



Portion:

Title:

SCRIPTURES

- Genesis 23:1-25:18
- II Corinthians 10:1-11
- II Peter 1:1-15

BICYCLES DON'T HAVE REVERSE

- The Rules of Engagement
- Weapons of Warfare
- Course Correction

Have you ever been tempted to go backwards? You know, when you've chosen to do what was right and it still ain't working out. It stinks when good decisions seem to yield bad results. What then? "Must you go back to, from where you came?" It's certainly tempting to reverse your decisions when you're sure you did things God's way and it turned out to be a big mess. "No good deed goes unpunished" is the comical euphemism often inserted in these situations.

Nevertheless, it's also abundantly clear that going in reverse is NOT the answer. I'd like you to consider your faith-walk like riding a bicycle. It can be wobbly at times, and truly, steering takes a million micro-corrections to get you where you want to go. But, bicycles don't have reverse. Sometimes you just have to keep going forward until you find the right spot to make bigger turns. But don't be mistaken, you are always going forward. I really like how Abraham

said it, as he instructed his servant on finding a wife for Isaac. I'll paraphrase it for you. "Go find a wife for my son, but under no circumstances are you to take him back to, from where I came. That life is over and all of God's promises are right in front of us."

THEME: MAIN SCRIPTURE(S) THAT HAS INSPIRED MESSAGE

"And the servant said to him, "Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. **Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?**" But Abraham said to him, "**Beware that you do not take my son back there.** The Lord God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, '**To your descendants I give this land,**' He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then **you will be released** from this oath; **only do not take my son back there.**"'" Genesis 24:5-8 NKJV

OUTCOME: MAIN TAKEAWAY(S) I AM HOPING FOR PEOPLE

"For **we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities**, against **powers**, against the **rulers of the darkness** of this age, against **spiritual hosts of wickedness** in the heavenly places. Therefore **take up the whole armor of God**, that you may be

able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

Ephesians 6:12-13 NKJV

“But also **for this very reason**, giving all diligence, add to your **faith** virtue, to **virtue** knowledge, to **knowledge** self-control, to **self-control** perseverance, to **perseverance** godliness, to **godliness** brotherly kindness, and to **brotherly kindness love**. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For **he who lacks these things** is shortsighted, even to blindness, and **has forgotten** that he was cleansed from his old sins.” II Peter 1:5-9 NKJV

Let's Set the Scene: Portion in a blurb

1. The narrative begins with the words “Now Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years.” In this portion of the scripture Abraham mourns the passing of his wife Sarah, Isaac’s mother. Afterwards, he procures a wife for his son Isaac. It includes an extremely prophetic section in which Abraham insists that he pay for and take title deed of the land on which Sarah is to be buried. At the end of this portion, Abraham is laid to rest beside his beloved wife.

2. **Sarah's Death and Burial:** Sarah dies at one hundred and twenty-seven years old and Abraham goes into mourning.
3. As he is a foreigner and a visitor in the land, he asks to purchase property for a burial place.
4. As he is well regarded among the leaders of the land, this is their response: *"Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead."* Genesis 23:6 NKJV
5. Abraham asks for a specific plot of land, the cave of Machpelah, but insists he buy it for full price.
6. Ephron, who owns the land, wants to give it freely, and even have witnesses verify he has done so.
7. But, Abraham, again, insists that he pay for it. Nevertheless, Ephron, counters his offer and again makes light of it, this time naming what it is worth (four hundred shekels of silver), but only to emphasize how insignificant it is to him.
8. Abraham hears what it is worth and says, "Sold, for four hundred shekels!"
9. Then the land was legally deeded to Abraham as a possession. *"So the field and the cave that is in it were deeded to Abraham by the sons of Heth as property for a burial place."* Genesis 23:20 NKJV

10. Abraham then buries Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah that he purchased.
11. **Special Reference:** You can see detailed notes about taking legal possession of the land in the sermon on this Torah Portion from two years ago. Title: [Hidden Treasure](#)
12. **A Bride for Isaac:** At the end of last week's portion we saw the introduction to Rebekah. Abraham is informed that his brother Nahor and his wife Milcah have been blessed with eight sons. One of them is Bethuel, who is the father of **Rebekah!** This is significant because the narrative of Abraham's and Issac's great faith, which affirms Issac as the SEED OF PROMISE, ends by introducing the woman to whom Isaac would one day be married!
13. Abraham is very old and he asks his most long-standing servant to vow that he would not let Isaac take a bride from among the women of Canaan, but, instead, he would go back to Abraham's native land (as his emissary) to find a wife for Issac from among his family, and to bring her to him. [**Confirmation 1:** *this is one of three criteria to confirm Isaac's wife, two of them from Abraham.*]
14. His servant is concerned that the woman he finds might not want to come to Canaan, but regardless, Abraham insists that

under no circumstances is he to take Isaac back to that land with him, as it is Canaan that is the land of promise.

15. Abraham tells his servant that if the woman is not willing to come to Canaan, then he will be released from the oath. This is a “more than you can ask or imagine” stipulation as he is saying that not only must the family be willing to let her go, which is the custom of the day, but the woman herself must be willing to go! [**Confirmation 2:** *her willingness to leave her country to come to Canaan is the second criteria from Abraham to confirm Isaac’s wife.*]
16. The servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham and swore to him concerning this matter. [**Note:** *it is likely that his servant placed his hands near or under Abraham’s testicles as the “thigh” literally means “loins or the seat of procreative power.” It seems that oaths were sworn in such a way to show the seriousness and severity of a promise, as to strongly affect or be witnessed by future generations.*]
17. **The Servant Departs on the Mission:** Ten of Abraham’s servants depart on the mission to find a wife for Isaac and they set out for Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor (Abraham’s brother).
18. They arrive at a well outside the city and the chief servant (the actual representative, emissary, ambassador, apostle) of Abraham offers up a prayer asking for Yahweh to show him

Isaac's wife by a specific answer to his request. **This is the nature of his prayer:** "Yahweh, I am setting this fleece before you; when the women come out to the well to draw water, the one from whom I ask for a drink from her pitcher, who says yes, but then also offers to draw water for my camels, this will be the one appointed by You to be Isaac's wife!" [**Confirmation 3:** *this is the third criteria to confirm Isaac's wife, this one set forth as a fleece by Abraham's emissary.*]

