

Saturday, December 29, 2012

Insecurity is a fear based in rejection. To rid oneself from that insecurity one needs to take back the power one gave to the people who have hurt one in the past. One's acceptance comes from God. I had dealt with the rejection from my childhood, but not from my first girlfriend. Thankfully God gave me a dream this morning before I woke up where she appeared. Thus allowing me to deal more fully with the wound and have closure in this area. First taking power back that I gave her... then later realizing that I gave power away too easily to others and needed to correct this. Truth sets free... but so does right thinking and right confession. I have to work on right thinking. Thank you Heavenly Father for sending Jesus. Thank you Jesus for being mutilated so that I can be healed. Thank you Holy Spirit for making Jesus present to me. Freedom tastes better and better as time goes by. Thank you Lord God almighty!

Thursday, December 27, 2012

I have believed for a long time that Jesus teaching to not judge, criticize, or condemn is meant for me. These acts come to me so easily. The Old Testament recorded that the Israelites spent 40 years in the Desert before they entered into the Promised Land. One reason for this walking around aimlessly offered by some is that they complained and murmured constantly. They blamed God, they blamed Moses, and they blamed the whole Israelite community except themselves individually. The same is true for me. I have criticized the teaching authority in the Catholic Church off and on for a long time now.

In the Apostle's Creed the only imperfect thing I am asked to believe in is the Catholic Church. I now think I know why. I am asked to believe the best about the Church: its teaching authority, its priests, pope, and followers. Certainly none of us are perfect including myself. But I can't murmur constantly over this or that teaching or rule or wallow on the unfairness/strictness of some of its teachings. Such an attitude is negative and will not be conducive to love. Love finds joy in the truth... it is not negative.

I have no authority to judge/criticize/condemn/complain/or murmur about anything. I know that if I continue in a bickering frame of mind I will never enter into the Promised Land. God alone has the authority to Judge or condemn. I am not better than anyone else. I am not superior to anyone else. My thinking is skewed and flawed a lot of the time.

The mature thing to do is to accept that those who rule over us aren't perfect (and won't be in this life) and that they are still vehicles of truth/meaning and to

just leave it at that. To look at the glass as half full is better than looking at it as half empty.

Sunday, December 16, 2012

Lord God I want to thank you for the wisdom you have given me. I have to remind myself that they are only channels of life. Focusing on maxims alone will make them into law and that makes nothing perfect. Jesus is the way. Ignoring Jesus is unwise. I have not found life or grace in plentitude for a considerable time... yes I have had victories like never before... seen plenty of re-calibrations... and I have not been dead fruit orientated out of rejection from my past like before. But I lacked oomph most of today... I tried re-applying the principles I have been using to re-arrange my thought life... but I felt the strength of the flesh weigh down on me something terrible... until I found my focus ought to be you Jesus. Now I feel normal again. Thank you Lord God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Sunday, December 9, 2012

Being constantly insensitive towards others can be the result of being hurt and rejected somewhere in the past. When this happens we can land up rejecting our selves (thus getting confused about who we are) and we can also build walls to prevent hurt or rejection again. We might also become people pleasers. When we have not dealt with rejection in healthy ways then we live out of the rejection we are rooted in and will constantly judge, resent, murmur, criticize, and condemn others without realizing it, or not realizing it is wrong while doing it. If we see from hindsight that we judge people and deal with it each time it happens that is a good attitude. But picking off the bad fruit won't stop new bad fruit from growing in its place again. The root of rejection needs to be dealt with. Joyce Meyer's book on rejection was key to setting me free in this area. Days have gone by now with me not being constantly judgmental towards others like before.

There have been many times when I have felt extremely sad, depressed, envious, un-please-able (no one can do anything right), or jealous for no apparent or obvious reasons. Feelings are fickle and are not always trustworthy. And while feeling these negative feelings ideas/intrigues/or conspiracies would come into my head that I immediately believed because of the intensity of my dark emotions. But now I realize that these ideas that formed in my mind did not have any basis in reality and that I unwisely embraced them because I felt so bad inside. I jumped to conclusions that were unfounded.

