

PART II

ABUNDANT RESPONSE

Abundant Relationship

WEEK 5

LESSON 12 • ABUNDANT SURRENDER: THE DISCOVERY OF RELATIONSHIP

LESSON 13 • ABUNDANT PRAISE: THE GRATITUDE OF RELATIONSHIP

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WEEK 6

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THE HEALTHY HEART & HEART EXAMINATION



Part II
**Abundant
Response**

WEEK 5  **LESSON 12**

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ABUNDANT SURRENDER

The Discovery of Relationship



Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Romans 12:1 NIV

What should our response be after all that we have just studied in Part I? We have seen the depth of our depravity and the need for grace. We then learned about God's plan to save us, which is the rescue of grace. Finally, for several lessons we studied the results of salvation by grace. This revealed the infinite and unsearchable love, mercy, and grace of God. God's abundant revelation should create and motivate an abundant response on our part.

Knowing who God is, what He is like, and what He has done for us cannot help but generate an abundant response to God. The key and quintessential step in this response is surrender. God's abundant love, provision, power, and plans should bring us to our knees to know Him, obey Him, and follow His plan for our lives. Abundant gratitude, awe, wonder, and excitement should fill and compel our hearts to be consumed with the Lord. This is a personal commitment to let God etch our hearts with His will and plan for our lives to bring Him glory.

Surrender is giving our heart and lives back to God, who created us and saved us with His own life. Since He died for us, we should live for Him. Surrendering to the Lord is not giving up anything of importance but, instead, is discovering

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God's eternal plan for our lives. It is dying to self so others might live, like Jesus did for us. Surrender is a daily process that is made voluntarily if we meditate on the truths of Part I. It is making God number one! Surrender is a process that matures. No one is ever fully surrendered at all times. Start where you can!

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. Surrender your life.** Your life is your whole person, plans, and time. God has a plan for your entire life. Let Him show you what it is. Surrender your plans, schedule, and time to God! Make your time His time. This must be a daily commitment. *Matthew 16:24-27; Romans 6:16-23, 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Philippians 1:20-21 (Matthew 10:34-39; Romans 1:1; 2 Timothy 2:4)*
- 2. Surrender your heart.** Your heart is the control system of your real spiritual person. It is the innermost part of your being. It consists of your will, emotions, conscience, and mental processes. Your desires, reasoning, and attitudes emanate from the heart. You need to allow God to empower and etch your heart with His will. *Deuteronomy 6:5-6; Psalm 37:4-5, 40:8, 119:36; Matthew 22:37-38; Luke 22:42; John 6:38, 28:9; James 4:7-8 (1 Chronicles 22:19; Ephesians 3:14-21)*
- 3. Surrender your mind.** The mind is the center of your cognitive processes. You need God to establish your thoughts. You need your mind to be renewed, and this starts with surrender. *Psalm 37:5; Proverbs 16:3; Matthew 22:37-38; Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 3:1-3; Philippians 2:5-8 (1 Chronicles 28:9; Isaiah 26:3-4; Romans 8:5-8)*
- 4. Surrender your possessions.** Everything belongs to God, including you. He owns and created everything. When you realize this, you should be grateful and willing to let Him use what He has given you for His purposes and glory. This is a state of the heart that understands where everything comes from and who really owns it. *Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 8:7-20; 1 Chronicles 29:11-12; Psalm 24:1-2; Isaiah 42:5, 44:24; James 1:17 (Psalm 50:10-12; Isaiah 45:18-19; Haggai 2:8)*

5. **Surrender in worship.** The heart of worship is surrender. It literally means to bow down. Worship sees what God is worth and gives Him what He is worth: all of your heart, mind, body, and soul. It is a state of the heart that—through faith—trusts, needs, and desires to know and praise God for who He is, what He is like, and what He has done in Jesus Christ. Worship is a state of awe, wonder, gratitude, need, trust, and praise that together culminate in a surrender of the heart and will to your Creator and Savior. *Psalm 29:2, 37:4, 96:9; John 4:21-24; Romans 12:1-2*

6. **Surrender from fear.** Fear of the Lord is not a trembling fear of danger, but a reverent respect for the awe and mighty wonder of God's person. It is an awareness of His sovereignty, omniscience, and omnipresence that stimulates your heart to surrender and creates a desire to obey His will and commands. This is a very healthy heart—it is very protective to have a reverent respect and honor for God that realizes He is God and you are not. *Proverbs 1:7, 9:10, 14:26-27, 15:33; Matthew 10:28 (Proverbs 1:29, 10:27, 14:2; Jeremiah 32:40-41)*

7. **Surrender from trust.** Surrender involves trust because you are entrusting all of your life and heart to God. You must trust Him with this. Trust is related to faith. *Proverbs 3:5; Psalm 9:10, 37:3-5, 118:8-9; Isaiah 26:3-4; 2 Corinthians 1:9-10*

8. **Surrender from need.** Jesus is your God and Savior. He gives you every breath and beat of your heart. You need God in order to accomplish anything for His will and glory. You need Him to empower your heart and keep you from sin. You still have a sinful nature/flesh that is selfish and opposed to the things of God and the Holy Spirit in you. You can win this war within you if you surrender. Surrender is a humble acknowledgement of great need and dependency that allows God to empower and show you His victory. You can intellectually acknowledge need but still trust in yourself. True surrender allows God to act and control. *Isaiah 42:5; John 15:1-8; Romans 7:13-25, 13:14; Galatians 5:16-25 (Acts 17:24-29; Philippians 4:13)*

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- 9. Surrender from desire.** Surrender involves a desire to acknowledge, thank, and know God because of what He has done and who He is. It involves seeking out the Lord's will by humbly coming to Him to guide your heart and mind. You should be eager and excited to come to Him, to learn His ways, and to understand His truths since they are delightful. *Deuteronomy 4:29; Psalm 1, 27, 40:8, 119:16, 35, 47; John 7:17; Philippians 3:7-11*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- 1.** Read *Romans 1:1, James 1:1, Jude 1:1, 2 Peter 1:1, and 2 Timothy 2:4*. What do these men call themselves? Why? The Greek word is *doulos* or bondservant. Read *Deuteronomy 15:12-18*. What is a bondservant? Why would the apostles and disciples call themselves one? What can you learn about surrender from this?
- 2.** Read *John 4:21-24*. What is the Father seeking? Why? What does worship "in spirit and truth" mean?
- 3.** Read *Romans 12:1-2*. What is a living sacrifice? What is Paul asking you to do? He is making reference to the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. How does this give you an understanding of worship and surrender? What did Jesus do as the ultimate act of worship and surrender? In verse 2, what are the benefits of surrender?

4. In *1 Corinthians 15:31* Paul says, "I die every day." What important principle of surrender does Paul show you? Why is this necessary?

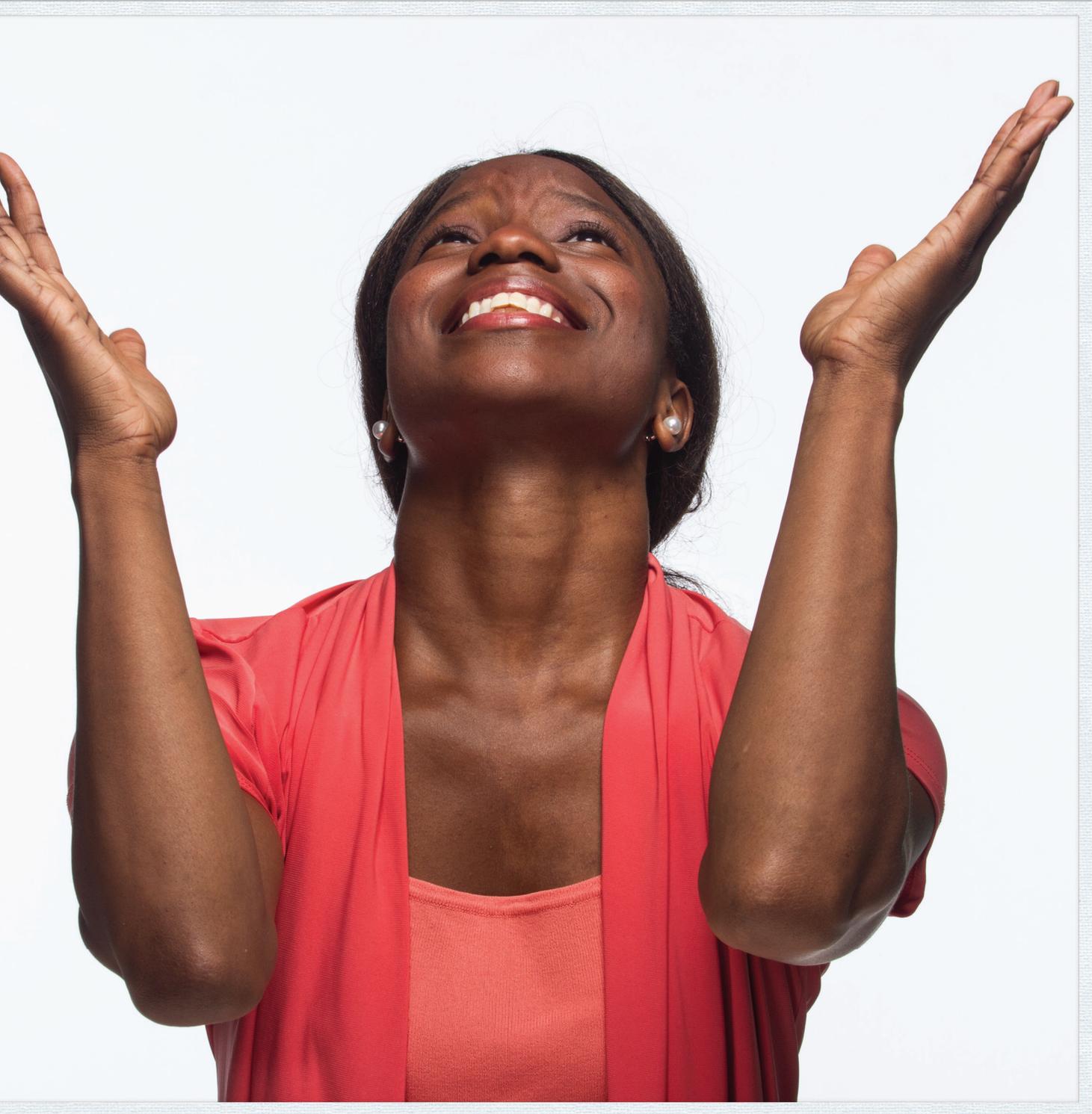
WEEK 5 • LESSON 12
Abundant Surrender

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Part II
**Abundant
Response**

WEEK 5  **LESSON 13**

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ABUNDANT PRAISE

The Gratitude of Relationship



Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

Psalm 150:6 NKJV

Praise is a natural response emanating from a heart that is filled with the love, grace, mercy, and compassion of God. It is a state of the heart that is thanking God and expressing admiration and gratitude for salvation in Jesus Christ. Praise is a celebration of who God is, what He is like, and everything He has done for us (refer back to Part I). It is an outflow of surrender and worship that extols God's goodness and love and adores His majesty and holiness. Praise can be expressed in words or kept in the heart. When we meditate on the amazing grace, love, and mercy of God, as learned in Part I of this study, we cannot help but praise God. Abundant revelation causes abundant praise.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. He is God.** Praise Him for being God. *Exodus 15:2; Deuteronomy 10:21; Nehemiah 9:5-6; Psalm 34:1-3, 86:12-13, 146:1-2*
- 2. He is worthy.** God is worthy of all praise. *2 Samuel 22:4; Psalm 9:1-2, 18:3, 48:1, 96:4-9, 113:3, 148:1-14, 150:1-6; Luke 19:37-40; Revelation 4:11, 5:11-13 (Psalm 96:4-9; 1 Thessalonians 5:18)*

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3. **He is holy and righteous.** God is holy, or set apart. He is God and completely unique. There is no one like Him. His ways are perfect and right. *Psalm 7:17, 30:4, 71:14-19, 99:3, 119:7, 164*
4. **He is your Savior, Creator, Redeemer, and the Great I AM.** God is everything to you. *Exodus 3:14; Psalm 28:7-9, 71:6-8; Isaiah 43:10-13, 45:21-22; Luke 24:52-53; 1 Peter 2:9-10 (Exodus 15:2; Deuteronomy 10:21-22; Nehemiah 9:5-17; Luke 2:13-14, 20)*
5. **He is love.** God is love. It is His essence. *1 John 4:7-11 (John 3:16; Romans 5:8)*
6. **He is merciful.** You need to praise God for mercy. We all need abundant mercy, and the Lord gives it! Mercy is not getting what you deserve; it is God's desire to rescue you with compassion from trouble. (Some translations use the words love, lovingkindness, or compassion.) *Psalm 118:1-4; Micah 7:18; Titus 3:4-5; 1 Peter 1:3 (2 Chronicles 5:13, 20:21; Psalm 36:5, 63:3-5, 86:15)*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Read *Psalm 63* and then focus on *verses 3-5*. What is a benefit of praising God? How can this help you in your Christian life and relationships? Why is it healthy to be thankful and express it?
2. What are different ways that you can praise God? In what different situations can you praise God?