19. **Beautiful Rebekah Draws Water:** Rebekah arrives at the well and Abraham's servant notices her beauty and even somehow knows she is a virgin. He goes to meet her and asks for water. She happily gives him water and then says... *"I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking."* (Genesis 24:19 NKJV) Notice how Rebekah not only draws water for the camels, but she does so until they are finished drinking! This again reminds me of how God gives us more than we can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20).
20. Even with this most dramatic indication that Yahweh had answered his prayer, the servant sits in stunned silence and wonderment. She still must meet Abraham's two requirements. Is she the one? Is she from the family of Abraham and would she be willing to go? He waits until the camels finish drinking, gives her valuable gold jewelry, and then asks, "**Whose**

daughter are you? Tell me, please, is there room in your father's house for us to lodge?" Genesis 24:23 NKJV

21. Remember, Abraham sent his servant on a mission: "You shall go to my country **and to my family**, and take a wife for my son Isaac." (Genesis 24:4 NKJV) If she is related to Abraham, this will satisfy his master's first criteria. Does she meet this requirement? She certainly was an answer to his prayer, but, "**Whose daughter is she?**"
22. **Is she from the family of Abraham?** "So she said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah's son, whom she bore to Nahor [Abraham's brother!]." (Genesis 24:25 NKJV) Rebekah is Abraham's brother's granddaughter. I think this more than qualifies as family. Confirmation one is sealed!
23. **Thankful in Prayer:** Abraham's servant acknowledges the miraculous ANSWER to both Abraham's first requirement, and to his own prayer. "Blessed be Yahweh who has led me to the house of my master's brethren."
24. **Next Rebekah Testifies to her Mother and Brother:** Rebekah races home and tells her mother and brother Laban of all that has happened. [**The First Witness:** this is the first testimony/ witness.]

25. Laban welcomes them in with open arms and wants to hear all about it; *“Come in, O blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside?”* Genesis 24:31 NKJV
26. Food was set before them, but Abraham’s servant says, *“I will not eat until I have **told** about my errand.”* (Genesis 24:33 NKJV) [**The Second Witness: this is the second testimony/ witness.**]
27. **Details of the Servant’s Testimony to Laban and Bethuel, Rebekah’s brother and father:** The servant ambassador recounts every detail of the testimony in Genesis 24:34-49.
- a) The LORD has blessed my master greatly and Sarah my master’s wife bore a son when she was old; and to him he has given all that he has.
 - b) My master Abraham made me promise I would not take a wife for his son Isaac from the daughters of the Canaanites.
 - c) Instead, I shall go to his father’s house and to his family, and take a wife for his son.
 - d) I asked him, *“What if the woman will not follow me?”*
 - e) He was sure it would all work out as he encouraged; *“The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father’s house.”*

- f) And just to comfort me, he assured me; *“You will be released from this oath if you arrive among my family and they will not give her to you.”* (And remember, also if SHE refuses to go!)
- g) Today, I came to the well and prayed, *“If a virgin comes to draw water, and I say to her, ‘Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink,’ and she says to me, ‘Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,’— let her be the one!”*
- h) And that is exactly what happened with Rebekah.
- i) Then I asked her, *“Whose daughter are you?”* When she told me she was Nahor’s granddaughter, I knew this was a confirmation of my master’s first criteria.
- j) I was so thankful that *“I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to take **the daughter of my master’s brother** for his son.”* (Genesis 24:48 NKJV)
Obviously he means the daughter of his master’s brother’s **household**, as Rebekah is not Nahor’s daughter, but his granddaughter, Bethuel’s daughter.
- k) **Only one criteria remains:** Will they release her for Issac?
And will she be willing to go?

28. **Laban and Bethuel Respond:** *“Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, **“The thing comes from the LORD;** we cannot speak to you either bad or good. **Here is Rebekah***

before you; take her and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the LORD has spoken." (Genesis 24:50-51) The final criteria is almost confirmed, the family will let her go! But will Rebekah agree?

29. **Let's Delay:** Laban (brother) and Milcah (mother) want a short delay (10 days) before they release Rebekah.
30. **Let's Not Delay:** The servant pushes back... *"Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master."* Genesis 24:56 NKJV
31. **Let's Ask Rebekah:** *"So they said, "We will call the young woman and ask her personally." Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go.""* (Genesis 24:57-58 NKJV) Not only is it okay with Nahor, Milcah, Laban, and Bethuel for Rebekah to leave her country, but so too with Rebekah! It is all confirmed. Yet again, this reminds me of how God gives us more than we can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20).
32. **Sent with a Blessing:** *And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: "Our sister, may you become The mother of thousands of ten thousands; And may your descendants possess The gates of those who hate them.""* Genesis 24:60 NKJV

33. **Off She Goes:** *“Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.”* Genesis 24:61 NKJV
34. **Isaac meets Rebekah and she becomes his wife:** Abraham’s servant ambassador tells Issac the entire testimony [***The Third Witness:*** *This is the third testimony/witness. Can you recognize how important it is to tell your testimony?*] There is not much more to do after all these supernatural affirmations than to just get married.
35. *And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent; and **he took Rebekah and she became his wife**, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.”* Genesis 24:66-67
36. **Abraham’s wife after the death of Sarah:** Abraham marries Keturah and she gives him many more sons and grandchildren. *“Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.”* (Genesis 25:1-2)
37. This 37 years after the birth of Issac and 62 years after God’s original promise to Abraham that he would have his own seed.
38. Don’t you find it curious how flippant this is stated after all the drama about Abraham being too old to have his own children when he was 75, and Sarah’s insistence the he has children with

her maidservant Hagar, and then ultimately the birth of Issac 25 years later?