I have often wanted to correct others... but I did it with a dark energy. In order to correct a person one needs jurisdiction or the authority to do so. If one is not respected because of past failures, or idiotic displays of un-loving behaviors or attempts at

manipulation, or blowing stuff out of proper proportion, then we have wood in our consciences and have no right to correct anyone. Knowing that one ought not attempt to control others but to set them free, is freeing in and of it self. God is infinitely better at correction than we are. I don't want God's job. Thankfully He is correcting me in this area of my life.

Saturday, December 1, 2012

The Bible says that our thoughts are not like God's thoughts. In fact it says that as far as the heavens are above the earth so are God's thoughts compared to ours. This truth hit home today. I have taken my thoughts far too serious for far too long. I would get my theology confused with God's message. I make mistakes in thinking, reasoning, assuming, and guessing. So often because of fears, thoughts would come to me seemingly out of nothing that I ought to not entertain. I now dismiss them because they come from darkness (intellectually or through demons).

Friday, November 30, 2012

I have known for a long time that truth sets one free. What I learned from Joyce Meyer is that right or truthful thinking also sets one free. I know now that I have had many false notions in my head, bad assumptions, and misguided loyalties. God is re-programing my thinking and I am slowly learning how messed up my attitudes have been... but praise be to God: there is a way through to freedom: Jesus!

Thursday, November 29, 2012

Today the Holy Spirit revealed a catch twenty-two situation that I was caught up in. On one hand I wanted people to care for my efforts, and if they didn't show it I felt angry, but when they showed they did care I got impatient with them anyways because all I really wanted was for them to leave me alone so I could get my list of tasks completed. When I realized this and repented from wanting my way all the time and recited: "thy will be done" from the Lord's Prayer I felt really emotional and cried a little bit. One step at a time God is restoring me!

Perfection is not gotten through the Law. Perfection is gotten through faith in Jesus Christ. I am married to Jesus; not the Law. Just because I don't want to sin, and do keep some of the rules; doesn't make me more acceptable to God than those who don't care if they sin or not. I can do nothing apart from Christ Jesus.

Wednesday, November 28, 2012

Last Wednesday's entry has helped a lot. But I was still prone to falling into judging, being negative, and condemning... along with having that unwanted smile come back to my face so I could not feel compassion for others... but then God showed me that I was still living out of being rejected so long ago. I was wounded and Jesus wanted to heal that wound of rejection. When I dealt with this through prayer and realized that my acceptance ought not come from fallible humans but from God alone I began to have really stable days with very little psychosis, warm feelings, staying away from judging, and unmatched stability. These insights were made possible through Joyce Meyer's book on rejection. PTL!!!

Wednesday, November 21, 2012 Declarations (Thanks To Joyce Meyer):

I choose to be merciful to all the people I meet through the grace of Jesus Christ.
I am not better than anyone else.
I don't know more than anyone else.
I am not superior to anyone else.
I am not more important than anyone else.
There but for the grace of God go I.
God alone is judge.
I choose to be kind to everyone I meet through the grace of God.
I have no authority to judge or criticize anyone.
Just because I am a Christian doesn't mean I am better than anyone else: Jew, Muslim, Mormon, Jehovah Witness, Protestant, Evangelical, Conservative Catholic, Liberal Christian, addicted drinker, addicted eater, Republican, Democrat, Liberal, NDP, Conservative, man, woman, or child; gay, lesbian, or transgender.

Sunday, November 18, 2012

I have had another paradigm shift.
All people start out innocent because God only creates goodness. People give themselves over to both their inherited bad sides (gotten from Adam) and inherited good sides (gotten from God) as life moves forward. We aren't wholly evil because God does not create evil. We are all made in the image of God. God's image is good. Having said this... I have been in the habit of judging people as either good or evil and putting them in such boxes and treating them likewise. I have also labeled people in ways that distorts their true identity to one-dimensionality in the grossest ways. I have wrongly demonized people most of my life. People are far too complex to be put into boxes or labeled. If all we can think about is another person's flaw(s) and can't focus on any good

points they have, then we have an imbalanced and distorted views of who they are. I need to focus on people's good points and the negative will look less daunting. Putting people into special "boxes" one way or the other with the hope that such will help us to love them is a recipe for disaster. This is because I put people into boxes with negative labels and these boxes reinforced my anger, hatred, intolerance, and hardness of heart towards them. Each person has some good and some evil within her or him. I am not allowed to put anyone into a box that labels them unfairly, limits who they are, or exaggerates their traits, paints them with one brush stroke, gives them a false reputation, or judges them in my eyes to be without mercy or excuse. Moreover I am not allowed to put anyone into a box.

