to the expectations of people, but according to the Word of God.

We consistently ask ourselves difficult and necessary questions: *Is God satisfied with our effort? Does He find delight in our lives? Does our life bring Him joy?* As a result, others are uplifted in our presence. We esteem people rather than diminish them. We overcome obstacles through faith in God's Word and confidence in His character. We are flexible and resilient; not everything unsettles us.

We are doers, not excuse-makers. We can be relied upon to produce positive results because we operate according to divine principles, strategies, and processes. Our lives demonstrate consistency, integrity, and effectiveness.

This kind of life not only pleases God, it blesses others. God is not interested in compartmentalized obedience. He desires alignment in every area of life: worship, daily decisions, relationships, work, and every human responsibility. The issue is not merely whether effort is being made, but whether the direction of our hearts truly satisfies God.

God is not impressed by busyness. He is pleased by surrender. A life aligned with Him seeks God's approval above all else and values His smile far more than human praise.

"To the man who pleases Him (God), God gives wisdom, knowledge, and happiness (listed in order of importance), but to the sinner He gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God." Ecclesiastes 2:26

The next thing we will see in the life of the Authentic Christian as they commit to living a life that is fully in alignment with God is a life that bears good spiritual fruit. This is about righteous acts. This is about good deeds. This is about positive spiritual results. This is about obedience and the divine power that is released into the lives of those who are obedient to God's word.

"…I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit abide…" – John 15:16

We are all bearing spiritual fruit of some kind. That fruit will be either good or evil. All evil spiritual fruit is rooted in human selfishness. Galatians 5:19–21 provides a clear catalog of such fruit with each expression grounded in the fallen nature of humanity. At its core, evil fruit always involves placing ourselves ahead of God's Word.

When evil spiritual fruit is at work, it manifests in attitudes and behaviors such as impurity, sexual immorality, debauchery, idolatry, hatred, discord, anger, rebellion, jealousy, envy, factions, drunkenness, orgies, addictions, and indulgence of the flesh. It includes seeking our own interests rather than the interests of God or others, defending ourselves against the Word of God, insisting on being first at all times, and allowing what we think and how we feel to dominate our decisions.

By contrast, good spiritual fruit reveals itself through humility, patience, longsuffering, faithfulness, self-control, gentleness, goodness, dedication, trustworthiness, peace, joy, and love. When the Holy Spirit produces fruit in us through obedience to God's Word, discernment increases and tolerance for evil decreases. Over time, we reach a place where our very presence shifts the atmosphere. We become increasingly inclined toward the spiritual, toward the things of Jesus Christ, all for His glory.

The Apostle Paul directly connects a worthy life—a worthy walk—with fruitfulness. Spiritual fruit is the evidence of a spiritual life. When Christ rules, fruit grows. The indwelling Holy Spirit produces fruit that reflects the character of Jesus Christ. This is not religious performance; it is spiritual reality.

There is a clear and unmistakable contrast between spiritually destructive fruit and spiritually constructive fruit. Destructive fruit thrives wherever self-interest remains protected and unchallenged: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, hatred, discord, anger, rebellion, jealousy, envy, factions, drunkenness, addictions, indulgence of the flesh, and the pursuit of personal desires while claiming to pursue God. These behaviors are unacceptable before God and demonstrate misalignment with His Word and His character.

A life that is acceptable to God—a life that is worthy—requires surrender rather than self-defense. The good fruit revealed in the life of an authentic Christian includes love, joy, peace, goodness, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, steadfastness, patience, humility, dedication, and the like. These qualities strengthen the Church and sustain God-ordained service. They reflect leadership guided by the Spirit of God rather than driven by the natural man.

A worthy life does not operate according to impulse, emotion, or convenience. It leads spiritually. It submits natural desires to spiritual authority. This is the life God approves. This is the life that aligns with His will. This is the life that bears good fruit, not because it is perfect, but because it is yielded to the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

To live fully aligned with Jesus Christ, our lives must be led by the Holy Spirit, marked by spiritual integrity, and rich in good spiritual fruit. This is not a life of self-effort, but a life shaped by the supremacy of Christ, sustained by His power,

and expressed through obedience. This is the life that pleases the Lord Jesus Christ and leaves a lasting imprint on His Kingdom.