39. Abraham blessed this new family with some gifts and sends them away from the country of Isaac, as he leaves all he has as an inheritance to Isaac.
40. **Abraham's Death and Burial:** Abraham lived one hundred and seventy-five years. His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, the field which Abraham had purchased to bury Sarah.
41. **The Families of Ishmael:** The genealogy of Ishmael is recounted and then he dies at one hundred and thirty-seven years old. He died in the presence of all his brethren.
42. **The next portion begins with the genealogy of Isaac:** *"This is the genealogy of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham begot Isaac."*
Genesis 25:19 NKJV
43. You can see last year's teaching on this portion here: [Fleeces and Testimonies](#)

THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. Contractual Obligations

- A. The basic elements required for the agreement to be a legally enforceable contract are:

- (1) **Mutual Assent:** Agreement by both parties to a contract. Mutual assent must be proven objectively, and is often established by showing **an offer and acceptance** (e.g., an offer to do X in exchange for Y, followed by an acceptance of that offer)
- (2) **Valid Offer:** A valid offer is an expression of **the desire to enter into a contract that is beneficial to both parties** involved in the agreement.
- (3) **Adequate Consideration:** Adequate consideration refers to **a price which is equal in value for an act or a thing for which it is given**. The price can be in the form of money, property, an act, and promise to do an act or not to do an act.
- (4) **Capacity:** The ability, capability, or fitness to do something; a legal right, power, or competency to perform some act. An ability to comprehend both the nature and consequences of one's acts. Capacity relates to **soundness of mind and to an intelligent understanding and perception of one's actions**.
- (5) **Legality:** Legality can be defined as **an act, agreement, or contract that is consistent with the law** or state of being lawful or unlawful in a given jurisdiction, and the

construct of power. The attachment to or observance of law.

B. Your contractual obligation...

- (1) You have the contractual obligation of a servant of God whose job it is to find a wife for His Son! We call this the Gospel of Salvation or Evangelism. Of course this is once you have become His betrothed bride yourself.
- (2) Paul, James, Peter and Jude all identify themselves as bondservants in openings of their letters. No better is the observation of this contractual obligation than in the introduction to Paul's letter to the Romans.
 - (a) "Paul, **a bondservant of Jesus Christ**, called to be an apostle, **separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets** in the Holy Scriptures, **concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord**, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Romans 1:1-4 NKJV
 - (b) See also [The Bondservant and His Master](#) and [Bondage & Bondservants](#) for detailed teachings on the Bondservant.
- (3) Abraham and his most trusted servant...

- (a) In the Biblical narrative in Genesis 24 you will observe the many aspects of a contract. The initial contract is between Abraham and his most trusted and senior servant who is charged with the critical task of procuring a wife for his son Isaac (like we do when we bring people to Christ). But, as you continue to read, you will realize that other parties play key roles in the fulfillment of the obligation. The woman *Rebekah*, of course, but also her mother *Bethuel*, father *Nahor* and brother *Laban*, are all instrumental in Abraham's servant's contractual obligation.
- (b) Read all Genesis 24 to see each of these details, but for our purposes today we will emphasize Genesis 24:1-9, which focuses on Abraham's interaction with his most trusted servant. Might we be considered Yahweh's most trusted servants?

C. The Offer

- (1) **I want to enter into a legal and binding contract with you. Here is my offer—** “Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, **“Please, put your hand under my thigh, and I will make you swear by the Lord,**

the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that **you will not take** a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; **but you shall go** to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac.”” Genesis 24:1-4 NKJV

(a) Swearing an oath—Offer and Consideration

1. **Oaths are a way of life for God’s people—Can you recognize the offer (Yahweh gives) and consideration (You shall)?** ““So it shall be, when **the Lord your God brings you into the land** of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, **to give you** large and beautiful cities which you did not build, houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant—when you have eaten and are full— then beware, lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. **You shall** fear the Lord your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name. **You shall not** go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you”
Deuteronomy 6:10-14 NKJV

(b) Never swear falsely—Your yes shall always mean yes!

1. **No oath should be considered a casual agreement which you might violate because you took that oath by swearing on something other than God—** ““Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, **‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’** But I say to you, do not swear [**falsely**] at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. **But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.**” Matthew 5:33-37 NKJV [also quoted in James 5:12]

D. What if it does not work out; can I go back?

- (1) **What happens if I cannot fulfill my agreement due to circumstances beyond my control? Can I take other measures?** “And the servant said to him, **“Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?”**”
Genesis 24:5 NKJV
- (a) Some things to keep in mind as part of every binding contract. This is the same for both servants and sons.

1. **You were bought with a price, so you no longer belong to you—** “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, **whom you have from God [the offer], and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit [the consideration],** which are God’s.” I Corinthians 6:19-20 NKJV
 2. **Your life no longer belongs to you—** “I have been crucified with Christ; **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;** and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20 NKJV
- (b) What does it take to be a disciple (Read Luke 14:25-35)
1. **Open you mind to the bottom line. If you are not willing to give up everything for God, you are not a true disciple—** “So likewise, whoever of you does not **forsake all** that he has cannot be My disciple. “Salt is good; but **if the salt has lost its flavor,** how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”” Luke 14:33-35 NKJV

E. Under no circumstances are you to go back!

(1) **If for any reason outside of your control, you cannot fulfill your contract, under no circumstances are you to bring my son back to my old life—** “But Abraham said to him, **“Beware that you do not take my son back there.”** Genesis 24:6 NKJV

(a) As God’s children we are NEVER to go back to our old lives...

1. **Leave what is behind and press into the future. That is where all of God’s promises are and this is what mature followers of Christ know. If you think otherwise, revelation is coming—** “Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but **I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.** Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but **one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.** Therefore let us, as many as are mature, **have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.** Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already

attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.” Philippians 3:12-16 NKJV

(b) Why are you looking for the living among the dead— (after the resurrection)...

1. **Why are you looking backwards to see what is ahead of you?** “Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “**Why do you seek the living among the dead?**” Luke 24:5 NKJV

(c) Why are you going back to your old ways?

1. **Only a person who forgets that the sin issue is ALREADY resolved is willing to go back and live in those sins again!** “For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and **has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.**” II Peter 1:9 NKJV
2. **One you have escaped your old worldly life, if you choose to go back to it in such a way that it becomes you again, the outcome will be devastating. This does not mean there is no room for errors. But, when you choose to “err” so often that your new life resembles your old life, then you never really escaped your old life—** “For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the

knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they **are again entangled in them and overcome**, the **latter end is worse for them than the beginning**. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit [Proverbs 26:11]," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."" II Peter 2:20-22 NKJV

F. The promise is right in front of us! (The Consideration)

- (1) **You cannot bring Issac back to that old land (life) because the promise is in this new land (life). And I will go before you with my ministering angel to give you success—** "The Lord God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, '**To your descendants I give this land,**' **He will send His angel before you**, and you shall take a wife for my son from there." Genesis 24:7 NKJV
- (a) Could we have any better promises (Consideration) than these? (And more on this is Section Three: COURSE CORRECTION)