People who wound others have themselves been wounded. Who am I to judge anyone? Oh God I repent in faith from putting people into boxes. I repent in faith from judging people. I repent in faith from demonizing people made in the image of God. I repent in faith from my anger, pride, intolerance, hatred, and hardness of heart.

I have been told many times by my mental health counselors over the years that in some sense my situations and struggles in life are not any different than those without my illness. I heard that again from somebody special today. But... yes the illness I have adds other facets to each of my situations that I can deal with through God's help. So good old Gospel Truth, common sense, liberating maxims or principles, and right thinking will get me through my trials as long as I commit myself to faith in Jesus the Great Shepherd as being the way through the darkness into the freedom to love fully and deeply.

Sunday, October 28, 2012

Here's a zinger: "Feelings are fickle". I have heard people say God is fickle or capricious (changes His mind without reason or warning). That is something I disagree with. Yet I know that I have been fickle only because I have listened to my feelings: they change constantly without reason... and usually because of my insecurities or desires for pleasure or to feel good... Well I think I'm getting a hold of this not going by feelings mentality. Going by truth does not mean trying to feel how truthful something is by how enthusiastic we are about it. Going by truth means we go by what our consciences through what the light of Christ says in our hearts/minds is true through the avenue of God-given-principles. Renewing the mind is a slow process!

Thursday, October 25, 2012

Further a long the road. Gentleness and the jerk-mentality are polar opposites. When I act like a jerk I am abrasive. It is using the violence of a crowbar on a delicate job when a chisel will do. Jerks jump to unfounded or fanciful conclusions and land up opening their mouths only to hurt or judge others. Jerks use inappropriate language or offensive tones in their voices to get their way often without realizing how inappropriate they have

been. They get red-hot-angry for small stuff that brushes off those with gentle mindsets. Everything is out of focus for those with a jerk-mentality. They are harsh and trample over other people's feelings or boundaries if they don't suppress their emotions for conscience sake. Jerks use the wrong tools for each job, and land up hurting others often without realizing it. It's like they have a callus on their heart that keeps them from seeing and loving others in color instead of black and white.

Wednesday, October 24, 2012

Well Lord God you did it yet again. I now know what the Beatitude: "Blessed are the gentle for they will inherit the earth," means more fully. It means blessed are those who aren't jerks. And boy did I have a "jerk"-attitude hiding within me that needed to be repented from. And Joyce Meyer's book: "Battle Field of the Mind" played a huge part in remedying the attitude that came out of me in a situation that crept up today. Joyce said in the book: God desires truth in the heart... and we can't have truth if we are blaming our sins on our past upbringings, illnesses, stations in life, or any other excuses. I knew today after struggling with my guilt that this "jerk"-attitude of mine was something I needed to own. But after it came out of me today I blamed it on my upbringing, my blindness, and my schizophrenia. Fact is I had accrued the attitude over the years all by myself. No one pushed me into being a jerk. Yes I may have learned some of it from others; but that never justifies being a jerk. I decided to own it and repented from it and now I feel different... like the "jerk"-attitude is gone for good. Thankfully God has cleaned me up yet again from the inside out. Amen and Amen!

Tuesday, October 23, 2012

The book called, "Battle Field Of The Mind" by Joyce Meyer is a treasure trove of practical wisdom. Today I realized that all the time I was focusing on: can I achieve this or that desire in the future if I believe the Bible verse: "I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me." Now I realize that I have put the cart before the horse. If I am not practicing it in my life today then how can I practice it in a hypothetical future? Believing I can do what's before me with God's help now gives me strength and confidence in the now.

Sunday, October 21, 2012

Jesus said freedom sets us free to love and be whom we are designed to be. How does this work? It has to do with thinking and grace¹. Right thinking sets us free when based on truth because that is the way God designed us and how His grace works. Hateful thoughts need to be replaced with compassionate ones. Selfish ones need to be replaced with giving ones. Unforgiving thoughts need to be replaced with forgiving ones.