3. List 10 things from Part I that you should praise God for every day. How big is this list?

WEEK 5 • LESSON 13

Abundant Praise

4. Contemplate your praise of God. How often do you praise Him? In what ways do you praise Him? Could this use some improvement? Do you feel a greater desire to praise Him after meditating on Part I of this study?

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ABUNDANT WORDS

The Communication of Relationship



If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

John 15:7-8 NKJV

How do we get to know someone and have a relationship with him or her? By spending time together and talking to each other. There are many ways to communicate, but verbal communication is the most meaningful and specific. Verbal communication is a word exchange. God's words to us are found in the Bible. It is the Word of God (His words to us). Prayer is talking to God and provides our words to God. The basics of a relationship with God are reading His words (Bible) and communicating with Him in prayer.

The more we talk and communicate, the more our relationship will grow. His words speak to our hearts. Reading and praying are essential. If we want to know the God who created us, who has a personal plan for our lives, and loves us enough to die for us, then we must be reading the Word of God and talking to Him. We can also communicate with God by silently sitting in His presence and listening to Him speak to our hearts. This is not burdensome because we should have an abundant desire from His abundant revelation, as studied in Part I.

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VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. The Words of God.** In the Bible, God has revealed who He is, what He is like, and what He has done and will do. The Bible is the Word of God. It is His words to you. It is the main way He communicates to you. Jesus Christ is the living, incarnate Word of God. If you want to know Christ, you must be in His Word. A relationship has a two-way word exchange, and God has given you 66 books of His words. That is more than enough for the rest of your life! *2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 1:1-5, 14, 8:31-32, 15:7-8 (Revelation 19:11-16)*

Eating the Word. The Bible is your spiritual food. It feeds your spirit and soul so that you can grow spiritually. Reading is eating. Newborn babies are hungry and need to eat or they will suffer from starvation. You should be hungry and eating a daily healthy diet of the Word of God. You should hunger to know God, hear what He has to say, and discover more of what He is like.

If you do not read His Word, then you do not care to know Him or hear from Him. This is a prevalent problem today among Christians. People are reading almost everything but the Word of God. If you live the abundant life, however, it will solve this problem. You have found the cure! Because you learned in Part I how awesome God is and how much He loves you and wants to guide your life, you cannot wait to know Him and hear what He has to say to you. You should view the Bible as God's love letter to His children. *Job 23:12; 1 Peter 2:2-3; Matthew 4:4; John 6:34-35; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Hebrews 5:12-14 (Ezekiel 3:1-3; Revelation 10:10)*

Hearing the Word (Listening). We spiritually "hear" with our hearts. Your heart must be right for you to hear the words of God when you read the Bible. A hardened or disinterested heart can read the Bible and hear nothing at all. It is like putting food in your mouth but then spitting it right back out. It never gets a chance to provide its nutrition. Because you are so enamored with God based upon what He has done for you, you are attentively listening when you read His Word. You should be trying to learn and hear what He has to say to you through His Word. If your heart is eager, expectant, humble, and grateful, then

you will “hear.” *Jeremiah 19:15; Matthew 11:15, 13:13-17; Luke 8:4-15; John 8:47, 10:27; Romans 10:17*

Meditating on the Word. You should meditate on the words of God because they are so powerful and nutritious for your heart and soul. Meditation on the Scriptures is like completely digesting your food so that you absorb it all. *Psalm 1; Joshua 1:8-9; Psalm 119:15, 23, 48, 97-99, 148; Philippians 4:8-9*

Believing/Doing the Word. Believing the Word involves doing it! Eating, hearing, and meditating on the words of God are not enough! You must also be a doer of the Word. You should obey what God says and do what He says because your heart is surrendered to His love. You need to change, and this starts with doing what God says. This is loving God. You must allow the Word to do “surgery” in your heart. *James 1:22-25; Matthew 7:24-27, 12:50; Luke 11:28; John 14:21-24; Romans 2:13; 1 John 2:3-6; Hebrews 4:12 (James 4:17; Revelation 22:7)*

Delighting in the Word. The Word of God is delightful! You should delight yourself in it because you love the Lord, who is the Word of God. *Psalm 119:16, 24, 47, 70, 77; Romans 7:22.*

- 2. The Words of Prayer.** Talking to God is prayer. You can pray for God’s will, help in trials, guidance, strength, mercy, forgiveness, healing, wisdom, thanksgiving, protection, and almost anything else in life. This is your part of the relationship. You need to realize that God has given you abundant access to Him! You can talk to the Creator of the universe, who is your Father and who is love, anytime you want. He wants to hear from you just like parents do from their children.

You were created for a relationship with Him. You should be so overwhelmed by His grace, love, mercy, and provision—as you will recall from Part I—that you cannot wait to talk to Him. We could do an entire study on prayer, because it is so important. Pray! Talk to God! Praise Him. Depend upon Him. Tell Him your troubles and needs. Surrender your heart and life in words of devotion. Think about His Majestic ability to hear one person out of billions! Do not treat this as an obligation but, rather, the most amazing opportunity ever.

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Jeremiah 29:11-13; 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Psalm 5:1-3; Matthew 6:5-13; Mark 1:35, 6:46; Luke 6:12-16; 1 Timothy 2:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 (Psalm 32:6; Daniel 9:4-19; Mark 14:38; Luke 1:46-55; James 5:16-18)

- 3. The Words of Praise.** Praise was the subject of Lesson 13. Often expressed in words, praise is an internal state of the heart in response to God's love, salvation, grace, and mercy. Because of what God has done for you, you should abundantly praise God with abundant words of thanksgiving. *Psalm 150 (Psalm 146:1-2, 147:1, 148)*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- 1.** One of the early signs of pride is a lack of prayer. What is pride? Discuss why a lack of prayer is a sign of pride.

- 2.** Read *Mark 1:35, 6:46*, and *Luke 6:12*. Jesus is God, yet what did He do? What does this tell you about your need for prayer? How can you make time? Did Jesus let His busy schedule stop Him from doing anything? Is being too busy an excuse? If you find that a week has gone by and you have barely prayed, is something wrong? Discuss how having a zeal and desire to know God, from what you learned in Part I of this study, is the cure for a lack of prayer.

REFLECTIONS

Week 5

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this week's lessons. Ask God to speak to your heart and reveal to you what's important. Then spend some time answering the questions below. Write down your responses to discuss them in your small groups or as a journal entry to remember what you have learned.

INSIGHTS:

What are some of the key insights you have learned from this week's lessons? What has stood out to you? What has spoken to your heart?

Lesson 12 • Abundant Surrender

Lesson 13 • Abundant Praise

Lesson 14 • Abundant Words

APPLICATIONS:

How should you respond to what you have learned in this week's lessons? What do you need to do differently? What changes do you feel the Lord leading you to make? What specific steps can you take?

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Part II
**Abundant
Response**

WEEK 6  **LESSON 15**

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ABUNDANT GOD

The Interaction of Relationship



And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

John 17:3 NKJV

When we respond to God's abundant revelation with abundant surrender, praise, worship, gratitude, prayer and reading His word to seek a relationship with Him, God responds back! When His children run to Him in gratitude to know Him, obey Him, and depend upon Him, He is delighted and abundantly responds to us. We were created for a relationship with the God who made us and died for us so we can finally know Him. The cross is Jesus' declaration that He will do anything to save us so we can know Him and have an eternal relationship with Him. He is the initiator in the entire process. We respond to God, and then He abundantly responds to us. He is waiting for us to respond so He can respond back!

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. God's Answers.** God answers prayer. Sometimes it is no, and often His answers are delayed, but He does answer. He answers prayer in many ways. You must pay attention to what is going on around you, because sometimes you find God's answers through your circumstances. At other times He answers through His Word using particular Scriptures. He can also speak to your heart and guide you by using His peace or disruption of that peace to show you His will. We cannot review

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answered prayer in detail in this study, but we can know that God does answer according to His will, in His timing, and in His way! 2 Samuel 5:19; 2 Kings 19:15-20; Daniel 10:12; Matthew 7:7-12; John 14:12-14; Ephesians 3:20; James 4:1-5; 1 John 5:14-15 (Genesis 20:17; 1 Samuel 8:6-7, 23:2-4, 30:8; Jeremiah 33:3; Matthew 21:21-22; John 16:23-24)

2. God's Presence. When you draw near to God, He draws near to you. This is an awareness of His presence that He makes spiritually known to you. Remember, He is not far, but lives inside of you and is all around you! He can use this to strengthen and encourage you in times of need or to simply bless your soul for seeking Him. Psalm 16:11, 46:10, 63:1-11, 145:18; Isaiah 57:15; John 14:19-23; Romans 8:16; James 4:7-8 (Psalm 21:6, 95:2; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17)

3. God's Filling. Filling is a misnomer that can give you the wrong understanding. God is all around you and lives within you. You already possess God's living presence. When you draw close to God and seek His presence, will, and a relationship with Him, He responds by manifesting Himself to you through His peace, joy, and control of your heart. You are spiritually content and filled with peace from His presence. Isaiah 58:11; Matthew 5:6; John 6:26-27, 35; Colossians 1:9; Ephesians 3:14-19

Filled with Love, Joy, Peace, and Hope. When you are in a right relationship with the Lord, He fills your heart with His love, joy, and peace so that you may abound in hope. His peace guards your heart and mind and strengthens you. Isaiah 26:3-4; John 14:27, 15:11; Acts 2:28; Romans 5:5, 15:13; Philippians 4:6-7

Filled with the Holy Spirit. This means to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. You have the Holy Spirit, who is God, living inside you! In the Bible there seems to be two kinds of Spirit filling. In one type, God sovereignly empowers a person to accomplish His will in a specific situation. It is not in response to prayer or based upon performance. We will not study this because it is not in our control. If God wants to empower you for His service, then He will. You do not need to focus on empowerment but on surrender and obedience to His will. He will take care of the rest. In the other type of filling you do have a role, and it is critical!

When you surrender to God and seek to serve Him with your heart, then you allow the power of God in you to take control and guide your life. You unleash the guiding and influencing power of the Holy Spirit. It is supposed to be a continual state of fullness and not a specific one-time event. You are to be filled and keep on being filled by allowing God to have His way with you. This is why surrender and devotion from gratitude and love are so important. You need all of the power that is available to you to live in this fallen world in your fallen body. This issue will be discussed in Part III, because even when we are trying our best and are “filled” we will still struggle and fail. You need God living within you, controlling your heart, thoughts, motives, words, and actions.

It is important to understand that this is a process related to spiritual growth, which we will study later in Part III. Over time, as you stay surrendered and let God guide and control your life for His purpose, you will slowly yield more and more to His will. It takes time for God to work on you so that you surrender increasingly more areas of your life. Spiritual growth involves God having increasing control over your heart and life (i.e., more filled).

It is important not to focus on being filled or experiencing being filled. You should not be preoccupied with this. There is no single moment or magic experience that provides instant victory in the Christian life. You need to focus on loving, surrendering, and seeking the will of God for your life. If you do this, then God will provide whatever power or blessings of His Spirit that you need. If you are surrendered and focused on God with your whole heart, then you will be controlled by the Holy Spirit (i.e., filled). If you have the abundant response you have been studying, then you will be abundantly filled. It is not about you and your state of spirituality, but God and His will and purpose for your life that brings Him glory. Focus on Him! *Ephesians 5:17-18; Luke 4:1; Acts 6:3, 5, 7:55, 11:24, 13:52*

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4. **God's Guidance.** The Lord provides His guidance when you are submitting in gratitude to His plan for your life and seeking His will. When you open your heart to God's plan, then He establishes it for you. Your desires will be the Lord's because He has put them on your heart.