1. **Exceedingly great and precious promises—Divine power—all things that pertain to life and godliness—knowledge of Him—partakers of the divine nature—escape the corruption that is in the world—** “as His **divine power** has given to us **all things that pertain to life and godliness**, through the **knowledge of Him** who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us **exceedingly great and precious promises**, that **through these** you may be **partakers of the divine nature**, having **escaped the corruption that is in the world** through lust.” II Peter 1:3-4 NKJV
- (b) And along the way—all the help you need!
 1. **You have ministering angels at your disposal—there for you to activate any time you need—** “But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? **Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”** Hebrews 1:13-14 NKJV
 1. **Notice what types of angels these are six verses earlier—warning angels with flames of fire!** “And of the angels He says: **“Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire.** [from

Psalm 104:4]"" Hebrews 1:7 NKJV [read all of
Psalm 104]

G. Free to NOT go back

(1) **This is a very cool concept as Abraham releases his servant from any obligations should he run into impossible circumstances. This is exactly how God deals with us! One stipulation—Never go back to your old life!** “And if the woman is not willing to follow you, **then you will be released** from this oath; **only do not take my son back there.**” Genesis 24:8 NKJV

(a) God always gives you a way out!

1. **You will NEVER face something that God has not provided a way to victory or to escape—** “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; **but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able,** but with the temptation **will also make the way of escape,** that you may be able to bear it.” I Corinthians 10:13 NKJV

(b) Excerpts from Romans 6—there is really no better place in the Bible with such a concentration of scriptures empowering you to NEVER go back to your old life! (I recommend your read all of Romans 6).

1. “Certainly not! **How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?**” Romans 6:2 NKJV
2. “knowing this, that **our old man was crucified** with Him, that **the body of sin might be done away with**, that we should **no longer be slaves of sin.**” Romans 6:6 NKJV
3. “For he who has died has been **freed from sin.**” Romans 6:7 NKJV
4. “Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be **dead indeed to sin**, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:11 NKJV
5. “And having been **set free from sin**, you became slaves of righteousness.” Romans 6:18 NKJV
6. “But now having been **set free from sin**, and having become **slaves [bondservants] of God**, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.” Romans 6:22 NKJV

H. A bondservant’s commitment (Mutual Assent)

- (1) **The servant comes into agreement with an oath!** “So the **servant** put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and **swore to him concerning this matter.**” Genesis 24:9 NKJV

(a) Your commitment is to ONE master only—that is why you can never go back! (Mutual Assent)

1. **You cannot serve two masters—** “**No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other.** You cannot serve God and mammon.” Matthew 6:24 NKJV

(b) A servant is not greater than his master (Mutual Assent)

1. **A true servant will never try to represent anything other than what his master represents. He will fulfill his contract precisely as agreed upon—** “Most assuredly, I say to you, **a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.** If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.” John 13:16-17 NKJV

(c) Consider yourself a bondservant

1. **We do not bring our own message our own way because we are simply servants of the One who sent us. We are contracted to bring God’s light, not our own! “For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts**

to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” II Corinthians 4:5-6 NKJV

(d) Could what we are being contracted for be worded any better? We have a Valid Enforceable Contract!

1. **Check out all these contractual elements! All things are of God—He reconciled us—then He gave us the ministry of reconciliation—first God reconciled the world to Himself through Christ—then He committed to us the same role as reconcilers—we are ambassadors for Christ to the world—God uses us to do the same work in the world that Christ did in us—Christ solved the sin issue in us so we could solve the sin issue for others—we represent the righteousness of God to the world—** “Now all things are of God, who has **reconciled us** to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has **given us the ministry** of reconciliation, **that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself**, not imputing their trespasses to them, and **has committed to us the word of reconciliation**. Now then, **we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us**: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. **For He made Him who**

knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” II Corinthians 5:18-21 NKJV

- a) **Valid Offer and Adequate Consideration:** This is a valid offer with outrageous benefits to both parties (us and God).
- b) **Legality:** It is completely in line with God’s heart (Law).
- c) **Capacity:** We have been totally equipped to fulfill our end of the agreement! And we have a sound mind with which to enter this agreement. *“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” II Timothy 1:7 NKJV*
- d) **Mutual Assent:** We have mutually agreed to all the benefits, obligations and stipulations!

Summary: THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. Contractual Obligations

- A. The basic elements required for the agreement to be a legally enforceable contract are:
 - (1) Mutual Assent: an offer and acceptance
 - (2) Valid Offer: a contract that is beneficial to both parties

- (3) Adequate Consideration: equal in value exchange
- (4) Capacity: soundness of mind
- (5) Legality: consistent with the law

B. Your contractual obligation...

- (1) You have the contractual obligation of a servant of God whose job it is to find a wife for His Son! We call this the Gospel of Salvation of Evangelism. Of course this is once you have become His betrothed bride yourself.
- (2) Paul, James, Peter and Jude all identify themselves as bondservants in openings of their letters. No better is the observation of this contractual obligation than in the introduction to Paul's letter to the Romans. "Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ..."
- (3) Abraham and his most trusted servant...
 - (a) In the Biblical narrative in Genesis 24 you will observe the many aspects of a contract. The initial contract is between Abraham and his most trusted and senior servant who is charged with the critical task of procuring a wife for his son Isaac (like we do when we bring people to Christ). But, as you continue to read, you will realize that other parties play key roles in the fulfillment of the obligation. The woman *Rebekah*, of course, but also her mother *Bethuel*, father *Nahor* and

brother *Laban*, are all instrumental in Abraham's servant's contractual obligation.

- (b) Read all Genesis 24 to see each of these details, but for our purposes today we will emphasize Genesis 24:1-9, which focuses on Abraham's interaction with his most trusted servant. Might we be considered Yahweh's most trusted servants?

C. The Offer

- (1) I want to enter into a legal and binding contract with you.

Here is my offer— "you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac." Genesis 24:1-4

- (a) Swearing an oath—Offer and Consideration

- 1. Oaths are a way of life for God's people—Can you recognize the offer and consideration? "You shall fear the Lord your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name." Deuteronomy 6:10-14

- (b) Never swear falsely—Your yes shall always mean yes!