¹ Joyce Meyer

Judgmental thoughts need to be replaced with positive thoughts. Life is not about: “If only I had this or that, then I’d be happy” thinking and actions. Thoughts create our emotions: the battle is fought in each of our minds. Negative thoughts create negative emotions such as depression, hatred, and anger. Positive thoughts rooted in truth create happiness.

I know that I have not aimed to praise God with my tongue at all times for a long time. I had decided somewhere in the past that there were acceptable exceptions to replacing praise with complaining, getting red-hot-angry, and to judging others who pissed me off... no wonder I gave into that negative/judgmental spirit so easily and felt so empty of love and compassion for people so much of the time. My aim needs to be worshipping God constantly (think celebrating and praising). My heart and mind have engaged this attitude now and now I feel different. When worshipping God is first in my life then His love flows through me and love becomes not only possible, but also a reality.

Tuesday, October 16, 2012

I needed to repent from demanding that others be insightful too. Because my identity and self worth were locked up in it I unnaturally thought others had to do the same. When people asked normal questions I often felt like they were treating me like an idiot or that they were thinking like an idiot for asking me such stupid questions with obvious answers. In repenting from this in prayer I found more peace and compassion in my heart.

I am noticing that my first reaction in situations is to over react (which I tend to suppress)... then to feel guilty... but then to see things more what they are in ways that are colorful, beautiful, and loving. When I see things more for what they are then it is with love that I act.

Monday, October 15, 2012

Don’t give up mentally because there is always a way through each situation with Jesus’ help. Just believing this steers us away from calamity. It keeps us from focusing on the negative lies that the enemy of our souls wishes us to believe. For negativity and lies create bondages and helps destroy our hopes, nullify our growth and impede our maturing process. The battle is in our minds. As a person thinks in their soul so they shall be!

A few weeks ago I attempted to repent from stuff that I had no business repenting from. In trying to do so... an insensitive smile appeared on my face and it blocked out my ability to love. Later I realized that I am allowed to voice injustices, and that my reactions to them aren’t always pompous or inflated and I don’t have to repent from

stuff that is valid to feel. When I realized this, the insensitivity was removed for the time being. Now for another piece of the puzzle to be revealed:

Lord God, I am sure that I believed the following lie: My self worth is dependent on and hinges on other people seeing me as intelligent, wise, deep, and relevant. I renounce this lie in Jesus' name. I don't have to put out to be accepted. I don't have to see myself as wise or have others see me that way. My worth comes from God. I am His child. He loves me because He made me. He loves me because He is love. If this lie is the reason for me always seeing myself as wise then... repenting from it in faith ought deal a mortal wound to it. Thank you Lord God for leading me slowly into the Promised Land. Amen, and Amen!

I felt different after repenting from making my worth dependent on being insightful. I felt normal. It lasted for hours until I thought boy I'd like to still be wise. When I thought this the insensitivity came back. But then I realized that insights that don't come from proper motives, and aren't God breathed, and don't give life, aren't worth having. I rather have a life giving word from God that sustains me than something that comes from pride or falseness. I repented again... and the insensitivity dissolved. I felt normal.

Saturday, October 13, 2012

Read the Bible not as a mathematical text but as a love letter.

We will never grow in love so long as we are envious of the rich, the well to do, and those who have it easy. One needs to repent from such wicked desires and embrace the path Jesus sets for us in order for one to be freer to love.

Monday, October 8, 2012

After Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount a man with leprosy came to Him for healing². Leprosy is a disease that attacks one's nerves slowly destroying them: spiritually in my life I have been that man. Spiritual leprosy means one whose heart has hardened and has trouble feeling mercy or compassion for others even though he or she really wants to. The more I come to Jesus... the more He reverses this process. Even though I take five steps forward; one backwards, two steps forward; one backwards, etc... through Him my mind/heart is being renewed.

Sunday, October 7, 2012

Lord God I think I understand some things better now. It is true that I don't have to feel a certain way to be in your will. So I don't have to aim to feel a certain way. I knew this from past experiences... but I am often blind to what I am doing. Thankfully the Holy Spirit helps me along into the truth.