Our Thoughts:

Proverbs 16:3; Jeremiah 31:33; John 14:26

Our Hearts:

*Ezra 1:5, 7:27; Nehemiah 2:12, 7:5; Psalm 37:4-5, 119:36;
Proverbs 21:1; John 16:13*

Our Steps:

*Psalm 37:23, 40:2, 119:133; Proverbs 3:5-7, 20:24;
Isaiah 58:11; Philippians 2:13 (Psalm 31:3, 32:8, 73:24)*

His Prayers:

John 17:20-24; Romans 8:27, 34; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1

His Wisdom:

*Proverbs 2:1-22; Ephesians 1:17-20; James 1:5-8, 3:17
(1 Corinthians 1:24)*

His Anointing: See Lesson 7 in Part I to review this concept.

1 John 2:20-27

5. **God's Strength.** God has made His power available to you when you call on Him and desire to walk in His will. He can strengthen you for service and to endure trials. *1 Samuel 30:6; Nehemiah 8:10; Psalm 28:7-9, 46:1; Isaiah 40:31, 20:6; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Ephesians 3:16, 6:10; 2 Timothy 4:17 (Psalm 18, 27:1; Colossians 1:9-11; Hebrews 2:18; 1 Peter 1:5)*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

WEEK 6 • LESSON 15

Abundant God

1. Discuss how God answers prayer. Use some of the verses given in this lesson as starting points.
2. Discuss how God puts things on your heart. How can you test them to see if they are truly from God?
3. Read *Ephesians 5:17-21*. The Greek here literally means “keep on being filled,” a continual state of being filled, not a one-time event. If Paul commanded it, then what does this imply? Discuss Paul’s contrast between being filled with the Spirit and being drunk with alcohol. In *verses 19-21*, what are the results of being filled? Why might the Holy Spirit desire these things for your life?

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Part II
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WEEK 6  **LESSON 16**

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ABUNDANT REPENTANCE

The Conviction of Relationship



I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Psalm 32:5 NKJV

Conviction is an inner pronouncement and convincing of the soul that it is guilty before God. It is a bringing to light and exposure of sin in a way that is known and shown to be true. Conviction is often felt and experienced as guilt, shame, fear, and a strong, uncomfortable inner sense of wrongdoing before God. Anger can also be a sign of conviction, as a result of fear or the frustration of being convicted. The conviction is focused on personal change leading to holiness and becoming more like Jesus Christ. It is not a conviction of condemnation, but of love from the Creator who cares about His children and knows the destructive power of sin. Conviction is a ministry of the Holy Spirit that is designed to bring us to repentance.

Repentance is a turning away from sin and towards God. Our grief and sorrow are directed towards God because we have sinned against Him. There is a deep and strong sense of grief that motivates us to change because we have sinned against our heavenly Father. This includes an acknowledgement that we are a sinner before God, which comes from a heart that is trusting in the blood of Jesus Christ to cover our sins. It is part of the ongoing state of "believing" in Jesus by trusting His work on the cross to cover our sins. It is the Holy Spirit within a person that enables him or her to be conscious, grieved, and repentant over sin. He creates a sense of guilt and a need to be restored to the Father. It is

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the next natural step after conviction of sin. Yes, in fact, many refer to this type of repentant grief as “Godly sorrow.”

The closer we get to Jesus Christ by continued surrender, prayer, worship, and reading His Word, the more we realize how sinful we are. The more time we spend studying the Word of God, the more we will be aware of our sin. This is actually a sign of spiritual growth and health. It creates a healthy heart that recognizes the need for grace and is grateful for the blessings of God’s salvation. We love God more and more because we begin to realize just how much He has done for us by dying for all of our sins.

This love and gratitude for Christ creates a heart that does not want to sin against Him. When we do, we are grieved and we repent. Because our hearts are filled with gratitude, reverence, and a desire to know God, we immediately want to restore our relationship with Him. Repentance keeps us humble and dependent, and it keeps our relationship with Him healthy. Our relationship with the Lord should be characterized by abundant repentance, because we will continue to sin and make mistakes. It is a sign that we are aware and care. The goal will be for us to sin less and less, but we will never be sinless.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. Awareness of Sin in God’s Presence.** God is perfectly holy and sinless. The closer you get to Him, the more aware you are of your sinfulness. This should make you revere and love Him more for who He is and for the grace and mercy given to you in Christ. *Job 42:1-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Luke 5:1-8*
- 2. Conviction of Sin from the Word of God.** *Nehemiah 8:1-9:3; Acts 2:36-38, 7:48-54; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12*
- 3. Conviction by the Holy Spirit.** *John 16:7-11; Psalm 38*
- 4. Grieving the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit, who is God, is also a person. Because He is perfectly righteous, holy, and sinless, any sin that enters your life causes Him to grieve. Sin causes Him to be sorrowful and have grief over your sin that can sometimes be internally sensed and felt because He lives within you. This grief is experienced completely

differently than feeling sorry for or convicted about your sin. It is an inner sense of grief and sorrow that you realize is coming from God within you. This working of the Holy Spirit within you should cause you to repent. Note: Grieving the Holy Spirit hinders His divine power to work in you, as well. *Ephesians 4:25-32; Isaiah 63:10*

5. **Repentance to God.** *2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 32, 51; Ezekiel 14:6-8, 18:30-32; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; 1 John 1:8-10; Revelation 2:1-5*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Read *Psalm 32*. The context of this psalm and of *Psalm 51* is that they were written after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed to cover it up. He was trying to hide and cover up his sin. David had delayed repentance even under conviction (see *2 Samuel chapters 11 and 12*).

List all of the internal feelings David was having from his sin, as described in *verses 3 and 4*.

In *verse 3* David says, "When I kept silent..." What was he silent about? To whom was he silent? What had he failed to do? To whom was he acknowledging this?

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2. Read *Psalm 51*. Whom did David think he had sinned against? Why?

In this psalm, for what is David crying out to God? Is it simply mercy and forgiveness? What else is he asking for? Why?

In *verses 11, 12, 14, and 17* David describes the effects of his sin. What are they?

What happened to David as he delayed his repentance?

3. Read *Ephesians 4:25-32*, focusing on *verse 30*. What is the context for this verse, as discussed in *verses 25-29*? Read *Isaiah 63:10*. What caused the Holy Spirit to be grieved?

4. Read *2 Corinthians 7:10*. What is the difference between worldly sorrow and Godly sorrow? What is the difference between genuine repentance and feeling guilty, sorry, or remorseful?

WEEK 6 • LESSON 16
Abundant Repentance

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Part II
Abundant
Response

WEEK 6  **LESSON 17**

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ABUNDANT LOVE FOR GOD

The Heart of Relationship



*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, and with all your mind.*

Matthew 22:37 NKJV

The word for love, as used in the New Testament to talk about loving God, is agape. Agape love is giving that is unselfish, unconditional, self-sacrificing, and centered on others not ourselves. Agape love is not something that we have naturally. It comes from God because He is agape love. God pours His love into our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit so that we can love Him and others. His love flows through us to others. Agape love for God is unselfish, unconditional, God-centered obedience to His will and Word while giving oneself to Him from a grateful and reverent heart. The Great Commandment is to agape love God with all our heart, soul, and mind—or our whole person and existence. The heart of love is surrender and obedience. Because God has so loved us, we should love Him and others. (Loving others will be discussed in Part III.) This type of love is our final and ultimate response to God and is the culmination of everything we have studied so far.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

1. **God is love.** *1 John 4:7-8, 16*
2. **God loves you.** God proved His love on the cross. *Jeremiah 31:3; John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:9-11, 16*

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3. **God gives you His love.** He is the only source of the agape love that you need. *Romans 5:5; Ephesians 3:19; 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:12-13 (2 Thessalonians 3:5)*
4. **Love is your response to His love.** He loved you first. You should abundantly respond to His love with love for Him. He died for you. You should live to obey Him. (Love for others will be discussed in Part III.) *1 John 4:19 (Psalm 18:1-3, 116:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Ephesians 5:2)*
5. **Love is the Great Commandment.** *Deuteronomy 6:5-6; Matthew 22:35-39 (Deuteronomy 10:12, 11:1, 11:13, chapter 30)*
6. **Love is obedience to the Word of God.** Jesus defined loving Him as obeying His Word. His Word is the Word of God (Bible). *John 14:21-24; 1 John 5:3*
7. **Love is walking in faith.** Biblical faith is God speaks-you hear-you obey. Obeying the Word of God is loving God. Biblical faith expresses itself in love. *Genesis 22:1-19; Galatians 5:6; Hebrews 11:1-9*
8. **Loving God is a test of salvation.** Jesus clarified that those who are genuinely saved do the will of God. They obey His words, His commands, and His personal will for their lives out of love, not obligation. *Matthew 7:21-23; 1 John 2:3-5, 4:7-8*
9. **Love is surrender and worship.** Jesus Christ on the cross is the ultimate example of love. He surrendered His life so that you could have life. Because Jesus gave all of Himself for you, you should give yourself back to Him. Surrender and worship are expressions of love that Jesus exemplified. *John 15:13; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 5:2 (Leviticus 1:1-9)*
10. **Love is exclusive.** You must get rid of anything that comes in the way of your relationship with Him. *Exodus 20:3-4; Joshua 24:19-20; Matthew 4:10, 6:24; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17*
11. **Love takes precedence and priority.** Jesus should be number one in your life. You should love Him so much that even your love for your family is nothing compared to your love for God. *Luke 14:26; Acts 20:24; Revelation 12:11*

12. Love is everything. Without agape love you are nothing. *1 Corinthians 13*

13. Love fulfills the Law. On the cross Jesus loved the Father by obeying Him. He also loved you by dying in your place. The cross is formed by Jesus loving God vertically and Jesus loving you horizontally. On the cross Jesus fulfilled the two Great Commandments: to love God and to love others. When you love God you do not have any other gods or idols or use His name in vain. You also obey like Jesus did. *Matthew 22:35-40; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Read *Deuteronomy 6:5-6, Matthew 22:35-38, and John 14:21-24*. What is the Great Commandment? How does Jesus define loving Him? What implications does this have for your need to study the Bible? How can you obey if you do not know what God says? How can you obey the Great Commandment without reading and knowing the Word of God?
2. Read *John 14:21-24*. What did Jesus promise for those who love Him? What does this mean? Discuss how this is an incredible incentive to read the Word of God and keep it (i.e., do it).

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3. Read *Matthew 22:35-40*, *Romans 13:8-10*, *Galatians 5:14*, and *James 2:8-11*.

Draw a vertical line to make the vertical part of a cross. Label it "Loving God." Draw a horizontal line to complete the cross. Label it "Loving Others." What supports the cross bar of loving others? Discuss how this demonstrates that loving God is primary.

Jesus said, "All the law and the prophets 'hang' on these two commandments." Who "hung" on these two commandments?

4. Read *Genesis 22:1-19* and *Hebrews 11:1-9*. Since love is obedience to the Word of God, how did Abraham demonstrate his love for God? What critical moment in history did Abraham and Isaac foreshadow? Bonus: Where is Mount Moriah compared to where Jesus was crucified? See *2 Chronicles 3:1*.

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Part II
**Abundant
Response**

WEEK 6  **LESSON 18**

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ABUNDANT HEALTH

The Wellness of Relationship



Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

Proverbs 3:7-8 NIV

You cannot grow unless you are healthy. This is true physically and spiritually. Spiritual health is essential for spiritual growth. What is a state of spiritual health? What is a spiritually healthy heart that is beating strong for God? It is a combination of everything that we have studied! Holiness is spiritual health to our spirit as physical health is to our physical bodies. The “germs” of sin can cause our hearts to be sick and diseased. A spiritually healthy Christian has a heart filled with the knowledge of the things we studied in Part I.

From Bible study and meditation the person understands God’s abundant grace and all of the amazing things that God has done for him or her, which reveals His person and love. The person’s heart is surrendered from gratitude, awe, and wonder. From the love for God, the heart is filled with praise, the words of God from Scripture, and repentance (when needed). It is controlled (filled) by the Holy Spirit. There is an interactive, abundant relationship which is abundantly healthy! A healthy heart will produce abundant results, as we will discover in Part III of this study. The abundant results lead to increasing holiness. Holiness is spiritual health because we become more and more like Jesus with less and less sin in our lives.