- 1. No oath should be considered a casual agreement which you might violate because you took that oath by swearing on something other than God—
Matthew 5:33-37 NKJV [also quoted in James 5:12]

D. What if it does not work out; can I go back?

- (1) What happens if I cannot fulfill my agreement due to circumstances beyond my control? Can I take other measures? Genesis 24:5 NKJV
 - (a) Some things to keep in mind as part of every binding contract. This is the same the same for both servants and sons.
 1. You were bought with a price, so you no longer belong to you— I Corinthians 6:19-20 NKJV
 2. Your life no longer belongs to you— Galatians 2:20
 - (b) What does it take to be a disciple (Read Luke 14:25-35)
 1. Open you mind to the bottom line. If you are not willing to give up everything for God, you are not a true disciple— Luke 14:33-35

E. Under no circumstances are you to go back!

- (1) If for any reason outside of your control, you cannot fulfill your contract, under no circumstances are you to bring my son back to my old life— Genesis 24:6
 - (a) As God's children we are NEVER to go back to our old lives...
 1. Leave what is behind and press into the future. That is where all of God's promises are and this is what mature followers of Christ know. If you think

otherwise, revelation is coming— Philippians
3:12-16

(b) Why are you looking for the living among the dead—
(after the resurrection)...

1. Why are you looking backwards to see what is ahead of you? “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” Luke 24:5

(c) Why are you going back to your old ways?

1. Only a person who forgets that the sin issue is ALREADY resolved is willing to go back and live in those sins again! II Peter 1:9
2. One you have escaped your old worldly life, if you choose to go back to it in such a way that it becomes you again, the outcome will be devastating. This does not mean there is no room for errors. But, when you choose to “err” so often that your new life resembles your old life, then you never really escaped your old life— II Peter 2:20-22

F. The promise is right in front of us! (The Consideration)

- (1) You cannot bring Issac back to that old land (life) because the promise is in this new land (life). And I will go before you with my ministering angel to give you success—
Genesis 24:7

(a) Could we have any better promises (Consideration) than these? (And more on this is Section Three: COURSE CORRECTION)

1. Exceedingly great and precious promises—Divine power—all things that pertain to life and godliness—knowledge of Him—partakers of the divine nature—escape the corruption that is in the world— II Peter 1:3-4

(b) And along the way—all the help you need!

1. You have ministering angels at your disposal—there for you to activate any time you need— Hebrews 1:13-14

1. Notice what types of angels these are six verse earlier—warning angels with flames of fire!
Hebrews 1:7

G. Free to NOT go back

(1) This is a very cool concept as Abraham releases his servant from any obligations should he run into impossible circumstances. This is exactly how God deals with us! One stipulation—Never go back to your old life! Genesis 24:8 NKJV

(a) God always gives you a way out!

1. You will NEVER face something that God has not provided a way to victory or to escape— I Corinthians 10:13
- (b) Excerpts from Romans 6—there is really no better place in the Bible with such a concentration of scriptures empowering you to NEVER go back to your old life! (I recommend your read all of Romans 6).
 1. “How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” Romans 6:2
 2. “our old man was crucified that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.” Romans 6:6
 3. “freed from sin.” Romans 6:7
 4. “dead indeed to sin” Romans 6:11
 5. “set free from sin” Romans 6:18
 6. “set free from sin, become slaves [bondservants] of God” Romans 6:22

H. A bondservant’s commitment (Mutual Assent)

- (1) The servant comes into agreement with an oath! Genesis 24:9
 - (a) Your commitment is to ONE master only—that is why you can never go back! (Mutual Assent)
 1. You cannot serve two masters— Matthew 6:24

- (b) A servant is not greater than his master (Mutual Assent)
 - 1. A true servant will never try to represent anything other than what his master represents. He will fulfill his contract precisely as agreed upon— John 13:16-17
- (c) Consider yourself a bondservant
 - 1. We do not bring our own message our own way because we are simply servants of the One who sent us. We are contracted to bring God's light, not our own! II Corinthians 4:5-6
- (d) Could what we are being contracted for be worded any better? We have a Valid Enforceable Contract!
 - 1. Check out all these contractual elements! All things are of God—He reconciled us—then He gave us the ministry of reconciliation—first God reconciled the world to Himself through Christ—then He committed to us the same role as reconcilers—we are ambassadors for Christ to the world, God is were us to do the same work in the world that Christ did in us—Christ solved the sin issue in us so we could solve the sin issue for others—we represent the righteousness of God to the world—II Corinthians 5:18-2

- a) Valid Offer and Adequate Consideration: This is a valid offer with outrageous benefits to both parties (us and God).
- b) Legality: It is completely in line with God's heart (Law).
- c) Capacity: We have been totally equipped to fulfill our end of the agreement! And we have a sound mind with which to enter this agreement.
- d) Mutual Assent: We have mutually agreed to all the benefits, obligations and stipulations!

WEAPONS OF WARFARE

2. Choose Your Weapon—fulfilling our contractual obligation will not be without challenges and resistance!

A. First—Know You are in a War

(1) In this world you will have trials...

- (a) **You are going to be challenged, but God has already given you the victory!** "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. **In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**" John 16:33 NKJV

- (b) **You are the Victor!** “Yet in all these things we are **more than conquerors** through Him who loved us.” Romans 8:37 NKJV
- (2) It is through many tribulations...
 - (a) **Achieving the fullness of what Yahweh has for us (manifesting the fullness of Christ in us) will take overcoming some serious challenges—** “strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, **“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”**” Acts 14:22 NKJV

B. Know Your Enemy

- (1) A Prowling Lion
 - (a) **The enemy lurks around looking for whom he may devour—** “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like **a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.**” I Peter 5:8 NKJV
- (2) A Murderer and a Liar
 - (a) **A murder who speaks on his own authority—** “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. **He was a murderer** from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, **he speaks from his own**

resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” John
8:44 NKJV

(3) A Thief

- (a) **A thief who wants to murder you, steal your belongings, and destroy your life—** “The **thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.** I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10 NKJV

(4) A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing

- (a) **A deceiver who wants to befriend you—** ““Beware of false prophets, who come to you in **sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.**” Matthew 7:15 NKJV

(5) A Tempter

- (a) **A tempter of faith—** “For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent [this letter] to know your faith, lest by some means **the tempter had tempted you,** and our labor might be in vain.” I Thessalonians 3:5 NKJV
- (b) **A tempter to make you into a traitor—** “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be **tempted by the devil.**” Matthew 4:1 NKJV

(6) A Faith Tester

(a) **Satan will indeed test your faith**— “And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! **Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.** But I have prayed for you, **that your faith should not fail;** and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.”” Luke 22:31-32 NKJV