² Cf. Matthew 8:1-4

Next I now realized that I idolized the book, "Can You Hear me?" from Brad Jersak. It is a good book, very well written. But my approach sucked. I thought if I practiced what the book taught then I'd be able to hear God's voice. Fact was and still is I already hear God's voice; long before the book came into being. The reason I hear God's voice is because He speaks it and I listen. I listen because I am one of His sheep. God's sheep know His voice. I am one of His sheep so I know His voice. Brad isn't the way... Jesus is!

Neil T. Anderson said something equally true about his books. His books are instruments or channels of grace. They aren't the source. Jesus is the source!

Thursday, October 4, 2012

Those who truly want freedom want it for everyone else too! But all too often desires for freedom get reduced to obeying choice sets of rules... and getting conformity to those rules by other people is done through manipulation instead of by the Spirit. True freedom is the power to do what is right... it is not always whatever we want. Just because you obey rules does not mean you are free. Doing always whatever you want is not true spiritual freedom.

Wednesday, October 3, 2012

For such along time I have aimed at what I thought was perfection and expected it from others too: that included those close to me and those I didn't even know. Many people can only love perfection (and when what they thought was perfection disappoints they become noncommittal)... but maturity freely loves imperfect people and loyally so. If other people don't have to be perfect then neither do I. That takes pressure off me, tears walls down, and enables me to be myself and gives others the freedom to do likewise. Love does not demand from others what they can't give. One can only give what one has received or is able to receive. Demanding perfection from others is going to happen if we make other people's behavior our concern and goal to change. We can desire to change certain behaviors from others but that often moves towards becoming our goals without their consent. Our goals that wrongly involving other people (who haven't consented to our goals) are going to make those people feel our efforts for change as manipulation. No one likes being controlled. Yet it is so easy to move in that direction. A happiness that is contingent on others only doing what we want is fully selfish/greedy/and pompous and will lead to us judging, getting angry, manipulating, crossing boundaries, being disappointed, getting disillusioned, resenting, and jettisoning commitments.

Lord God I repent in faith from wrongly demanding perfection from others and myself and trying to manipulate others into doing stuff for me. I set those free who I have sought to put in bondage to my manipulations. Thank you Lord God for setting us free! Amen and amen! One cannot be free if one does not set others free! When we set others free we get a portion of peace in our lives through the freedom we receive.

Tuesday, October 2, 2012

Lord God today for the first time I was able to forgive myself before I confessed my failure to the person I thought I had offended. Thank you Lord Jesus, Holy Spirit, and God the Father for your grace. This leads to the topic of blaming and being hard on oneself. I have found that in the past when I did something wrong, failed, or hurt someone that afterwards I would compulsively hammer and batter myself and punish myself even though I didn't want to be hard on myself. Today I realized that compulsively being hard on myself means I am no longer the one being hard on myself but the "sin within me" because of what St. Paul wrote in the book of Romans, Chapter 7. This is true because I hated being hard on myself yet was powerless by myself to stop being hard on myself. Now if it is no longer I doing it then I don't have to blame myself anymore for being hard on myself! I no longer have to be hard on myself for being hard on myself.

Culminating on Monday, October 1, 2012

Jesus said:

I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.³

Doing so with (1) my judging problem (2) my pride problem, and (3) my not caring problem is key to further success. This together with openness to the Spirit's voice will lead me deeper into the Promised Land. Jesus may not answer this promise instantly, but as I believe He will bring stuff to mind that I need to deal with in prayer and my relationships with God and others. Yes I had to learn to forgive and understand what forgiveness is in order to uproot past judgments and so soften my heart to at least be open to kindness towards others. Yes I had to learn that by blurring, or moving my personal boundaries by minimizing wrongs or ignoring the demands of injustices that I was inviting into my life a hard judgmental spirit that does not forgive and crosses boundaries that ought not be crossed. I also had to learn that the wisdom of keeping many desires: desires, and not always making them goals is a huge key to stopping judgments, anger and hatred from sprouting out of my heart. And yes I had to believe in my heart as I had learned to see in my mind that God's love for us all is unconditional. He loves the most depraved persons just as much as the most virtuous. God does not love less because we screw up! Jesus' words above are an

³ Mark 11:23

invitation to us to remove the stinking ruts out of our minds and hearts by faith and to remove those deceiving spirits' influences in our thinking and to uproot dark desires when it comes to being judgmental towards all those not in our camps and also those in our camps. Walking about in the darkness of this world trying to make wise decisions all by ourselves with our own resources by rejecting God is doomed to failure. We need the guidance and input of the triune God. That comes from a relationship built on the foundation of Jesus' love shown in His conduct in life, His Passion, and His Resurrection.