CHAPTER 4

Avoid Being A Spiritual Con-Artist

"…so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy,…" – Colossians 1:10-11

The anchor of the entire authentic Christian life is a correct, biblical understanding of the supremacy of Christ. If we are to live a mature spiritual life, we must clearly know both who Christ is and what He has done. This understanding, and its faithful application, establishes a shield of spiritual protection over our lives.

Jesus does not merely represent God; He reveals God. He *is* God. To see Christ is to see God, to behold His nature, His character, and His authority. Christ holds supremacy, authority, and inheritance over all creation. Everything was created by Him, through Him, and for Him, things visible and invisible, natural and spiritual alike. Christ sustains all creation; He holds everything together.

He is the head of the Church. He governs the Church. He defines the Church. The Church does not define Christ.

His resurrection establishes His supremacy even over death itself. He is not one among many; He is preeminent in all things. In Christ, all the fullness of God dwells. Nothing is lacking in Him, and nothing is divided. No mediator is needed. No additional revelation is required. No supplement to Christ exists.

Spiritual maturity stabilizes when we stop looking elsewhere for what already dwells fully in Jesus Christ. It is the Cross of Christ that reconciles all things to God.

It is the Cross that establishes peace between God and humanity through the shed blood of Jesus. This peace is not merely emotional comfort; it is restored relationship. What sin fractured, Christ reconciled.

Spiritual maturity is sustained by knowing:

1. Who Christ eternally is
2. What Christ has already done
3. Where we now belong
4. Who we are in Christ

The shield of God's protection is applied only to those who live by divine principles and strategies, those who walk in the spiritual strategy of obedience. It is through genuine obedience to God's Word that our true spiritual potential is revealed.

There is no such thing as *trying* to obey. We either obey, or we do not. We either give our best, or we do not. We either do what God requires, or we refuse. The idea of "trying" suggests that effort alone should be rewarded, regardless of outcome. Perhaps that idea has its place in a children's athletic league, but it has no place in the Kingdom of God.

God desires our best. It is only then that His grace is fully released into our circumstances. God's character does not endorse half-hearted obedience or participation-trophy Christianity. We did not *kind of* get saved. We did not *kind of* repent. We do not *kind of* live holy lives. We do not occasionally participate and expect divine approval.

Such a posture is unacceptable to God, and it should be unacceptable to us. We must reject mediocre Christianity, counterfeit spirituality, and performative faith. The Kingdom of God is not a stage for hypocrisy or deception.

"Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward."
Matthew 6:2

A person may be operating in hypocrisy if the following descriptions apply. Hypocrites seek the applause of people rather than the approval of God. They

desire to be seen by others more than to be known by God. They honor God with words and public actions, yet their hearts, their true affections, remain far from Him.

Hypocrites constantly test the boundaries of grace to see how much they can get away with. They attempt to manipulate God's mercy while resisting His authority. Their lives present a false witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

They never truly apprehend the Cross. They are religious without relationship. They are deceived and therefore never lay hold of the promises of heaven. They cannot reveal the power of God because they do not possess it. One cannot give what one does not have.

Hypocrites deceive others and hinder them from grasping the weighty truths of God. They are always being deceived and always deceiving. They are not acting as children of light, but as children of darkness. They focus on minor issues while neglecting major truths. The outside appears clean, but the inside is filled with greed and self-indulgence. They resemble whitewashed tombs, beautiful outwardly, yet inwardly full of death and corruption.

They know how to perform religious duties, but their motive is never to honor God. They are merely acting. They can read the signs of the sky but cannot interpret the Word of God. They are quick to instruct others, yet unwilling to submit to the very truth they proclaim.

Hypocrites are actors, people pretending to be someone they are not. Their lives are performative rather than transformative. They may even deceive themselves. The greatest lie is the one we tell ourselves: that God does not require holiness, that we can live outside His Word and still expect His blessing.