(7) A Trap

(a) **He lies in wait for you to ruin your testimony and then he presses until you surrender**— “Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, **lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.**” I Timothy 3:7 NKJV

(b) **Eventually he hopes to draw you in so deeply that you have no escape**— “and that they may come to their senses and **escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.**” II Timothy 2:26 NKJV

(8) A Heart Surgeon

(a) **Satan wants to grab hold of your heart in an equal but opposite fashion that God has your heart**— “But Peter said, “Ananias, why has **Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit** and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?” Acts 5:3 NKJV

(9) A Priority Changer

- (a) **Satan would prefer you keep your eyes fixed on the earthly things rather than Godly things—** “But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, **for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.**”” Matthew 16:23 NKJV

C. Know Your Battle

(1) Principalities and Powers

- (a) **The real battle is not in the flesh, but in the spirit realm — “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”** Ephesians 6:12 NKJV

D. Know Your Weapons

(1) Your weapons are not carnal...

- (a) **It’s a mistake if you think I am walking in my own power—** “Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you. But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, **who think of us as if we**

walked according to the flesh.” II Corinthians 10:1-2
NKJV

- (b) **The true weapons of war are spiritual weapons—** “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. **For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God,** bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.” II Corinthians 10:3-6 NKJV
- (c) **“Do you look at things according to the outward appearance?...”** II Corinthians 10:7 NKJV

(2) The Armor of God

- (a) **Put on the whole armor of God—** “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. **Put on the whole armor of God,** that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” Ephesians 6:10-11 NKJV
- (b) **The whole armor of God: gird your waist with truth— the breastplate of righteousness—shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace—above all— shield of faith—the helmet of salvation, the sword of**

the Spirit, which is the Word—praying always by pleading in the Spirit—be watchful—persevere—open your mouth boldly—make known the mystery of the gospel— “Therefore take up **the whole armor of God**, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having **girded your waist with truth**, having put on the **breastplate of righteousness**, and having **shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace**; above all, taking the **shield of faith** with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the **helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**; **praying always** with all **prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful** to this end with all **perseverance** and supplication for all the saints — and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may **open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel**, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.” Ephesians 6:13-20 NKJV

(3) Fix your Eyes

(a) **Don’t get entangled with sin by continuously fixing your eyes on Y’shua—** “Therefore we also, since we are

surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, **let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us**, and let us **run with endurance** the race that is set before us, **looking unto Jesus**, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Hebrews 12:1-2 NKJV

(4) Ministering Angels of Fire!

(a) **Angels of Fire at your disposal when the time is right.**

As many as you need! “But Jesus said to him, “**Put your sword in its place**, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will **provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?** [72,000 angels]” Matthew 26:52-53 NKJV

1. **Angels of fire**— “And of the angels He says: “**Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire.**”” Hebrews 1:7 NKJV
2. **Available to you**— “Are they not all **ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?**” Hebrews 1:14 NKJV

E. **Reminder: The One thing that Can Defeat You...**

- (1) Going back to your past sins!
 - (a) **Forgetting that you are ALREADY forgiven and that you should leave your past in your past**— “For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has **forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.**” II Peter 1:9 NKJV
 - (b) **A dog returns to his own vomit**— “But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: **“A dog returns to his own vomit,”** and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.”” II Peter 2:22 NKJV
 - (c) **Looking at your old life for your new life**— “Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, **“Why do you seek the living among the dead?”** Luke 24:5 NKJV

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- (b) A dog returns to his own vomit— II Peter 2:22
- (c) Looking at your old life for your new life— Luke 24:5

COURSE CORRECTION

3. Troubleshooting and Godly Decision-Making—course correction on your journey to all of Yahweh’s promises!

A. Peter looks back at his discipling/discipleship journey...

(Scripture Reference Guide— II Peter 1:1-15)

- (1) *“Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:” II Peter 1:1 NKJV*
- (2) *“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,” II Peter 1:2 NKJV*
- (3) *“as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,” II Peter 1:3 NKJV*
- (4) *“by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the*

*corruption that is in the world through lust.” II Peter 1:4
NKJV*

- (5) *“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,” II Peter 1:5 NKJV*
- (6) *“to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,” II Peter 1:6 NKJV*
- (7) *“to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” II Peter 1:7 NKJV*
- (8) *“For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” II Peter 1:8 NKJV*
- (9) *“For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.” II Peter 1:9 NKJV*
- (10) *“Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;” II Peter 1:10 NKJV*
- (11) *“for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” II Peter 1:11 NKJV*

B. Consider this the best troubleshooting and course correction guide in the universe!

- (1) A reminder!

(a) “For this reason I will not be negligent **to remind you** always of these things, **though you know and are established in the present truth.** Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, **knowing that shortly I must put off my tent,** just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. Moreover I will **be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.**” II Peter 1:12-15 NKJV

1. Peter says he is about to die and the powerful and essential discipleship truths he is about to write should not be new to them. This shall serve as a **reminder** of what they are ALREADY fully established in, and Peter is writing them down to serve as a **reminder** after his death!

(2) **The foundation everything is built upon:** Free Faith (II Peter 1:1)

(a) Like precious faith—the free gift from Yahweh

1. The faith that it takes to believe Y’shua is the son of God, and that He was crucified, buried, and resurrected for you, is a FREE GIFT FROM YAHWEH.
2. You did not want it; you cannot earn it; you were not bad enough or good enough for it; you were not desperate enough or content enough for it; you were

not lost enough or deserving enough for it; you were not anything enough to receive this free gift. IT IS SIMPLY FREE!

3. It is the foundation of all things. Without it you are nothing, and with it you are everything. It is the spiritual substance that makes up the universe (Hebrews 11:1). It is the very thing that Peter uses to identify himself and to those whom he writes, as equals—"to those with like-precious faith as mine."

(b) **The only way to obtain that faith:** The righteousness of Christ (II Peter 1:1)

(3) **If you are willing to do the work of a disciple, then here are...**

(a) Seven Precious Promises (Remember the consideration in contracts):

1. Access to Divine Power (II Peter 1:3)
2. Have everything we need for a Godly life (II Peter 1:3)
3. Knowledge of Yahweh and Yahshua (II Peter 1:3)
4. Partakers in the divine nature (II Peter 1:4)
5. Escape the corruption in the world (II Peter 1:4)
6. Be neither barren nor unfruitful (II Peter 1:8)

7. Gain an abundant entrance into the Kingdom (II Peter 1:11)

(4) **Seven things you must add to your free faith if you want all the above promises.**

(a) **This is NOT FREE! Add:** Virtue, Knowledge, Self Control, Perseverance, Godliness, Brotherly Love, Love (II Peter 1:5-7)

1. Virtue—always the first thing that follows faith and must precede all others, or your coordinates will ALWAYS be off target!