Thursday, September 27, 2012

Yesterday I streamed another mynewday.tv show and learned a simple (obvious) principle that has lessened my worrying, fears, and insecurities in some of my relationships. Just because somebody criticizes me does not mean they don't love me (anymore). They speak what they speak because they care. Just because somebody disagrees with me does not mean that they all of a sudden dislike me or are rejecting me. There is always a way through every dilemma with Jesus' help. It is our faith that enables us to overcome all our challenges. Faith in Jesus.

Tuesday, September 25, 2012

I have known for some time that I had no intimacy with God in my quiet times or even outside of them. I was skeptical of quiet times as far as feeling close to God was concerned because for so many long years I had dryness and did not feel God's presence. Yes, God and I have done a lot of interior heart cleaning business in my quiet times and out of them. But alas, I sought consolation in created things more than in God because I did not feel God's presence. I also was more after principles that would enable me to more deeply love and to sin less than relationship with the One God from whom all love comes from. I found a lot of wise principles. But I did not get any rest consolation or strength from my idols: such as my computer, the latest software, and the latest spiritual books; and on top of it all I carved out as much personal down time for me only (Yes I ignored friendship with God because I felt distant from Him). I wanted to use God. I wanted friendship but felt at a loss on how to get there.

I now know that this distance was because of my pride (scoffing). It was also because of my idols thinking I'd find joy in them. When I repented from my pride and renounced my idols (put them in their proper place as servants)... I began to feel consolation in God again. I also began to enjoy the music that was precious to me when I first renewed my walk with Jesus. Thank you Lord Jesus for this new turn in my path and for not abandoning me.

I am still tempted to hate those I see as holding onto something evil (as if I don't do likewise in other areas)... but my faith is in God to show me a loving path out of doing

so. The more I put my faith in Jesus the more love and warmth I have for others. Thank You holy trinity!

Friday, September 21, 2012

I no longer look at alcohol from a black and white perspective. I see it as colored. Thank you Lord God. Thank you for removing from me a vow, attitude, and commitment to hate and despise those whose beliefs are different from mine. Thank you for showing me that I need to love and not build walls when it comes to the way I treat those who are in my life. Thank you Lord God for this victory: Amen and Amen!

Saturday, September 15, 2012

For a long time I thought it took, "hunger to love" as a prerequisite to accepting God. But today I realized looking back that I wanted to be loved and to feel love within. When being loved on the inside came to me by me putting my trust in Jesus, God then gave me a hunger to love others a little while later. I now realize that there are as many reasons to become a follower of Jesus Christ as there are people. Every person comes up with her or his own reasons for accepting or rejecting Jesus. But hunger to love and be loved comes from God. If God did not draw us to Himself then we would never seek Him.

Thursday, September 13, 2012

In rejecting an institution as the final arbiter of truth in all cases does not mean we are necessarily proud. That is, if we are open to listening to and weighing what any person has to say no matter where they are from. Any person can be a vehicle of truth in particular areas. Being open to listening to others and open to the truth other people speak is a key to growing in humility. The Church is composed not of just its leaders... it in compasses all it's members. Believing correct doctrinal truths is not the only thing that Jesus meant when He said that the Holy Spirit would lead us into truth. The truth that Jesus is speaking about is the kind that sets us free from sinful strongholds in our lives. There are so many people who sit in church pews Sunday after Sunday that believe the doctrines set out by the clergy but who struggle with stuff that has them in bondage and that the clergy don't have any idea about how they can set the enslaved free. I am a Roman Catholic... and have sat in pews Sunday after Sunday in bondage to sins but not hearing much of anything from the pulpit that could set me free. Yes I have benefited from many Priests through the Confessional very much, and also

from other lay Catholics. But I have mostly benefitted from my Evangelical brothers and sisters who have shared stuff that has freed me up in so many areas. I embrace all of Christendom as the Church Christ set up. The Church is not just the Clergy: Priests/Bishops/Cardinals/ and Popes. The Church in compasses all who believe Jesus and who are living out their baptized vows.