Our greatest defense against hypocrisy is found in God's Great Commandment. In Mark chapter twelve, when a scribe asked Jesus, *"Which commandment is the most important of all?"* Jesus answered in verses thirty and thirty-one:

"And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that He (Jesus) answered them well, asked Him (Jesus), "Which commandment is the most important of them all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind

and with all your strength." The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself". There is no other commandment greater than these."
Mark 12:28-31

Christ goes on in John 13:34-35 to clarify His second greatest command, to "*love our neighbor as ourself*". There Jesus declares the following:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.
John 13:34-35

When we fully embrace the concept of loving God with all of ourselves and loving our neighbors as ourselves, yea, to love our neighbors as God has loved us, there is a great change in us in every aspect of our being. This application of God's word to our lives will propel us to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth have been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." - Matthew 28:18-20

The Authentic Christian will not find spiritual satisfaction until his or her life bears clear testimony to the saving power of faith in the person of Jesus Christ and to His great atoning work on the Cross. We will not be satisfied in the Spirit until our lives lead others to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. But this is not the end, it is the beginning.

From there, we move forward into spiritual maturity through the power of the Holy Spirit by actively participating in discipleship. We do not merely live in a way that plants seeds of faith; we intentionally teach others how to grow spiritually and become disciple-makers themselves. We are disciples who make disciples, who make disciples, who make disciples. This is the Kingdom strategy of Jesus Christ for reaching the world and advancing His Kingdom.

If we are not discipling, we are out of order in the Kingdom of God. If a church is not discipling, it is not functioning as an authentic New Testament Christian Church. God has given every authentic Christian, both individuals and organizations, one primary assignment, revealed in the Great Commission. There are many methods to accomplish this mission, but every Christian activity must ultimately serve this singular purpose: that all whom we encounter would love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, holding nothing back, and love their neighbors as God has loved them.

When we live this way, the power of God is released as a witness to the world that Jesus Christ is real and that we are His disciples. This is accomplished when we remain focused on the Great Commission.

The Great Commission is a command directed to every disciple of Jesus Christ. It is not reserved for pastors, preachers, deacons, elders, apostles, bishops, prophets, or evangelists alone. This command belongs to every person who has been spiritually born again through faith in Jesus Christ. It is a calling that requires diligence and humility, for it is impossible to fulfill apart from the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit. The Great Commission is not denominational, racially biased, gender biased, or financially focused. It is wholly and unapologetically Kingdom-focused, because there is nothing more vital and nothing humanity needs more than the saving and transforming work of Jesus Christ.

Hypocrites are spiritual con artists who measure success by possessions, influence, and numbers. While God is indeed a multiplier, His character places far greater value on obedience than on anything that can be consumed or destroyed. Hypocrites believe there is a substitute for obedience, but this belief is a destructive lie.

Above all, obey. Even if obedience leads through suffering - obey. Even if God calls us to surrender our most treasured possession, even our future - obey. Even if His Word leads us through the valley of the shadow of death or into the refining crucible - obey.

In all circumstances, regardless of cost or consequence, obedience remains the divine priority. Only those who commit themselves fully to the strategy of obedience are empowered to live the truly abundant life. These are the ones who walk in the glory of the Lord at a deeper level. These are the ones God uses

mightily. These are the ones who leave a residue of His presence on the lives of everyone they encounter.

The question that now confronts us is this: *What truly matters to us?* Whatever holds the highest place in our hearts is what we pursue, what we seek, and what captures our attention first. It is where our time, energy, and resources naturally flow.

We do not need to ask what someone values most. We simply need to observe how they live—what they chase, where they go, and what they consistently choose.

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
Luke 12:34

Where is our treasure? This is the difference between a con artist, a pretender, a hypocrite and an Authentic Christian. Con artists are chasing after the applause of men and the accumulation of material possessions. Authentic Christians are chasing after the presence of God and the accumulation of spiritual treasure that will be stored up in heaven. What are we chasing after? What are we focused on? What messages are we sending to those that are watching us? Do we fit in with the crowd or are we dramatically spiritually peculiar people? There is a call of God on our lives, today more than ever. Who are those who will answer?