- a) The world calls this moral excellence. The problem with that definition for our purposes is that morality to the world is an ever-changing moving target. What was considered unacceptable yesterday is perfectly fine today. As a matter of fact, today it is intolerable to have thought such things from yesterday as unacceptable. This is what happens when man's heart is used to define virtue.
- b) Instead, for our purposes, we will simply define virtue as what is right in God's eyes. To build upon our faith we must always ask this question first: "What is right to God in this situation?" In other

words, “What does Yahweh think about this?” Or, “What is God’s heart on this matter?”

- c) And in order to know how to answer that question, we must be able to tap into the heart of God. Fortunately for us, we have not only the rights to do this (as free Faith gave us this right), but we have the ability and obligation to do so. We are told that “We have the mind of Christ,” (I Cor. 2:16) and we are instructed to “take all thoughts captive unto the obedience of Christ.” (II Cor. 10:5)
- d) We start with knowing what is right in God’s eyes before we attempt to add one bit of knowledge.

2. Knowledge—is what you need to know in order to act wisely!

- a) To do what is right in God’s eyes we must fill in the knowledge gap. What do I need to know? What am I missing?
- b) This applies first in the spiritual realm as Paul prays for us by asking that God will give us a spirit of revelation and knowledge (Ephesians 1:17). About what? About all things that pertain to Y’shua, what He has done for us and what we have available at our disposal because of what He has done for us.

- c) If you add knowledge before you aim in the right direction (which would be virtuous thing to do), then no matter how much knowledge you gain, no matter how much of an expert you become, **YOU WILL ALWAYS MISS THE TARGET.**
- d) This, of course, assumes you want to hit the target that Yahweh is holding out for you. Do you?
- e) But once you see the target and you know all you need to do it hit that target, it takes energy and effort to hit it! I can assure you of this, at that point challenges, distractions and difficulties will come. That is why you must always add self-control next.

3. Self-control—don't follow your first impulses and desires!

- a) It is desirous to default to what appears easier. It can be tiring as you pursue the call of God, and even in the little things in life, you must be on constant guard that you are staying the course that He has laid out for you.
- b) Expedience is the spirit of the day—do what is easier, takes less effort, gets the quick flesh-satisfying results, and leaves plenty of energy to fill

your life with more stuff that satisfies your craven desires.

- c) Telling yourself no, when yes is so tempting; and telling yourself yes, when no would be so much more convenient, is a life of self-control.
- d) Self-governance and self-mastery are regular practices for disciples of Christ. But I don't mean this from a personal improvement self-help point of view. I am talking about dying to the flesh because you are filled with the Spirit! (Read Roman 6-8)
- e) Knowing the right thing to do never translates into doing the right thing unless you are a regular practitioner of self-control.
- f) And then, there is always that lingering question when what you know you should do, you do, and you know it is right in God's eyes, so you keep on doing it, and you're sure about it, but it just does not seem to be paying off or getting any easier? How long do you stay with it?
- g) The answer is...FOREVER! And that is why God tells us that perseverance comes next!

4. Perseverance—doing what is right no matter how hard or how long it takes!

- a) In this world you will have trials (John 16:33), Y'shua said. Also, it is through many tribulations we enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Acts 14:22), we learn from the scriptures.
- b) It is clear that suffering, and challenges, and difficulties are part of the process. If Y'shua suffered, why not us? And that is where perseverance shines!
- c) Think of perseverance as PERMANENT SELF-CONTROL. You know what is right from God; you know what to do and how to do it; you discipline yourself to do it; and then it just won't happen; the fruit is elusive; the breakthrough absent; the hope starts to fade.
- d) Don't ever surrender! Don't give up. As Paul even says, "don't grow weary in doing good—in due time you will receive the harvest if you don't give up!" (Galatians 6:9) That is perseverance: permanent, relentless, never-ending self control.
- e) When you can arrive at this place in your spiritual life, and it is translating into all other facets of your

life, then Yahweh wants you to add another component! It's an awesome label and it too has wonderful applications in the natural world in which we live.

5. Godliness —let's call this holistic integrity!

- a) This will make more sense if we take a look at the inner workings of integrity. Think of integrity as a structural engineering term. When a structure is designed correctly, it has integrity—it functions safely as it should and can be trusted.
- b) You don't want to cross a bridge over a deep chasm if the cables were used under the bridge to hold it up and the concrete blocks were used on the top as suspension support, do you? Instead, you want materials to be used for why they were created!
- c) Suspension cables are at their best when they are suspending something. Why? Because they are designed to have strength when they are being pulled. Concrete is at its best when it is used to hold something up from below. Why? Because it is designed to have strength when it is compressed.

- d) When all facets of the bridge are in integrity, it is safe to cross and will offer years of faithful service to those who traverse the deep valley below.
- e) Godliness is spiritual integrity. This means that your Spirit, soul and body are all in complete alignment, doing what they designed to do by their creator. There is no loss of strength in any area—thereby we are living with holistic integrity.
- f) This alignment comes with great benefits; picture the favor of God pouring out of Heaven like rain, and all you must do is stand underneath it, in other words align yourself with where the rain is falling. If you are not standing under the cloud of God's glory pouring out, what do you think you should do? Will God move over to you, or must you move under God's outpouring? Stepping underneath or "aligning" ourselves with God's outpouring, His anointing, in all areas of life, is a life of spiritual integrity, or Godliness.
- g) This is something that must be practiced; it will not come easily, but it is certainly how we are called to live. Paul even encouraged us to be sanctified

(set-part) in Spirit, soul, and body at the coming of Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

- h) Once we have alignment, we are ready to pour ourselves and all this goodness out onto others. That is why the way we relate with others is next.