Sunday, September 9, 2012

Even when I love people I have the potential to hurt them; and often have hurt them. Those that love me the most have the greatest potential to hurt me; and some have. Those who love us the most often hurt us in ways that make us question their love. We say, "If they loved us then they wouldn't have done this or that". Fact is none of us are perfect... I have hurt those closest to me, and they have often hurt me. Those who hurt us can still love us. Those who love us can still hurt us. We are all the walking wounded.

Wednesday, September 5, 2012

Today I realized that I needed to explore the ideas related to forgiveness and a stolen prized possession that doesn't seem like it will ever be restored to me. I wanted it back for a long time. But that is not in my power to do so. I then re-read some advice from Brad Jersak on forgiveness and he strongly suggested that I turn that prized possession over to God for him to deal with and therefore to be free of it. This done I felt a load drop from my heart and a new softness in my heart along with sadness manifest. That is a sign that healing is taking place. The prized possession is no longer between my robber and me. I could try to befriend this person... but I don't feel led to do so at this time.

Monday, September 3, 2012

Salvation involves two important aspects: doing away with guilt felt and sinful acts done. As far as guilt is concerned it is forgiven through faith in Jesus by God's mercy. As far as sinful acts are concerned they are replaced by the fruits of the Spirit through faith in Jesus. In other words: sinful acts are replaced by good works. Saving "faith" is completed by good "works" that are in-fused with God's grace. So we are saved from our guilt through faith in Jesus; and we are saved from performing sinful acts by replacing them with good works with God's help through faith.

Salvation from guilt in this life is always needed: therefore we always need faith and are continually being saved from guilt and the penalty thereof. The Bible also

teaches that only those who do the will of God will be saved: therefore we need to abide in Jesus through faith and this will ensure that we will bear good fruit. Jesus came to save us from our sins: guilt/penalty/and wrongful acts. Works are not a way of earning salvation. It never will be. It is best to see salvation, as a free gift and that good works are a response to. We are saved unto good works that God prepares in advance for each of us to do. We don't have a works-righteousness or a righteousness that is rule-based... we have a righteousness that comes from faith in Jesus. All the changes from darkness to light are done through a faith that doesn't give up for anything. Faith is the key to doing away with guilt and it is also the key to replacing dead works with good works.

Wednesday, August 29 – Thursday, August 30, 2012

I came to the realization that I still lacked the ability to love others deeply and compassionately in certain areas of life. Because my heart and mind were too focused on soteriology (the study of salvation)... and that means being too quick at judging others and wanting to police their theology and assertions about real life situations when it came to Heaven and Hell. I then recalled a passage from Brad Jersak' book, "Can You Hear Me?" where he spoke about being at a Christian summer camp as a youth leader... and an accident happened there... with his reaction to it being a cold: "If God wills option A, then He wills option A; and if God wills option B, then He wills option B" while everyone else was in tears praying for the situation to be remedied to the glory of God and the well-being of those involved. I did all the time what Brad did on one occasion.

I know that when it comes to people's salvation: going to Heaven or Hell; it is in God's hands... and yes, people are going where they choose. Yet, I have been too focused on what I thought was God's will when it came to soteriology and where people might land up. I was more concerned about "truth" and "theological" accuracy than that real people were involved and I actually hardened my heart against those whose opinions differed from mine. I was not mercy focused. God's perfect will is that none perish... that all go to Heaven. Yes that does not appear to be the case all the time... but nevertheless God does desire all to be saved... and so should I.

I can't be coldly focused on "theological" or "truth" accuracy... and harden my heart towards real people; instead I need to and want to focus on where those people are at who are mourning the departed; and to weep and mourn with them. I know that Jesus teaches us to not judge or condemn anyone. This is an area where I have struggled so much knowing that I was in the wrong but not knowing how to change my heart until God put love inside of it. I here and now

embrace your compassion Lord Jesus: your very heart oh God. Thank you for your mercy towards others and myself! I am grateful!