Authentic Christians have the spiritual ability to see Jesus Christ, even in their pain, and focus on Him and His word. They can look past the physical and spiritual hinderances. They can look past the challenges of their surrounding situations that seem in the natural to be impossible. They don't hold themselves back spiritually by being concerned about the opinions or voices of those around them. They are focused on the audience of One. The are locked in on His presence, His word, His will, and His way. And nothing will prevent their surrender to God's will for their lives.

If we are to gain and maintain Authentic Christian Behavior, we must commit to rising spiritually, being reinforced by the power of God, and becoming resilient in

spiritual things. Spiritual growth is not accidental. It is intentional, progressive, and necessary. The Christian life was never meant to be static or stagnant. From the moment of salvation, God begins a lifelong process of transformation, moving believers from spiritual infancy into mature, resilient, and powerful followers of Christ.

Paul's prayer in Colossians 1:10–11 reveals a pattern of spiritual development: rising spiritually, reinforcement of the power of God, and resilience (the toughness to endure hardship in a way that honors God). These are not separate experiences but interconnected realities of a growing faith.

As we seek to rise spiritually, we turn to Paul's prayer that believers would *"walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God."* This verse assumes motion. Growth is expected. Development is normal. Stagnation is not.

This passage speaks directly to spiritual immaturity and delivers a clear message: there comes a time when it is necessary to grow up. One cannot remain a spiritual infant forever. There is nothing wrong with being a spiritual baby at the beginning of one's relationship with God. New believers require care, instruction, and patience. Scripture affirms this reality.

However, Scripture also repeatedly warns against remaining in that state for too long. Arrested spiritual development occurs when a person has the capacity to grow but chooses comfort over discipline. Spiritually immature believers are easily offended, easily discouraged, and easily distracted. They depend heavily on others for motivation, direction, and stability.

Over time, immaturity becomes dangerous, not only to the individual, but also to the community surrounding them. God's desire is not to shame spiritual infants, but to invite them into maturity. He calls His people forward, upward, and onward into a life that reflects growth, fruitfulness, and increasing alignment with Christ.

Spiritual growth is like swimming upstream. There is no floating forward. If you stop moving, you drift backward. Culture, temptation, and pressure constantly pull against spiritual progress. Growth requires intentional effort, prayer, study, obedience, and surrender. To rise spiritually means choosing growth even when it is uncomfortable. It means embracing conviction instead of resisting it. It means allowing God to stretch you beyond what feels familiar.

Knowledge alone does not equal maturity. Many believers know Scripture but do not live it. Spiritual growth happens when revelation becomes application. Mature believers don't just ask, "*What does the Word say*?" They ask, "*How must I change in response*?" Obedience transforms knowledge into wisdom. Growth happens when truth moves from the head to the heart to the hands.

Spiritual adulthood is marked by responsibility, discernment, and stability. Mature believers do not require constant emotional reinforcement. They are anchored in truth, not tossed by circumstance. This maturity allows believers to handle correction without offense, challenges without quitting, and blessings without pride. Arrested development keeps people reactive. Maturity makes them responsive.

Every believer begins untrained. But God never intended for His people to remain defenseless. Growth equips believers for spiritual battle. An unskilled soldier panics under pressure. A seasoned warrior stands firm, knowing how to use their weapons. Rising spiritually transforms fearful recruits into disciplined warriors, alert, prepared, and confident in the authority God has given them.

"Do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O little Israel, for I Myself will help you, declares the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. See, I will make you a threshing sledge, new and sharp, with many teeth. You will thresh the mountains and crush them and reduce them to chaff." – Isaiah 41:14-15

As Authentic Christians, not only are we to rise spiritually, but we are also to allow God's power to continually reinforce us. Paul continues, praying that believers would be *"strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might."* Growth without power leads to frustration. Power without maturity leads to pride. God develops both together. Spiritual power does not come from self-effort or personality. It flows from relationship with God. The focus shifts from human ability to divine enablement. When believers stop trying to manufacture strength and start drawing from God's power, spiritual life becomes sustainable rather than exhausting.

Faith grows through testing. Every challenge that is faced and overcome reinforces confidence in the faithfulness of God. What once shook us now strengthens us. This strengthening begins internally before it is ever seen

externally. Circumstances may remain difficult, but the believer becomes stronger within them.