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It is important for us to understand that abundant results are the natural outflow of a healthy, abundant relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. If we are lacking in results, then we can trace it back to an unhealthy heart that is not in a right relationship with the Lord. Recall that the impetus and fuel that sparked and will maintain our relationship with God was surrender because of who He is, what He is like, and what He has done for us. In this respect, a lack of results from poor spiritual health can be traced back to a lack of knowledge and Biblical illiteracy. Poor spiritual health comes from more than simply not reading our Bibles, however. We must allow the Word to change us. We must submit ourselves to the Word and do what it says.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. Fed.** A healthy heart is well fed by a steady diet of the Word of God. The Word of God is your spiritual food. Spiritual health requires spiritual nourishment. *Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2-3; Hebrews 5:12-14 (John 6:35; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Job 23:12; Ezekiel 3:3)*
- 2. Filled.** A healthy heart is filled with and pumps out praise, love, joy, peace, and hope. The heart must be filled to have proper function and output. It is filled with the things of God and eternity. An empty heart, or a heart filled with the wrong things, will have heart failure. *Psalm 9:1-2, 96:4-9; Matthew 5:6; Romans 5:5, 15:13; John 6:26-27, 35; Ephesians 3:14-19; Philippians 4:6-9; Colossians 1:9, 3:15-16*
- 3. Controlled.** A healthy heart has a proper pace and rhythm that are controlled by the Holy Spirit. This comes from a state of surrender and giving your heart to God. The New Testament calls this being “filled” with the Holy Spirit. (Recall our study from Lesson 15.) *Ephesians 5:18 (Luke 4:1; Acts 6:3, 5, 7:55, 11:24, 13:52)*
- 4. Exercised.** A healthy heart requires exercise and training to have endurance and strength. This comes from a relationship with Jesus Christ in which He works on our hearts through His Word, prayer, worship, and seeing us through life’s struggles and tribulations. An exercised heart is active for the Lord. *Acts 20:24; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Philippians 3:13-14; 2 Timothy 2:5, 4:7; Hebrews 12:1-2 (1 Peter 1:6-9; 2 Peter 1:1-10)*

5. **Listening and Hearing.** A healthy heart must be soft and pliable, not hardened. A soft heart is able to hear and listen to the Word of God. It is listening, eager, and willing to obey from gratitude, trust, and reverence. A hardened heart will not receive the Word of God. It is spiritually deaf and blind. Its soil is not penetrable. *Proverbs 28:14; Matthew 13:3-23; Mark 16:14; John 10:27, 12:37-41 (Exodus 8:15, 32; Ephesians 4:17-19)*
6. **Clean.** A healthy heart is “clean” and fertile. It is not polluted with idols and the cares and riches of this world which hinder the Word of God from changing it. It has no “weeds” or “rocks.” *Mark 4:10-20; 1 John 2:15-17 (Luke 8:9-15)*
7. **Humble.** A healthy heart is humble and not prideful. It is dependent upon the Lord for its desires, thoughts, and motives because it knows it is desperately wicked without Him. A humble heart is needy and teachable. Jesus Christ humbled Himself and so should you. *Numbers 12:3; 2 Chronicles 7:14; 2 Kings 22:19; Proverbs 3:7-8, 11:2, 16:19, 29:23; Psalm 25:9, 51:17, 147:6; Isaiah 66:2; Micah 6:8; Philippians 2:8; James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:5-7 (Isaiah 57:15; Daniel 10:12)*
8. **Connected.** Spiritual health also comes from being an active member of a local church. God gave us the local church as a place for believers to serve, grow, fellowship, and mature in their faith. *Acts 2:40-47, 20:7; Ephesians 2:19; 1 Peter 3:8; Romans 14:19; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Corinthians 11:17-22; 1 Timothy 3:15*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Read *Matthew 13:3-9, 13:18-23; Mark 4:10-20; and Luke 8:4-15*. Consider the four types of hearts in this parable. What distinguished the good heart from the other three?

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What were the problems with each of the other three? What causes these problems?

What happens to the Word of God in each of them?

Why was the Word being sown? Why does Jesus talk about the Word of God and the heart?

How do you make sure you have a good and healthy heart?

If you have one of the other three types, what should you do to fix it?

- 2.** Discuss why daily surrender and seeking the Lord's will for your life is absolutely essential to spiritual health.

REFLECTIONS

Week 6

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this week's lessons. Ask God to speak to your heart and reveal to you what's important. Then spend some time answering the questions below. Write down your responses to discuss them in your small groups or as a journal entry to remember what you have learned.

INSIGHTS:

What are some of the key insights you have learned from this week's lessons? What has stood out to you? What has spoken to your heart?

Lesson 15 • Abundant God

Lesson 16 • Abundant Repentance

Lesson 17 • Abundant Love for God

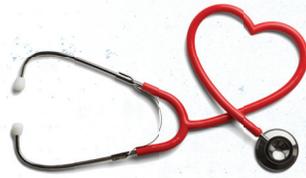
Lesson 18 • Abundant Health

APPLICATIONS:

How should you respond to what you have learned in this week's lessons? What do you need to do differently? What changes do you feel the Lord leading you to make? What specific steps can you take?

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HEART EXAMINATION



Since a healthy heart is vital to Part III of this study and your spiritual growth, it's time for a quick heart examination based upon what you have studied in Parts I and II. Think positively! Look for areas you can improve and bring them to God. He loves you and wants to heal and strengthen your heart. Below are some questions to ponder to get you started. Be honest and ask God to examine your heart.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24 NIV

Surrender

Are you seeking God's will and His plan for your life daily?
Are you giving yourself to Him from gratitude, love, and a desire to know Him?
Do you earnestly desire to allow Jesus to make you the person He wants you to be?
Who is on the throne of your heart? God or you?

Praise

Do you praise God for Who He is, what He is like, and what He has already done for you in Christ?
Do you have a time when you worship God and thank Him?

Communication

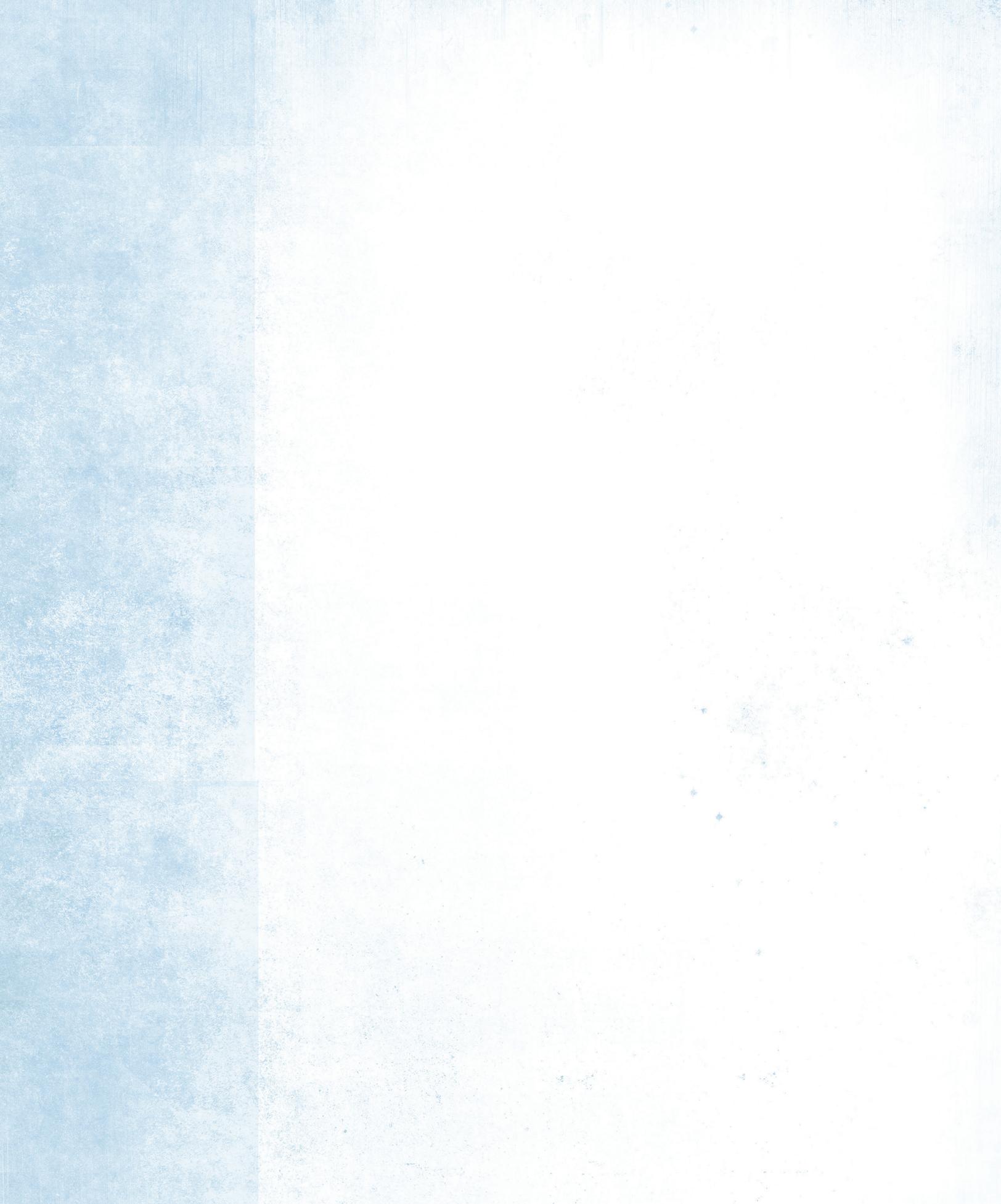
Is your heart being fed the Word of God on a regular basis? Are you seeking God in His Word?
Do you have a daily time of prayer and reading the Word of God?
Are you listening for Him to speak to your heart and then obeying what He says?
Is the Lord guiding your life and helping you through its struggles and challenges?

Repentance

Are you sensitive to sin in your life and repenting of it when you make a mistake?
Does your heart want to please God and avoid sin as much as possible because you love Him?

Love

Do you love God by obeying His Word? This requires that you are reading and studying His Word to know what He says (*John 14:21-24*).
Do you know that God loves you personally?
Are God and His will number one in your life?



PART III

ABUNDANT RESULTS

Transformation

WEEK 7

LESSON 19 • **ABUNDANT GROWTH:** THE NEW MAN MATURES

LESSON 20 • **ABUNDANT GODLINESS:** THE NEW MAN BLOSSOMS

WEEK 8

LESSON 21 • **ABUNDANT STRUGGLE:** THE NEW MAN STRUGGLES

LESSON 22 • **ABUNDANT SUFFERING:** THE NEW MAN SUFFERS

LESSON 23 • **ABUNDANT VICTORY:** THE NEW MAN SUCCEEDS

Fruit

WEEK 9

LESSON 24 • **ABUNDANT LOVE FOR OTHERS:** THE FOCUS OF LOVE

LESSON 25 • **ABUNDANT GIVING:** THE GIVING OF LOVE

WEEK 10

LESSON 26 • **ABUNDANT SERVICE:** THE SERVANT OF LOVE

LESSON 27 • **ABUNDANT HARVEST:** THE GOAL OF LOVE

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PART III OVERVIEW

TRANSFORMATION



And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV

An abundant response to God causes an abundantly healthy relationship with Him. This results in spiritual transformation and fruit. We are gradually transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit as we continue one day at a time to surrender to God from gratitude, awe, and wonder as we walk in His will and plan for our lives. In continuing to seek Him in prayer, in worship and in the Word of God (Bible), we will begin to grow spiritually and be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We will become more and more like the Lord!

This process is called sanctification. It is slow and gradual, and it is never fully completed while we are alive here on earth. It requires hard work and personal discipline, but because our motivation is from love and gratitude for the incredible grace God has given us (see Part I: Abundant Revelation), this should not be a burden. The transformation process is not without its struggles, failures, and challenges. Spiritual growth requires trials and difficulties, it tests our faith, and it even requires failures from which we can learn. Yes, the abundant life is not all fun and pleasure. Despite these struggles, there is still abundant joy, comfort, and victory promised by God!

FRUIT



Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

John 15:4-5 NKJV

As you are being transformed by God you will begin to produce “fruit” that glorifies God. Spiritual fruit in its essence is agape love. This can be simply defined as unselfish giving of yourself to others and to God. These are the two Great Commandments: to love God with all your heart and to love others as yourself. The fulfillment of these commandments will be natural and will flow from the relationship and state of spiritual health that you have studied. This fruit of love will have many effects on others around you as you serve them, love them, teach them, and reach them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Because you are surrendered and seeking God’s will and are filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit, you will be servants living for the Lord and His will, glory, and coming kingdom. You will be giving yourself to others and to the Lord. You will impact others for eternity by God working through you! You will be abundantly satisfied from nothing else.