6. Brotherly Kindness—It's simple, but not easy...prefer others!

- a) A serious disciple of Christ has so much to give others. Just meditate for a moment on all that we just reviewed and think about the type of person you have become to arrive at this place!
- b) You have so many good things pouring into your life, but why? What for?
- c) Christian Alert! It's not about you! It's easy to see that all that Christ did for us was about us, not Himself. That is the model of how we should live...for others. No greater love is there than to lay down our lives for others (John 15:13), like Y'shua did.
- d) It reminds me how Y'shua was careful to quote two areas of scripture when asked about the greatest commandment. One from Deuteronomy 6:4-7, love God! And the other from Leviticus 19:17-18,

love your neighbor! But it also tells us how to love others in those Leviticus verses. Don't stand by and watch your neighbor sin and say NOTHING. Instead, you shall rebuke him and NOT put up with their sins. That is brotherly love at its best!

- e) Let's face it, there is no way to be crafted into the image of Christ, and let's have no doubts, that is our calling, without first being able to switch positions. Others first for me first. Let me say that again. There is no way to be crafted into the image of Christ, without first being able to switch positions. Others first for me first!
- f) When you know the heart of God; know what and how to do what He calls you to do; have the self-control and self-discipline to do it; no matter how long it takes or how hard it is; and you have become resolute to never give up; and you live your life in perfect alignment with God in all facets, Spirit, soul and body; and have arrived at the place where you can, with all honesty say, "My life is not my own; it's about others;" you are ready to tap the Divine Nature!

7. Love—God is love, plain and simple!

- a) Peter tells us in II Peter 1:4 that we have the rights to participate in the Divine Nature. Pause and think about this promise!
- b) We can experience God in us! We can have the mind of God and think like God. WE CAN LOVE LIKE GOD!
- c) God's nature is love. And love is many things, a many faceted diamond. But love is definitely not an emotion or feeling. It is a willful, on purpose decision. Love's all encompassing, uncompromisable description is best elaborated in I Corinthians 13. If all 16 attributes are not at work, at the same time, always, then we are not talking love.
- d) Love is all things all the time—God is love (I John 4:8, 16). It is the pinnacle of the discipleship model, the goal of the path to the divine nature. It is the full stature and image of Christ which is the ultimate goal and mandate for the existence of the church!

(5) And the one thing that will block you from receiving God's promises and partaking in the divine nature...

- (a) **Forgetting** you have already been cleansed from your past sins. (II Peter 1:9)
 - (b) This is beyond radically important. If you were inspired by all that is available to you as a believer, and how to achieve everything God wants for you, then you better take heed to the **ONE THING** that will stop you!
 - (c) DO NOT wallow in your past sins. Leave them exactly where they are—in YOUR PAST!
- (6) **So, because this is simply the most important discipleship and troubleshoot method there is...**
- (a) Be diligent to do these things—they are a sign that you are actually on the team (II Peter 1:10)
 - (b) Trust me, you will not only spend eternity in the kingdom of God, but you will experience it right now on earth. (II Peter 1:11)

C. Important Teachings that support this content:

- (1) [Spiritual Amnesia](#)
- (2) [Precious Promises](#)
- (3) [The Path to the Divine Nature — Foundational Teaching](#)
- (4) [The Path to the Divine Nature — Workshop](#)
- (5) [The Path to the Divine Nature — Scripture Resources](#)
- (6) [Enough Already](#)

Summary: COURSE CORRECTION

3. Troubleshooting and Godly Decision-Making—course correction on your journey to all of Yahweh's promises!

- A. Peter looks back at his discipling/discipleship journey...
(Scripture Reference Guide— II Peter 1:1-15)
- B. Consider this the best troubleshooting and course correction guide in the universe!
 - (1) It's first and foremost a reminder!
 - 1. This shall serve as a reminder of what they are ALREADY fully established in.
 - (2) The foundation everything is built upon: Free Faith (II Peter 1:1)
 - (a) Like precious faith—the free gift from Yahweh
 - (b) The only way to obtain that faith: The righteousness of Christ (II Peter 1:1)
 - (3) If you are willing to do the work of a disciple, then here are...
 - (a) Seven Precious Promises (Remember the consideration in contracts):
 - 1. Access to Divine Power (II Peter 1:3)
 - 2. Have everything we need for a Godly life (II Peter 1:3)
 - 3. Knowledge of Yahweh and Yahshua (II Peter 1:3)

4. Partakers in the divine nature (II Peter 1:4)
5. Escape the corruption in the world (II Peter 1:4)
6. Be neither barren nor unfruitful (II Peter 1:8)
7. Gain an abundant entrance into the Kingdom (II Peter 1:11)

(4) Seven things you must add to your free faith if you want all the above promises.

(a) This is NOT FREE! Add: Virtue, Knowledge, Self Control, Perseverance, Godliness, Brotherly Love, Love (II Peter 1:5-7)

1. Virtue—always the first thing that follows faith and must precede all others, or your coordinates will ALWAYS be off target!
2. Knowledge—is what you need to know in order to act wisely!
3. Self-control—don't follow your first impulses and desires!
4. Perseverance—doing what is right no matter how hard or how long it takes!
5. Godliness —let's call this holistic integrity!
6. Brotherly Kindness—It's simple, but not easy...prefer others!
7. Love—God is love, plain and simple!

- (5) And the one thing that will block you from receiving God's promises and partaking in the divine nature...
 - (a) Forgetting you have already been cleansed from your past sins. (II Peter 1:9)
- (6) So, because this is simply the most important discipleship and troubleshoot method there is...
 - (a) Be diligent to do these things
 - (b) You will not only spend eternity in the kingdom experience it right now on earth.

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

- 1. Discuss the contractual obligation made between Abraham and his most trusted servant regarding finding a wife for Isaac:**
 - A. What were the key elements agreed to?
 - B. Who else was involved?
 - C. What promises were made?
- 2. What was Abraham's most critical stipulation regarding Issac?**
 - A. How does this absolute demand relate to how you should view your past?
- 3. Your life in the faith will face constant challenges:**
 - A. Name eleven key identifiers of your main enemy.

- B. Why would Paul say that our battle is not a against flesh and blood? Who is it against?
- C. What weapons do you have at your disposal?
- D. Why is it critical to leave your past behind you, if you are to win the battle?

4. The Scriptures teach us how to troubleshoot our lives and make course corrections.

- A. Why is it so important to be reminded of such?
- B. What is the system Peter taught that we can institute into all our Godly decision-making processes?
- C. What six things are we promised if we do so?
- D. What is the one thing that will guarantee we do not experience all of God's promises?