Spiritual strength operates much like physical strength, it increases through exercise. Prayer, worship, obedience, and trust all develop spiritual endurance and resilience. A faith that is never tested remains theoretical. A faith that is regularly exercised becomes unshakable.

Mature believers recognize spiritual authority. Situations that once intimidated them no longer hold the same power. Fear loses its grip as faith takes its rightful place. This does not imply the absence of difficulty; rather, it reflects confidence in the midst of difficulty, a settled assurance that God is present, faithful, and in control.

Paul's prayer points toward spiritual disciplines that reinforce power:

- Prayer aligns the believer with God's will
- Praise shifts focus from problems to promises
- Love reflects Christ's character
- Humility keeps power from corrupting
- Worship deepens intimacy
- Obedience activates authority

Speaking the Word aloud reinforces truth internally and releases life externally. God's Word spoken in faith carries power. The phrase "According to His Glorious Might" defines the standard of strength, not according to human limits, but according to God's glory. The supply is limitless. The challenge is learning to rely on it.

"Where the word of the king is, there is power." – Ecclesiastes 8:4

Christ desires for us to be resilient. Strength produces endurance. Endurance produces resilience. Paul describes a believer capable of standing firm under pressure. Resilient believers are not easily knocked down. They recover quickly because they know who they belong to. Setbacks no longer signal defeat; they signal resistance. Resilience is learned through experience. Over time, believers recognize the enemy's tactics and refuse to be intimidated. They fight smarter, not harder.

Resilient faith is serious faith. It does not bow to pressure, whether from people, culture, or desire. Conviction outweighs convenience. Spiritual resilience does not harden the heart. It strengthens resolve while keeping compassion intact. You become firm in faith without becoming cold in spirit. Resilient believers bend without snapping. Pressure reveals strength rather than weakness. Trials refine instead of destroy. There is a holy confidence that develops, an inner resolve that says, "*I'm not quitting*." It says, "*It will take more than that*." This stamina is the fruit of consistent spiritual conditioning. They are up for the challenge of attacking evil aggressively.

Survival of the fittest applies spiritually. Those who train endure. Those who prepare overcome. Victory favors the faithfully committed. Resilient believers are ready for the test because they've already decided the outcome. They are up for the challenge, dedicated, and unwavering, not because they trust themselves, but because they trust God.

"The people that know their God shall be strong." – Daniel 11:32

Spiritual maturity is a journey. Authentic Christians are committed to rising. Rising leads to reinforcement. Reinforcement produces resilience. And resilience prepares believers for every good work God has prepared for them.

God is not merely growing you. He is equipping you.

CHAPTER 5

The Big Pay Off

"…being strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light." – Colossians 1:11-12

As we live a life that reveals Authentic Christian Behavior, what is it that others that observe us actually see? What are the obvious practical results of a life well lived in honor to our risen Lord Jesus Christ? There are at least three characteristics of the life of an Authentic Christian that should be obvious to those who we encounter: Patience, Joy, and Gratitude.

In the previous chapter, we examined Paul's prayer that believers would rise spiritually, be strengthened with all power, and develop endurance and resilience according to God's glorious might. That strengthening, however, is not an end in itself. Power without character produces instability. Strength without fruit produces imbalance.

Paul does not stop at power. He moves immediately to *what that power produces*. Patience, joy, and thankfulness are not separate virtues added later. They are the evidence that spiritual power is being properly formed within the believer. These qualities reveal whether strength has matured into Christlikeness. Biblical patience is not weakness, passivity, or delay. It is power restrained by love. It is strength that refuses to react impulsively, retaliate emotionally, or abandon faith under pressure.

Paul's prayer assumes that patience flows *from* spiritual strengthening. We cannot manufacture patience. We grow into it as Christ's power stabilizes our inner life. Patience expresses itself first in relationships. Longsuffering is the

ability to remain steady with people who are still in process. It means refusing to stumble over the imperfections of others, recognizing that sanctification is ongoing. We are no longer side tracked by what other people do or say. Patience allows God's promises to work in people without forcing outcomes. It helps us guide others toward where Jesus is leading them rather than demanding instant maturity. True patience says: *"I will do my part before God—pray for you, love you, and remain faithful—regardless of how you respond."* Patience is strength under the control of God the Holy Spirit.