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Part III
Abundant
Results

WEEK 7  **LESSON 19**

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- TRANSFORMATION -

ABUNDANT GROWTH

The New Man Matures



As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

1 Peter 2:2-3 NKJV

We have already studied how the Word of God is our spiritual food (Lesson 14) and how a healthy heart is well fed by a steady diet of the Word of God (Lesson 18). Spiritual growth requires spiritual health and nourishment. If the new man is created by a new birth, being “born again” (Lesson 4), then he is a spiritual baby at birth. A baby needs to grow and mature. Growth and maturity require food, health, and a proper environment that fosters both.

This concept is critical because, as we will learn in the next few lessons, it is this new man along with the power of the Holy Spirit that will battle sin, the sinful nature/flesh, the enemy, and the world. Although God provides the means for growth and the power for victory, He leaves it up to us to tap into this power by choosing to grow and mature. If a person fails to grow and remains a “baby,” that person will be dominated by his or her sinful nature/flesh and have little to no victory over sin.

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VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

1. **Spiritual Growth.** Spiritual growth has many aspects. Everything that you will study about abundant transformation is part of the growth process. *Psalm 1:1-6, 92:12-15*

Growth in Love. *1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philippians 1:9-11; Ephesians 3:14-19*

Growth in Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom. You can gain a lot of knowledge from the Word of God, but unless you apply that knowledge, it profits you nothing. Understanding is seeing the personal application, whereas wisdom is actually doing it. If you grow in the knowledge of God and His grace, goodness, and love for you, then this should positively affect your practical daily relationship with Him. *Ephesians 1:15-21, 4:15; Colossians 1:9-12; 2 Peter 2:1-8, 3:18*

Growth in Faith. Faith is something of which you can never have enough. You need to grow in faith, and this comes from reading and applying the Word of God. As you “eat, digest, and assimilate” the Word of God into you, you grow in faith. Faith is a certainty of God in the heart that comes from hearing the Word of God and results in obeying the Word of God, which is love. Faith expresses itself in love. Another Biblical definition of faith is: God speaks—you hear—you obey. *Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 10:15; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4; 1 Peter 1:6-9; Jude 20-21 (Psalm 27; Luke 17:5-10; Acts 6:5)*

Growth in Relationship. As you mature and grow in the Lord, your relationship with Him will grow and become more real to you. A child can interact with his father better than a baby can and will have a better understanding of who his dad is and what he does for him. An adult, on the other hand, is even more mature and has spent more time with his father and thus will have a much deeper understanding of him. Time spent together, memories, and going through life together build and grow a relationship. The same is true of your relationship with God. *John 8:31-32, 15:1-16, 17:3; 1 John 2:24-25*

Growth in Dependency and Need. Christian maturity brings increasing dependency on God for everything. As you grow and get closer to the Lord, you become more and more aware at deeper and deeper levels of how sinful you are. The more you understand the truth from the Word of God, the more you realize you really know nothing at all. You begin to realize that you need the Lord in every thought, motive, word, deed, and circumstance of your life. This creates humility, dependency, and amazing gratefulness leading to surrender because of what Jesus has done by rescuing you from sin. *Psalm 27, 73:25-28; Isaiah 55:8-9; Mark 2:17; John 15:5; Romans 7:18 (read 7:13-25), 8:26; Philippians 4:10-13 (Psalm 103, 119)*

- 2. Renewing the Mind.** The new man, born as a spiritual baby, will also have to renew his mind. Although he is born with a new mind and now has the Holy Spirit, there is still a lot of work to be done. Many things need to be learned and unlearned. This is part of “growing up.” The mind and heart are integrally related in ways that we do not understand, but the need for growth and change is necessary and clear in Scripture. You need your mind to be surrendered, unified with God and others, selfless (a servant at heart), heavenly/eternally focused, peaceful, and content. These are the hallmark qualities of a healthy, mature mind of a growing Christian.

Surrendered Mind. As you have studied, surrender is the key. There is no transformation without surrender. Your growth will be stunted to the degree that you do not give all of yourself to God and His plan for your life. *Luke 22:42; John 4:34; Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 1:1*

Renewed Mind. Your mind will be renewed. The way you think will change. *Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:23-24; Philippians 3:7-8; Hebrews 9:14*

Meditating Mind. Your mind should be meditating on the Word of God. Jesus is the Word of God. The Word is your food and power for change. *Joshua 1:8; Philippians 4:8 (Psalm 1; John 1:1-3, 8:31-32)*

Sober/Sensible/Controlled Mind. Your mind will be clear, sensible, and controlled by the Holy Spirit. *Titus 2:6; Romans 12:3; 1 Peter 1:13, 4:7, 5:8; 2 Timothy 1:7*

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Unified Mind. Your mind will be unified with the Lord's will and with your brothers and sisters in the body of Christ. *Romans 15:5-6; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Philippians 2:1-2, 3:15-16; Hebrews 8:10 (Romans 12:16; 1 Peter 3:8)*

Servant/Selfless Mind of Christ. The heart of Christianity is serving others with the love of Jesus Christ. As you become more like Jesus, you will become a greater servant. *Mark 10:45; 1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:3-11*

Christ-Centered Mind. You should be focused on the Lord and His grace, love, and presence. He should be number one. You should be infatuated with Him! *Isaiah 26:3-4; Matthew 22:37; Philippians 3:8-16; 1 Peter 1:13-14 (Titus 2:11-14)*

Heavenly/Eternal Mind. You should develop an eternal paradigm of life focused on the things that will matter and last in eternity. You should see the world through Biblical glasses and be focused on the will of God and His coming kingdom. *Matthew 6:19-21; 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:11; Colossians 3:1-3; Philippians 1:19-26, 3:19-21; 2 Peter 3:10-13 (Psalm 119:36-37; Romans 2:7, 8:5-8; 2 Timothy 2:4; 1 John 2:15-17; Jude 20-21)*

Peaceful/Content/Guarded Mind. God will guard your heart with His peace when you are in a right relationship with Him and meditating on Him and His Word. This is a blessing from God and is a result of everything you studied above. *Isaiah 26:3-4; Philippians 4:6-7 (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)*

Secure/Certain Mind. You will be more and more certain of your salvation and the hope of Heaven as you grow and mature. You will know that you are going to be with the Lord forever, which brings increasing joy and hope. *Romans 8:15-16; Philippians 1:21-26; 1 John 3:18-23, 5:13 (2 Corinthians 5:1-11; Galatians 4:6-7)*

- 3. Cleansing the Heart.** Your heart is the control center of your life. Even though you receive a new heart, there is still a war within you between the new man and the old sinful nature/flesh that wants to

contaminate your new heart. The growth process involves a gradual cleansing of your heart. As you abide in the Lord and His Word, He removes the dirt and contaminants that do not belong there. *Psalm 51:10; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 1 John 3:1-3 (John 15:1-8, 17:17-19; Ephesians 5:25-27; Titus 2:14; James 4:8)*

- 4. Putting on the Armor.** Living the Christian life is war. This is another paradigm shift of the mind. The enemy is real and will be discussed in an upcoming lesson. God has made available His armor for you to use, but you must put it on. A growing Christian will be using the armor and gaining battle experience. He or she will learn how to use the different pieces of armor and be increasingly aware of the war. If you look at the different parts of the armor, you will see that many of them are related to the Word of God. You have to know what the armor is to fully utilize its benefits. *Ephesians 6:10-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:8; 2 Timothy 2:3-4; 1 Peter 5:8 (Psalm 18, 144:1-2; Romans 13:11-14; 2 Corinthians 6:7)*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. To understand the need for Christian growth, explore the analogy of being born again as a spiritual baby. What happens if a baby does not get enough food? What kinds of problems do starving people have?

Read *1 Corinthians 3:1-4*. What was the problem with the Corinthians? What was the cause?

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Read *Hebrews 5:12-14*. What problem was the writer addressing? How does spiritual starvation affect your Christian witness and your ability to be used by the Lord for His glory? Is a starving baby able to realize the problem? Does a baby know he is a baby? How might this affect a certainty of salvation?

2. Read *Philippians 2:1-11*. What kind of mind should you have? Describe the mind of Jesus Christ. What qualities should you be striving for?

3. Read *Matthew 12:33-37* and *James 1:26, 3:1-12*. Where do your words come from? How can you evaluate the health of your heart?

The word for controlling the tongue literally means to bridle. A bridle is a harness used to control a horse by reins with a bit in the mouth. Who is meant to have control over the horse? Who has the reins, the horse or the rider? If James says we are to bridle our tongues in order to bridle our body and lives, then who is supposed to be in control and have the reins?

How can your words measure your state of growth, good or bad?

What about an absence of words from your tongue to God (i.e., a lack of prayer)?

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Part III
Abundant
Results

WEEK 7  **LESSON 20**

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- TRANSFORMATION - ABUNDANT GODLINESS The New Man Blossoms



But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23 NIV

Godliness encompasses a healthy state of reverence, dependence, and devotion to God which results in obedience and displaying Christ-likeness that glorifies God. A Godly person is fulfilling God's purpose for their life by knowing Him in relationship and glorifying Him with their life by displaying His character. They are becoming more like Jesus by spending time with Jesus in His presence and Word. The Abundant Response studied in Part II described one aspect of Godliness, which is our healthy relationship with God. In this lesson we will focus on the manifestations of godliness that change us and are evident to others.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. Godliness.** These are general verses about Godliness. *1 Timothy 2:1-3, 6:3-12; Titus 1:1-3; 2 Peter 1:1-9, 3:10-13*
- 2. Being Conformed to God's Image.** The entire purpose of Christian growth is to make us more like Jesus Christ. The abundant life is a

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transformation of the heart, mind, and soul to grow closer to God in relationship and to become more like Him in our personage. As this happens you will become more holy because God is holy. Holiness is being set apart to God. Practically, it describes the growth process in which you become more and more “clean” as God “cleans you up” from the “dirt” of sin and the world. *Romans 8:29-30, 12:2; 1 Corinthians 15:49; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 3:10; Colossians 3:8-11; 1 Peter 1:13-16 (John 3:30)*

- 3. Exemplifying God's Character.** The result of being transformed is that you will be more Christ-like in your life and interactions with other people. As the Holy Spirit molds you into the image of Jesus, God's agape love, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, will blossom in your life. You will think, act, and speak like the Lord because He is living within you and guiding your life for His purpose and glory. You will love because God is love and has shown you love. You will show grace and mercy because God shows it and because you have received it from Him in abundance (Part I). *Matthew 5:3-12; Luke 6:27-36; John 13:13-17, 15:11-13; 1 Corinthians 11:1; Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 5:1-2; Philippians 2:1-11; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 John 2:6 (Micah 6:8; Psalm 112; 2 Timothy 2:24-25; 1 John 4:7-16)*

- 4. Glorifying God.** You were created to know God and to glorify Him. You bring Him honor and praise when you obey and love Him with all your heart. The Abundant Results of Part III, where God changes you and you serve God and others, bring Him glory. *Psalm 86:12; Matthew 5:14-16; John 16:13-15, 17:1-5; 1 Corinthians 10:31 (1 Corinthians 6:20, 10:31; 1 Peter 2:11-12, 4:16)*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- 1.** Read *2 Timothy 3:1-5*. What is a form or appearance of Godliness that rejects the power?

Discuss the difference between being outwardly religious and having an inward personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Which is easier?

What signs are listed in these verses to tell you which person you are? Try making a two-column table comparing the characteristics listed in these verses to what they should be if you are truly godly. For example: unloving versus loving, lovers of pleasure versus lovers of God, etc.

2. Read *Galatians 5:22-23*. The fruit is love. The others in the list are aspects of God's agape love. Agape love is unselfish giving. How did Jesus manifest love?

Study the list below:

- LOVE (unselfish giving)
- JOY (unselfish happiness from God)
- PEACE (unselfish harmony with God)
- PATIENCE (unselfish waiting)
- KINDNESS (unselfish niceness)
- GOODNESS (selflessness)
- FAITHFULNESS (unselfish dependability)
- GENTLENESS/MEEKNESS (unselfish concealed strength under control)
- SELF-CONTROL (unselfish revealed strength under control)

Discuss what each of these means and how they all should practically manifest themselves in your life as you mature by the power of the Holy Spirit. Ponder and discuss the selfish counterparts. There is rotten fruit (selfish taking), which is open rebellion (i.e., self-indulgence versus self-control). There is also plastic fruit (selfish giving), which is an imitation of agape love that wants to look real but has underlying selfish motives of giving to get or gain something. Consider how you could selfishly corrupt each aspect of God's love.

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REFLECTIONS

Week 7

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this week's lessons. Ask God to speak to your heart and reveal to you what's important. Then spend some time answering the questions below. Write down your responses to discuss them in your small groups or as a journal entry to remember what you have learned.

INSIGHTS:

What are some of the key insights you have learned from this week's lessons? What has stood out to you? What has spoken to your heart?

Lesson 19 • Abundant Growth

Lesson 20 • Abundant Godliness

APPLICATIONS:

How should you respond to what you have learned in this week's lessons? What do you need to do differently? What changes do you feel the Lord leading you to make? What specific steps can you take?

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Part III
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WEEK 8  **LESSON 21**

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- TRANSFORMATION - ABUNDANT STRUGGLE The New Man Struggles



For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want

Galatians 5:17 NIV

Despite all of the changes and incomprehensible blessings that God has provided for us in His plan of salvation, there are still many struggles and battles that ensue after it has been received. We are fallen because of sin, and so is the world we live in. We have three enemies that will oppose the abundant life by using sin to try to hinder our health and growth. One of them is us! This is called our sinful nature or flesh. Although the sinful nature/flesh is a source of internal battles and struggles, there are two more external enemies to be fought. The other two are the devil/demons and the world. God, however, has provided everything we need to have victory in this life. Our victory will be studied in Lesson 23.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. The Sinful Nature/Flesh.** The framework of man's existence was corrupted by sin. Not only is the innate person (spirit/soul) corrupted, but also a deeper level of fallen human existence is infected with sin. It is part of your inner being stained with sin that is predisposed to

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selfishness and sin. This is called “the sinful nature” or “the flesh.” The sinful nature/flesh is a source of sinful actions and inner attitudes against God and others.

The sinful nature/flesh remains after salvation. Despite all of the incredible and powerful things God has done to restore mankind from the disease of sin, He has chosen in His infinite wisdom not to rid the Christian of the sinful nature/flesh. Not yet. The cure for this will come in Heaven after physical death. For now, the sinful nature/flesh remains a part of your existence. Do not forget that you have power to prevail! You have God inside you!

This creates within true Christians an internal conflict that must be fought. In your existence you have the Holy Spirit and the sinful nature/flesh living together in the same body. The sinful nature will still be opposed to the things of God and seek selfishness in all areas of life. The new man will desire to know the things of God and do what is right, but the sinful nature/flesh will oppose him. A person who has been saved will begin to struggle with and sometimes overcome sin because he or she now has power over it, something that does not happen before a person is saved. This is actually an important sign of someone who has been genuinely saved by Jesus Christ. Do not be discouraged! *Galatians 5:16-21, 6:7-8; Romans 7:5-25, 8:5-13 (Ephesians 2:1-3; Philippians 3:3-11; Colossians 2:23; 2 Peter 2:10-18)*

OTHER ENEMIES. *A full description of these two additional enemies is beyond the scope of this study, but you need to be aware of their existence and threat to your spiritual health.*

- 2. The Devil and Demons.** Evil, demonic forces are real but largely ignored in modern society. A very effective military strategy is for an enemy to make his opponent think he is not a threat or, better yet, that he is not real. The devil and the forces of darkness will attempt to harass, attack, frustrate, and discourage your growth in the Lord. They will also try to deceive you into sinning. *Genesis 3:1-7; Job 1:1-12; John 8:44, 14:30; 2 Corinthians 11:14-15; Luke 4:1-13; 1 John 3:8; 1 Peter 5:8 (Zechariah 3:1-5; 2 Corinthians 4:4, 10:3-6; Ephesians 2:1-3; Revelation 12:9)*

- 3. The World.** The “world” is not the physical world of nature but the entire system of fallen human existence that is opposed to the true and living God and His salvation from sin through Jesus Christ. It is ruled by Satan and targets the sinful nature/flesh through lust and pride as means for self-fulfillment and self-preservation. *John 14:30, 15:18-25, 16:33; Romans 12:1-2; 1 John 2:15-17, 3:1, 4:1-3, 5:19; James 1:27, 4:4-6; 2 Peter 1:4 (Mark 4:18-19)*

Holy Spirit + New Man VS. Sinful Nature/Flesh + World + Devil

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Read *Romans 7:5-25*. This was written by the Apostle Paul about 23 years after he had been saved. Also read *Galatians 5:16-21*. Paul describes the inner battle with the sinful nature/flesh. List two or three things that you struggle with. Have you gained victory over time? Is struggling wrong or a sign of spiritual immaturity? Since the Apostle Paul struggled, then should you get frustrated and view your own struggles as failure? How should you view your struggles?
2. Read and study the following verses: *1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 2:15-17; Romans 12:2; 1 John 5:4-5; and John 16:8-11*. Discuss what they teach you about the world, the devil, and their interrelationships.
3. Read *Luke 4:1-13* and *Genesis 3:1-7*. What strategy did Satan use? How does this relate to *1 John 2:15-17*?

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Part III
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WEEK 8  **LESSON 22**

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- TRANSFORMATION - ABUNDANT SUFFERING The New Man Suffers



For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.

2 Corinthians 1:5 ESV

It is very important for us to understand that the Christian life is not all fun and games. In fact, as we have just learned, it is a war. We live and exist in the middle of a spiritual war in a fallen world ravaged by sin and the enemy. As a result, we will suffer and face great tribulations in this life, but God promises us joy, peace, comfort, and victory to get us through them. Amazingly, He uses them to grow and refine us. Our greatest periods of growth will often come from the most difficult times. If we anticipate suffering and trials and see them as opportunities to grow in the Lord and draw on His power and promises, then half of the victory is won. Perspective is everything. This is part of the renewing of our mind that we studied in Lesson 19.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. Suffering.** Suffering is when you experience something unpleasant. Something from the outside affects you in a negative way. There are many types of suffering such as physical, financial, emotional, and spiritual. Pain, illness, rejection, and loss can all bring suffering into your life. The Bible is clear that you will suffer as a Christian, but God

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promises you abundant comfort and even joy in the midst of your suffering. Jesus suffered, and as His disciple, you will too. You can only control your own choices. Choosing to sin brings consequences and its own suffering into your life. This can be prevented by following the Lord. *Luke 9:22; Romans 8:17-25; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; Philippians 3:10-11; 1 Timothy 4:10; 2 Timothy 3:10-12; Revelation 2:10 (Galatians 6:17; Philippians 1:29-2:2, 4:11-13; Colossians 1:24; 1 Peter 3:13-17)*

2. Trials and Tribulation. A trial is a specific event or situation that brings suffering or challenges into your life. There are many types of trials. Some trials you bring upon yourself due to sin and poor decision-making. Other trials come from other people and their sin that affects you. In some situations God orchestrates a trial to test and purify your faith in order to bring you closer to Him and to trust in His provision and power. God is with you in your storms and trials if you turn to Him and trust in Him to get you through them and not necessarily out of them. *John 16:33; Romans 5:3-5; Acts 14:21-22; 1 Peter 1:6-9, 4:12-19; James 1:2-8 (Daniel 3:8-30; Matthew 8:23-27)*

3. Persecution. Persecution is another promise that you can expect as a Christian. People will treat you unfairly and seek to harm, ridicule, and restrict your proclamation of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. But Christ promises you a special blessing when you suffer for His name's sake! *Matthew 5:10-12, 10:16-31; John 15:18-25; 1 Corinthians 4:11-13; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:10-12*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Read *Revelation 2:8-11*. This letter was dictated by Jesus to the church at Smyrna in the first century A.D. What can you learn about suffering and the Christian life from the words of Jesus?
2. What kind of suffering did Jesus endure during his lifetime? What can you expect, based upon your answer and reading of *Luke 17:25, 24:46*; and *John 15:18-16:4*?

3. In *Philippians 4:18* Paul wrote, “Indeed I have all and abound.” Paul claims to be living the abundant life. What is interesting is that Paul is in jail. How could Paul say that? Why did he say it? Discuss Paul’s life as a model for the abundant life and the key to enjoying it even in very difficult circumstances.

4. Read *2 Timothy 1:8-12*. Paul also wrote this letter from prison, but this time while on death row. What was Paul focused on that kept him so positive in such difficult circumstances? What can you learn from him? How can you emulate him? Also read *Acts 20:17-24* for insight.

5. Read *Matthew 5:10-12*. Jesus said you are blessed when you are persecuted. Why is this true? How should this truth shape your paradigm of life to enjoy the abundant life?

6. Read *Matthew 13:18-21*. What does this Scripture teach you about the importance of spiritual growth for enduring trials? What was the problem with this person’s heart? How can that be corrected? Which type of soil is in your heart?

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WEEK 8  **LESSON 23**

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- TRANSFORMATION - ABUNDANT VICTORY The New Man Succeeds



Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Romans 8:35-37 NKJV

We have learned in previous lessons about the many blessings and resources that God has provided for us in Jesus Christ. He provides the means for growth and the power for victory, but He leaves it up to us to tap into this power by choosing to grow, mature, and depend upon Him. If we have a healthy response to God through surrender and relationship, then we will be controlled or "filled" with the Holy Spirit. All of our power for victory comes from God. All of it. Yes, we are a new man with a new heart and mind, but as we have studied, this man is born a baby and must grow, mature, and be renewed by the power of the Holy Spirit as we submit to God and feed on His Word.

We have three strong enemies that are opposing us. We have no chance of victory without surrender, which unleashes God's power and starts our transformation process, enabling us to utilize His power. We have to put on God's armor daily to be ready to fight in the power of His might. Everything that we have learned has

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been building up and combining to make us ready for the victory God has for us. If there is no victory and fruit, then we can trace it back to a lack of relationship and surrender combined with spiritual starvation. Starving Christians simply attending church once a week and praying at meals will have no chance against their flesh, the devil, or the world. In fact, they will resemble the world and cause people not to believe in Jesus Christ because they see no difference between Christians and the world. That is why many Christians are called hypocrites by the world. Christians living the abundant life will not be confused with the world!

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. Walking in the Spirit.** The Word of God talks about “walking in the Spirit” as a means of victory. What does this mean? This is a state where your “walk,” or life, is controlled by the Holy Spirit, who is your source of transforming power for victory and change. This comes from being controlled by Him or filled, as you have studied. This reality is absolutely critical. The power switch is turned on when you surrender yourself to God for His will and glory. Abundant health and transformation enable you to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit. This gives you victory over all three of your enemies. (Note: Some translations say “live” instead of “walk.”) *Galatians 5:16-26; Romans 8:1-17 (1 John 2:6)*

Walking in Love. Love is unselfish giving. This means you are to live your life unselfishly. *Ephesians 5:1-2; 2 John 6*

Walking in the Newness of Life. You are a new creation that has been born again. You should live a new life for God and His glory. *Romans 6:4 (read 6:1-11)*

Walking in the Light and Truth. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the light of the world. He is the Word of God which is a lamp to light your path. *Psalms 119:105; John 8:12; Ephesians 5:8-14; 1 John 1:5-7; 3 John 3-4*

Walking Circumspectly. You need to live your life carefully and diligently, pursuing the Lord and His will one day at a time. *Ephesians 5:15-17*

Walking by Faith. Biblical faith: God speaks—you hear—you obey. Obeying God is loving God (*John 14:21-24*). If you walk by faith, then you walk in trust, obedience, and love! *2 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 5:6; Hebrews 11:1-39*

Walking in God's Plan. God has a specific plan for each of us. Walking in His plan is victory. You don't have to know the details in advance, but live by faith the abundant life one day at a time. This is His plan! *Ephesians 2:10*

Walking Worthy. You cannot live a certain way to earn God's love and blessing. Your worthiness comes from Jesus Christ by grace. Through Christ, you can and should, however, live in a way that glorifies God and reflects His worthiness, love, and grace for you. *Ephesians 4:1-5; Philippians 1:27; Colossians 1:9-12 (1 Thessalonians 2:12)*

- 2. Victory over Sin.** In Part I you learned about how you have power over sin. This power is a new ability to say no to sin. This power did not exist before you were saved. Because you have died with Christ and have been born again and united with Him, you are dead to sin. You must, however, access the power over sin that God offers you, and you must do this continually to be victorious. You practically begin to walk in this victory when you know what is available to you and then make it real for yourself by presenting yourself to God as His servant who is dead to sin. Review Lesson 8 and the questions you answered on *Romans chapter 6*. Focus on verses 3, 6, 11, 13, 16, and 19.
- 3. Victory over the Sinful Nature/Flesh.** The first enemy is you! You studied this notion in Lesson 21. You gain victory over your flesh when you choose to let the Holy Spirit run your life. It should be apparent at this point that everything goes back to surrender, since this unleashes the power of God already in you. If your new man is growing and surrendering, then you will have victory. The Bible talks about “putting off” the deeds of the sinful nature/flesh and “putting on” the new man and Jesus Christ to win victory over sin. This is your role. God has the power and victory ready for you, but you must choose to wear it! You do this by knowing the truth from His Word and then seeking God's power, victory, and will for your life in worship, prayer,

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surrender, and His Word. This concept directly relates to walking in the Spirit. This spiritual walk will put on Christ and His love and put to death and crucify the sinful nature/flesh, BUT it must be done daily. *Galatians 5:16-26 (Romans 8:1-17)*

Put to death the flesh and put off the old man. *Romans 8:13; Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 4:17-32; Colossians 3:5-11*

Put on Christ, the new man, and the armor of God. *Romans 13:11-14; Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 4:20-24, 6:10-18; Colossians 3:9-17*

- 4. Victory over the Enemy.** God has given you everything you need to be victorious over the enemy. You, however, must activate and use what He has provided through faith and prayer.