As spiritual growth accelerates, opposition often increases. When believers are passive, few object. When believers become serious about Christ, resistance appears, sometimes from unexpected places. Patience keeps the believer focused. It prevents detours caused by offense, comparison, or disappointment. Mature believers understand they are not called to worship personalities, whether saints, teachers, or leaders. Christ alone remains central.

Patience redirects attention away from irritation and toward righteousness. Instead of obsessing over what is wrong, the believer learns to align with what God is doing rightly, even when circumstances are imperfect. Patience produces composure. Forgiveness becomes instinctive rather than forced. Retaliation loses appeal. Strength is expressed through restraint.

As power stabilizes the inner life, the believer develops spiritual poise. Emotional swings decrease. Discernment increases. The heart remains centered even when circumstances shift. We are not easily distracted. Our spiritual poise increases. The patient believer moves neither ahead of God nor behind Him. There is no rush born of fear, and no delay born of avoidance. Strength allows the believer to move at the pace God requires. Patience reveals understanding because it reveals trust in God.

"He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding." - Proverbs 14:29

Joy is the inner climate of a strengthened soul. Joy is not added *after* endurance. Joy grows *within* endurance. Paul does not separate joy from patience; he joins them. This reveals that joy is not circumstantial relief but relational stability.

Joy flows from a life where Christ has become central. We delight in the Lord alone. Joy begins when pleasing Christ matters more than pleasing people. The

authentic believer no longer operates under false assumptions, that spiritual success means approval, ease, or applause.

There is no alternate route around obedience. Joy does not come from negotiating with God's Word, but from surrendering to it. Joy deepens as intimacy with Christ increases. It is not rooted in activity but in connection. The believer is no longer trying to extract joy from outcomes. Joy flows from fellowship with God the Father, through faith in Jesus God, the Son.

When Jesus alone becomes the source of happiness, circumstances lose authority. Joy becomes resilient. It remains intact under pressure. This joy is not dependent on what Jesus does. This joy rests in who He is. Because it is relational rather than transactional, it remains stable.

Joy cannot coexist with pride, ambition, pretense, or self-rule. As these diminish, joy increases. A gentle, kind spirit becomes the soil where joy flourishes. There cannot be any joy without obedience. Obedience deepens joy. Joy sustains obedience. They function together, reinforcing spiritual stability.

And finally, a thankful heart or a spirit of gratitude, is the anchor for a correct spiritual perspective. It is this perspective that is the grounds for spiritual maturity. Without gratitude, patience becomes strained and joy becomes fragile. Gratitude keeps strength aligned with humility.

Thankfulness begins with recognition. We acknowledge what has been done for us by Jesus Christ on the Cross. We acknowledge what we could never earn. Gratitude humbles the soul and aligns perspective. A thankful believer welcomes whatever God asks. Gratitude transforms obedience from obligation into privilege. Disobedience often grows where gratitude has diminished. When the Cross loses weight, when we have the wrong perspective, suffering for Christ feels unnecessary and service feels optional. This perspective has weakened much of the modern church.

Paul reminds Authentic Christians that God the Father has:

- Qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light
- Delivered us from the kingdom of darkness
- Made us spiritual sons and daughters

A thankful heart is not shaped by circumstance, tradition, or intellect alone. Gratitude is an act of faith. Deliverance remembered fuels obedience sustained.

"Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage." - Exodus 13:3

The fruit of a life strengthened by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit is a life that is built for endurance. It is a life prepared for victory that produces patience which steadies the Authentic Christian. This life has a joy that sustains us and gratitude that anchors us. Together, these three, reveal a life that is not merely powerful, but mature.