The Armor of God. The armor of God must be understood and put on daily. *Ephesians 6:10-20*

The Word of God. Jesus defeated the devil by quoting Scripture. The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. You must know and memorize Scripture to be able to use it when needed. This is having your sword ready. *Ephesians 6:17; Luke 4:1-13; Hebrews 4:12*

The Presence of God. Staying close to the good Shepherd keeps the wolf (devil) away. If you stray from the Shepherd, then the wolf is more likely to attack. Drawing near to God is a way to resist the devil and provide yourself protection from him. *Psalms 91; John 10:11-16; 15:1-8; Romans 13:11-14; James 4:7-8 (1 Thessalonians 5:8; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 John 4:4)*

The Anointing of God. You have the anointing of the Holy Spirit which gives you spiritual discernment over situations (see Lesson 7). This helps you identify the enemies and their plots against you so that you do not fall for their deceptions and traps. *John 16:13; 1 John 2:20-27 (Philippians 1:9-11)*

The Wisdom of God. You can ask God at any time for wisdom and advice about a situation. What an incredible opportunity! *Proverbs 2:3-22, 3:5-6; James 1:5-8*

The Angels of God. God uses His angels to protect and help you. *Psalm 91:11-13; Daniel 6:22, 10:10-14, 12:1; Hebrews 1:14 (Genesis 19:1-25; Acts 5:19, 12:7)*

The Protection of God. God Himself is your protection and refuge. As a child of God you can call on Him at any time for protection and victory over the enemy. *Psalm 18, 91; Romans 8:31-34; Ephesians 6:18*

The Deliverance of God. God will deliver you from the enemy. *Psalm 34:7, 17, 19; 2 Corinthians 1:9-10; 2 Timothy 3:10-11, 4:17-18 (1 Samuel 26:24; Colossians 1:13)*

The Testimony of God. Your personal testimony is a weapon against the enemy, along with the blood of Jesus Christ which saves you. *Revelation 12:9-11*

The Freedom of God. The enemy is your accuser before God, but you have Jesus Christ as your advocate. He has cleansed you from all your sins and there is no condemnation because you are in Christ. You are free from sin's penalty, power, and condemnation. The devil has nothing to accuse you of before the Father because of Jesus. *Romans 8:1, 33-34; 1 John 2:1*

- 5. Victory over the World.** You have already learned that the "world" is not the physical world of nature but the entire system of fallen human existence that is opposed to the true and living God and His salvation from sin through Jesus Christ. It is ruled by Satan and targets the sinful nature/flesh through lust and pride as means for self-fulfillment and self-preservation. You overcome the world by everything that you have studied in this lesson. *John 16:33; 2 Peter 1:3-4; 1 John 5:4-5*

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6. Victory over Trials and Suffering. You have already studied trials and suffering in Lesson 22. The most important aspect for victory during life's difficulties is the right perspective. If you remember that God is in control and that He uses trials to help you grow and mature, it changes everything. When you compare your struggles with the coming glory and eternity with the Lord, they begin to shrink and seem less important. God also promises that all things work together for your good even if you do not understand while you are in the middle of your trials. Do not forget, the Lord is with you and comforts you in the midst of it all (see Lesson 22). *Romans 8:18-39; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; Hebrews 11:24-26 (Acts 20:22-24; John 16:33)*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Read *James 4:7-10*. James says to resist the devil and he will flee, but what does James say right before and after this? Why is this integral to resisting the enemy? How do you practically do both?

2. Read *Galatians 5:16-26* and *Romans 8:1-14, 13:11-14*. The key to victory over your flesh is the power of the Holy Spirit. If you can control yourself, then you also gain victory over sin, the devil, and the world because, in the end, you are the culprit. How do you walk in the Spirit? What do you practically need to do to let the Holy Spirit give you the victory? What are the different components of your spiritual life that are necessary for victory? How often does this need to occur?

3. Read *Romans chapter 6*. Go back and focus on verses 3, 6, 11, 13, 16, and 19. What are the critical steps you need to take to gain victory over sin?

WEEK 8 • LESSON 23
Abundant Victory

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REFLECTIONS

Week 8

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this week's lessons. Ask God to speak to your heart and reveal to you what's important. Then spend some time answering the questions below. Write down your responses to discuss them in your small groups or as a journal entry to remember what you have learned.

INSIGHTS:

What are some of the key insights you have learned from this week's lessons? What has stood out to you? What has spoken to your heart?

Lesson 21 • Abundant Struggle

Lesson 22 • Abundant Suffering

Lesson 23 • Abundant Victory

APPLICATIONS:

How should you respond to what you have learned in this week's lessons? What do you need to do differently? What changes do you feel the Lord leading you to make? What specific steps can you take?

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Part III
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Results**

WEEK 9  **LESSON 24**

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- FRUIT -
ABUNDANT LOVE FOR OTHERS
The Focus of Love



You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

These things I command you, that you love one another.

John 15:16-17 NKJV

The abundant transformation that we have just studied results in abundant fruit, which is love. A healthy maturing Christian will be producing the fruit of love in their lives as they are being transformed by God. The heart of love is unselfish giving of ourselves, and the focus of love is others. The Great Commandment is to love God with all of our hearts. This is a given and is essential to health and transformation (Lesson 17). God is first, others are second, and we are last. The only source of love is God. God is agape love. This is why we must be right with God and have His power flowing through us to have any chance of genuinely loving others. Everything must be done in the power of God's love with the other person's best interest at heart. We should love everyone, whether they are believers or unbelievers. We will draw people to Jesus when we love them.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

1. **Love one another.** God's agape love is the hallmark of being a Christian. Loving one another is the second Great Commandment of God. The

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verses that you will study in #'s 2-17 below are all aspects of love. Love unselfishly gives and cares for others. *Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:34-40; John 13:34-35, 15:12-17; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14, 22-26; James 2:8-9; 1 John 3:23, 4:7-12; 2 John 5 (1 Peter 1:22, 4:8)*

2. **Be devoted to one another.** You are to be devoted to others with a heart ready to help, serve, or minister when needed. *Romans 12:10*
3. **Look out for one another.** You need to look out for the interests of others, whether they are emotional, spiritual, or physical. Your mindset should be concern for their well-being. *Philippians 2:4*
4. **Honor one another.** You should respect one another and see the good in others and their potential to serve God in Christ. *Romans 12:3, 5, 10; 1 Corinthians 12:20-26; Philippians 2:3*
5. **Be honest with one another.** You need honesty to trust other people. Lying and deceiving are of the devil. You will ruin your Christian witness without honesty. *Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9*
6. **Accept one another.** Along with your brothers and sisters in Christ, you are a fallen sinner. Each of us has our own problems and faults. Since God has accepted you, you need to accept each other. *Romans 15:7*
7. **Admonish/instruct one another.** Love warns and even rebukes with the goal of restoration and protection. It is selfish to ignore dangerous or sinful behavior. This must be done in God's timing and can only be accomplished by His love flowing through you. *Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16*
8. **Agree with one another.** Christians need unity and oneness in Jesus Christ. You will not agree on everything, but you can agree on the essentials of the Gospel, the need to reach the lost, and to love others as yourselves. *Romans 12:16; Philippians 2:2; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Peter 3:8*

9. **Serve and minister to one another.** You need to serve each other and the lost. This will be covered in Lessons 25-27. *Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 4:10*

10. **Tolerate/bear with one another.** We all have many faults, idiosyncrasies, and weaknesses. Believers need to tolerate and not look down on each other. This does not mean overlooking sin, but it means not expecting everyone else to be perfect or the way you think they should be. The more you realize how fallen you are (a sign of spiritual growth), the more tolerant you will become of others. *Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13*

11. **Forgive one another.** God has forgiven you of all of your sins. You, therefore, must forgive others. Trust is earned but forgiveness is mandatory. *Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13; Mathew 6:14-15; 18:21-35; Luke 23:34*

12. **Be kind and compassionate to one another.** Kindness is unselfish niceness. Compassion empathizes with another person's problems and desires to help that person, leading you to take action on his or her behalf. *Ephesians 4:32; 1 Peter 3:8*

13. **Submit to one another.** You need to humble yourself before God and one another. *Ephesians 5:21-33; 1 Peter 5:5*

14. **Encourage/build up/exhort one another.** You have a great opportunity to encourage others with the Word of God and the Gospel. This is true for the saved and unsaved. God has so many promises and amazing gifts of grace that you could spend the rest of your life encouraging others in the Lord and in His love, grace, and goodness. As you have studied, life is filled with problems and struggles. You can comfort people in their struggles and especially in areas you have already been through due to God's power and grace. *1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11; Hebrews 3:13, 10:25*

15. **Motivate one another.** Almost all of us get lazy and need motivation. When I am down, pick me up, and then I will return the favor later. *Hebrews 10:24*

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16. Confess to one another. You should always confess your sins to God, but there are times when you need to confess sins and problems to others for help and guidance or for forgiveness and restoration. *James 5:16*

17. Pray for one another. We all need prayer. Pray for each other and for the lost. *1 Thessalonians 5:25; 2 Thessalonians 1:11, 3:1-2; Hebrews 13:18-19 (Colossians 1:9-10)*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Read *Philippians 2:1-11*. What does Paul exhort you to do? What is his goal in these verses for you as a Christian? What should the example of Christ encourage and compel you to do?
2. Read *Matthew 18:21-35* and *Ephesians 4:32*. Why must we forgive one another? What happens when you do not forgive but harbor resentment? What is the difference between forgiveness and trust? How do they relate in the forgiveness process?
3. Read *James 5:16* and *1 Thessalonians 5:25*. Why do we need to pray for each other? Read *Luke 6:27-36*. How can praying for someone who has done you wrong help you to love them like the Lord commands? Did God love you when you were His enemy? Read *Romans 5:6-11* and discuss.



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Part III
**Abundant
Results**

WEEK 9  **LESSON 25**

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- FRUIT -
ABUNDANT GIVING
The Giving of Love



But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also.

2 Corinthians 8:7 NKJV

The abundant transformation results in abundant fruit, which is love. God's love can be defined as unselfish, others-centered giving, which is exemplified in its highest form on the cross. God gave His only Son so that we could have eternal life. A growing and maturing Christian will be focused on giving themselves in order to help others in need. This is Christian love in action. Giving makes us more like God, draws us closer to God, enables others to see God, and helps us let go of materialism and our fixation on self.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. Giving Yourself.** The main thing that you need to give up is yourself! We are naturally self-centered and self-focused in this modern world that we think revolves around us. The power of God in you, however, enables you to give up your time, desires, resources, heart, and life to the will of God. God has given everyone different talents, skills, strengths, testimonies, and resources that can be used to help others for God's glory. It all starts, however, with letting go of yourself.

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Giving Yourself to God. You have already studied in Lesson 12 the essential importance of surrendering your life to God. You must first give yourself back to your Creator for His purpose and glory. Please review Lesson 12 as needed. *Matthew 16:24-27; Mark 10:17-22; Luke 14:25-33; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Revelation 12:11 (Acts 20:24)*

Giving Yourself to Others. Once you have given yourself to God, He will use you to be a blessing to other people. Your heart will naturally have a concern for others and their welfare as the Holy Spirit empowers you to be selfless and focused on others. God gives you your life, talents, and resources to give back to others. You are a channel and conduit for God's blessings to flow to others. *Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Isaiah 58:7-10; 2 Corinthians 8:9-15; Ephesians 5:25, 28-33; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; James 1:27; 1 John 3:16-19 (Romans 16:3-4; Philippians 2:19-30; Hebrews 13:16)*

- 2. Giving Your Money.** If God has your heart, then He has your wallet! He does not need your money, but He wants you to invest in His kingdom and in eternal rewards that will last forever. He has chosen to use you to finance His kingdom and ministries. You need to understand that everything you have belongs to the Lord and has been given to you by Him. You are merely giving back what He has first given to you. Giving to God helps your heart be focused on Him, others, and Heaven. It strengthens your faith and blesses you in return! You should give willingly, joyfully, sacrificially, and expectantly. *Genesis 14:17-20, 28:22; Leviticus 27:30; Deuteronomy 14:22-23; Proverbs 3:9-10; Malachi 3:8-11; Matthew 6:19-24; Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7, 9:6-15; Philippians 4:14-20 (Genesis 28:22; Proverbs 11:25, 22:9; Matthew 23:23; Luke 6:38)*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- 1.** Read *Matthew 6:19-21*. What are the "treasures" on earth that will rot, decay, and be stolen? What are the "treasures" in Heaven that are immune to this? What is the difference? Why? How do we lay up treasures in Heaven?

What does it mean that where your treasure is your heart will follow?

How can you use this principle to draw closer to God and His purposes?

WEEK 9 • LESSON 25

Abundant Giving

2. Read *1 John 3:16-19*. What should you do for a brother/sister in need? How do you do that practically? Should you take the credit as a “good person” or give the credit and glory to God? What is the blessing that you get for helping others?

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REFLECTIONS

Week 9

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this week's lessons. Ask God to speak to your heart and reveal to you what's important. Then spend some time answering the questions below. Write down your responses to discuss them in your small groups or as a journal entry to remember what you have learned.

INSIGHTS:

What are some of the key insights you have learned from this week's lessons? What has stood out to you? What has spoken to your heart?

Lesson 24 • Abundant Love for Others

Lesson 25 • Abundant Giving

APPLICATIONS:

How should you respond to what you have learned in this week's lessons? What do you need to do differently? What changes do you feel the Lord leading you to make? What specific steps can you take?

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Part III
**Abundant
Results**

WEEK 10  **LESSON 26**

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- FRUIT -
ABUNDANT SERVICE
The Servant of Love



Whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Mark 10:43-45 NKJV

The Lord Jesus Christ was the perfect servant while He was on earth. His entire life and ministry was about others. He never did anything to benefit Himself. He never used His power to help Himself. He came to die so that others might live through Him. As Christians, we are to follow His example and give up our lives to serve God and others. When we serve God, He has us serve others. When we serve others, we are serving God.

There are many ways and places to be a servant. We should serve at home, at church, in the workplace, and in the world. We should serve God, our families, fellow Christians, friends, neighbors, and the world around us. The power to be a servant comes from God living within us. The perfect servant, Jesus Christ, lives within us and can empower us to glorify Him if we surrender to His will and abide in His power, presence, and Word to do it. We must avoid serving ourselves at the expense of others.

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VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. Serving God.** In Lesson 12 you studied how you are a bondservant. You should view yourself as God's servant, created to glorify Him and serve others. There are many ways that you can serve God, and you have already reviewed many of them in other lessons. If you are surrendered to the Lord and walking in His will by the power of the Holy Spirit, then you will naturally be serving God and others, which brings Him glory. The essential ingredient is surrender, because you must be doing the will of God in your service to Him. Serving God is serving others since God is all about other people. Jesus is our example of the perfect servant. *Matthew 24:45-51; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Colossians 3:22-24; 2 Timothy 2:3-4 (Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9)*
- 2. Serving Others.** You can serve others in the name of the Lord in many ways. You can help people, pray for them, encourage them, be with them in hard times, teach them, and support them, just to name a few. God wants His people to serve each other and to serve the unbelieving world as a way of demonstrating the love of God to them. You should be serving others everywhere you go—home, school, work, church, the world, etc. Being a servant makes other people and their welfare your priority. All of the “one anothers” we studied in the last lesson are forms of serving others. *Mark 9:33-35, 10:43-45; John 13:1-17; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Galatians 5:13-15, 6:2; Philippians 2:1-4; 2 Timothy 2:24-26*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- 1.** Read *Colossians 1:3-8, 4:7-9*, and *Philippians 2:19-30*. What can you learn about being a servant from these descriptions of Epaphras, Tychicus, Timothy, and Epaphroditus?

WEEK 10 LESSON 27

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- FRUIT -
ABUNDANT HARVEST
The Goal of Love



The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

Matthew 9:37-38 NKJV

The ultimate goal of God is to save people. Jesus Christ came to save sinners by dying on the cross for the sins of the world. Our goal should be to win people to Christ. We should see every person as God's creation that He loves, died for, and cares about more than we can ever comprehend. As we grow and mature in the Lord, we should begin to share our faith and have a heart for the lost. Our relationship with God which keeps discovering the depths of His love should compel us to try to reach the lost. We are only responsible for presenting the Gospel in a loving and appropriate way. Anyone can give their testimony. We cannot save anyone or convince anyone to be a Christian. It is up to God to save them and up to the person to choose Christ.

VERSES TO READ, STUDY, AND MEDITATE ON:

- 1. Ambassadors of the Gospel.** God has declared that you are His ambassador of the Gospel. You are His representative who has been entrusted to tell everyone what He has done on the cross. He has given you the ministry of reconciliation. He wants you to plead His case of love to a lost and dying world. *2 Corinthians 5:18-21*

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- 2. Spreading the Gospel.** You have been given the greatest message with the greatest story of all time. God has entrusted it to you and commanded you to tell as many people as you can. *Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; John 15:27, 20:21; Acts 1:8, 4:33; 1 John 4:14 (Luke 14:15-24, 24:46-49; Acts 5:32; 1 Corinthians 1:17; Philemon 6)*
- 3. Sowing and Watering the Gospel.** God has given you an analogy for spreading His word of salvation: It is like planting a seed. A seed must be planted in fertile soil and be watered. You can plant seeds in people's hearts and water them by telling them about Jesus and then showing them His love in your service and kindness to them. You plant seeds by loving people and serving them. When you share the Good News of Jesus with people, you have no idea who has planted and watered before you. It could be harvest time! The seeds will later germinate and give you an opportunity to directly share the reason for your caring about them. People need to know that you care before they will listen to what you believe. *Luke 8:4-15; John 4:34-38; 1 Corinthians 3:5-8*
- 4. Not Ashamed of the Gospel.** Sometimes Christians can be ashamed or embarrassed to tell people about Christ. You might worry about what they will think and fear their rejection, but you should not be ashamed or afraid. You have the power of God in your message and living within you. The more you have the love of God in your heart from devotion and worship, the easier it will be to share your faith. You will be compelled to tell people because it is bursting out of you. You cannot judge your effectiveness by their response. *Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 1:8-12; 1 Corinthians 1:18; Psalm 40:9-10, 71:14-16, 119:46; Mark 8:38*
- 5. A Heart for the Gospel and the Lost.** God has a heart for the Gospel and the lost, and so should you. If you are in a right relationship with the Lord, then you should have a burden to tell people about His salvation. You should fear for their souls and desire that they experience not only salvation, but the loving relationship that you have right now. Your selfish, sinful nature will not care, but the Holy Spirit living within you can give you this desire and heart for the lost that comes from God. The reality of God living within you and your state of eternal life now is also a stark reminder of the reality of the separation from God to those all around and warns them of the danger of entering eternity

without God. *Psalm 119:136; Isaiah 6:8; Luke 19:10; Romans 9:1-3, 10:1; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, 10:33; 2 Corinthians 5:14-16; 2 Timothy 2:8-10, 4:1-5 (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)*

- 6. Ready to Share the Gospel.** You need to be ready to share the Gospel. How can you be ready? You can rehearse your testimony, pray for God to enable you to share in a loving way, and have a Bible or tracts on hand in case a situation arises in your path. You also need to be waiting, watching, and expecting God to give you divine appointments to share your faith or begin to build relationships that will one day enable you to share. You need to walk with a God-consciousness and be tuned in to the fact that even in the midst of your busy life He is about saving souls. He gave His life! He is eager for you to tell people what He has done for them. You can also read books, study, and make sure you know basic Bible verses about salvation like *John 3:16, Romans 3:23, 6:23, and 10:8-10*. If you are praying and watching, then God will give you an open “door” to tell someone about Jesus Christ. *Romans 1:15; 1 Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12; Colossians 4:2-5; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; 1 Peter 3:15-16*

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Read *John 4:1-42*. What can you learn about witnessing from Jesus and His interaction with the woman at the well? How does He start the conversation? How does He change the topic to the spiritual realm? How does He deal with the woman’s sin?

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2. Read *Luke 8:4-15*. What is the seed? What is the ground that the seed falls on? What can you learn from this parable about how people will respond to the salvation message? Did the sower selectively spread his seed? If you sense there is a problem with the soil/ground, what can you do to change it? Who has that power?

3. Read *2 Corinthians 5:18-21*. What is an ambassador? What can you learn from the role of an ambassador about your responsibility to share the Gospel with the lost?

4. Read *Acts 22:1-21* and *26:1-32*. What can you learn from the Apostle Paul giving his testimony? What does he appeal to? What is his strategy? How does he ask for a response?



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REFLECTIONS

Week 10

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INSIGHTS:

What are some of the key insights you have learned from this week's lessons? What has stood out to you? What has spoken to your heart?

Lesson 26 • Abundant Service

Lesson 27 • Abundant Harvest

APPLICATIONS:

How should you respond to what you have learned in this week's lessons? What do you need to do differently? What changes do you feel the Lord leading you to make? What specific steps can you take?

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THE ABUNDANT LIFE PATHWAY

- REVIEW -

The figure on the next page summarizes The Abundant Life pathway. It all starts with abundant revelation from the Word of God. This revelation of the grace of God is so amazing and incredible that the believer then has an abundant response to God that is initiated through surrender. The abundant response of the believer to God's revelation results in God responding back. This sets up a feedback loop creating an abundant relationship, which defines the abundant state of spiritual health. The abundant results are the natural outflow and result of abundant health. All of these feed back into each other, creating a continuing cycle of increasing spiritual growth, health, and results.

The more we learn about our Heavenly Father and Lord Jesus Christ, the more we respond and grow in Him, which opens up more room for the cycle to continue. We fall deeper and deeper in love and are increasingly amazed at the Person and work of God in our lives. The more we grow and know, the more we surrender and serve from gratitude, awe, and wonder.

PART I

ABUNDANT REVELATION



PART II

ABUNDANT RESPONSE



ABUNDANT HEALTH



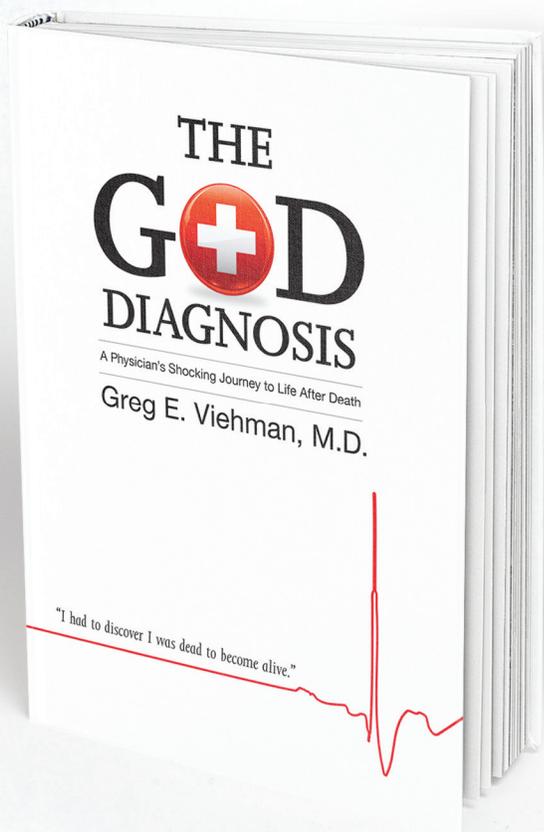
PART III

ABUNDANT RESULTS

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