This is the life that Jesus came that we might live. This is the abundant life. This is the prosperous life, the fruitful life. This is the life that is worthy of His life, death, burial and resurrection. This is the life of the truly Authentic Christian. May we all desire above all else that this life may be revealed in us that the whole world may see the power of God in us and be drawn to the Cross, be drawn to the saving power of The One True Living God. May we all be authentic instruments in the hands of our risen King Jesus to exhibit Authentic Christian Behavior that those we encounter and even the whole world might be changed, all for His glory and His glory alone.

"And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.

And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God.

Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field.
Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock.
Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.
Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

"The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.

The Lord will command the blessing on you in your barns and in all that you undertake.

And he will bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.
The Lord will establish you as a people holy to himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in his ways.

And all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you.

And the Lord will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your livestock and in the fruit of your ground, within the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give you.

The Lord will open to you His good treasury, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hands. And you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail, and you shall only go up and not down, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, being careful to do them,

and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Deuteronomy 28:1-14

AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

Study Guide

Download the Authentic Christian Behavior Companion Workbook at HOWICP.org

Author's Note

Thank you for reading "*Practicing His Presence" - Volume 1 - Companion Workbook*. If this book encouraged, challenged, or strengthened your walk with Christ, would you consider leaving a brief review?
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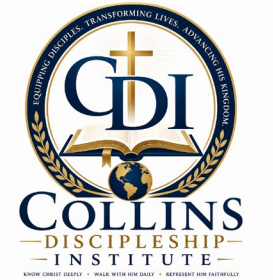
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Thank you for helping us make disciples who make disciples - for the glory of God.



In Matthew 28, our Lord Jesus Christ gave His Church its mission, its vision, and its process for reaching the world. We know it as the Great Commission.

Jesus commanded His followers to go *and make disciples of all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching *them to obey everything He had commanded*. This is not one ministry among many; it is the mission of the Church. It is the one assignment that every believer, every local church, and the Church universal has received directly from our risen King.

Sadly, much of the modern Church has neglected this divine responsibility. Many who stand behind the sacred desk have never themselves experienced intentional biblical discipleship. Consequently, they have little vision or passion for discipling others. This stands in direct opposition to both the command and the example of Jesus Christ.

Disciple-making is rarely easy. It is often inconvenient, time-consuming, and personally demanding. It requires patience, commitment, and sacrifice. But the Kingdom of God has never been advanced through convenience. It has always been advanced through faithful men and women who were willing to invest their lives in others.

We cannot fully accomplish biblical discipleship from the pulpit alone. Preaching is essential, but it is only one part of the process. Neither can we effectively disciple someone through occasional meetings or brief conversations. Jesus did not simply teach crowds; He invested deeply in twelve men. He walked with

them, answered their questions, corrected their misunderstandings, modeled obedience, and allowed them to observe His life day after day.

That remains the biblical pattern.

Discipleship is life shared together. It is walking alongside another believer, allowing them to see how we respond to life's victories, disappointments, temptations, and trials. It is opening God's Word together, praying together, encouraging one another, and holding each other accountable to grow in Christ.

For us, intentional discipleship means meeting regularly - ideally at least once each week - for meaningful conversation centered on Scripture, spiritual growth, and the practical challenges of living faithfully in a fallen world. It is helping believers develop the spiritual disciplines that deepen their intimacy with Jesus Christ and strengthen their walk with Him.

The goal is not simply to produce knowledgeable Christians. The goal is to develop mature disciples who, in turn, become disciple-makers themselves.
This is the multiplication strategy of the Kingdom.

At **Collins Discipleship Institute (CDI)**, our passion is to equip individuals, churches, and Christian organizations with practical, biblically sound resources that cultivate mature, vibrant, and Spirit-empowered followers of Jesus Christ. Our desire is to strengthen believers in the essential areas of Christian life and ministry, so they can faithfully fulfill the Great Commission. We do not exist to produce better church members. We exist to produce mature disciples who make mature disciples.

We believe that the future strength of the Church will not be determined merely by the size of our congregations, but by the depth of our disciples. When disciples make disciples, churches become healthier, families become stronger, communities are transformed, and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ advances.

The Great Commission has never been rescinded. It remains the calling of every believer. May we not merely admire it, but may we obey it.

Contact us at info@HOWICP.org for more information. All resources are free.

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