Self-pity together with pouting are killers... they incite anger... try to manipulate... neutralize compassion... are rooted in getting one's own way. Over night change is not recommended... gradual change is advisable. Lord Jesus do with me what you want... I am your child and servant. Only have mercy on me and lead me not into temptation. I pray in Jesus' name! Amen, and Amen! I want to feel what others feel.

Sunday, August 26, 2012 (Part III)

For the longest time I have had a very proud attitude operate within me that I knew about but did not see for what it was. Today I realized that my seemingly "noble attitude" was directly opposed to union with Jesus through faith in Jesus: I now see it as "law of sin". If anyone is going to live victoriously in freedom to love, then they have to be open to following God in faith. Unfortunately I had the attitude on the inside that I would do absolutely anything within my own resources and own strategies apart from God if I had to in order to get things done in the need-to-be-done-department. However, the Bible says that we ought to make no provision for the flesh. We can't love supernaturally apart from God. We can't do anything wholly right apart from God. If we believe we can we are deceived and are not in line with the truth. I have prayed for sometime that my commitment to God would grow and I see this revelation as an answer to my prayer today. Thank you Lord Jesus Christ. I am most grateful for all your guidance, light, care, grace, mercy, love, and compassion in my life. You are faithful beyond my wildest imagination. Amen and Amen!

This insight above has been earthshattering. The power of sin in my life seems to be broken. It doesn't seem to be as intense as before. I feel wind in my sail again. If the Lord does not build the house the laborers labor in vain. Thank you Lord God Most High!

I would later on learn that this attitude of being dependent on God for all my needs and to fulfill goals through the wisdom He has given me to carry out His will can only be sustained by God through faith. It is not meant to be a burden that we constantly struggle to carry out. In order to see the fulfillment of: "don't doubt God will provide for all our needs" we need to trust God with it. We don't have to carry it with us as a weight and burden in our minds and hearts. We will also turn away from the lie that: "if God will let us down then we will have to do

what we can in our own strength.” We can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens us.

Beneath this revelation is another issue that is closely related to it. I know that I am dependent on others. If I had not had the anti-psychotic medications I have been on then I may have landed up in a mental institution. How long would I have spent my life there? I don't know. But I do know that God did promise me to be broken into freedom... so somehow He would have fulfilled His promise there if I had remained committed to Him in faith. One always wonders what would have happened if such and such... happened?

Sunday, August 26, 2012 (Part II)

Neil T. Anderson has written with the help of the Holy Spirit many useful books on living in freedom. I am grateful that he has done so. Recently I have been made aware of many truths that I need to embrace and also lies I believed that need to be discarded.

I have also learned a new principle that helps me process my anger in healthier ways. It has to do with distinguishing between desires and goals. If I choose goals where others can let me down I will get angry and try to control them when they don't seem to be coming true. So attempting to choose goals that involve me will help me stay away from anger/criticism/and judging and trying to control others. Moreover, if I am agreed with my spouse or friends or colleagues then setting common goals is also OK. This principle is an excellent one but by itself it won't work. I need to abide in Jesus via faith.

The acronym: NAR which stands for being noticed, being accepted, and being respected by God will also deal a deathblow within me to my anger/criticism/and judging of others. If I know that God treats me according to NAR, then my self-image becomes more whole because my needs are being met. Also if I believe that others don't respect me and if I dearly want that respect and make it my goal to get it from anyone other than God then I will get angry and un-charitable too besides trying to control others.

Sunday, August 26, 2012

I know that for many years I moved in the direction of accepting the Catholic Church as perfect when it came to faith and morals... and in the process I became increasingly less critical of the Mass/music/sermons/dogma/structure/and churchgoers/and lack of community within the Church. But then I got

disillusioned and I now am learning to love the Catholic Church without idealism while at the same time seeing it as flawed in its teaching/preaching/and practice. It can't be perfect seeing that I am a member among other revelations of Church history. Hopefully I will get more mature... the immature only love what they see as perfect. Perfection outside of God anywhere will lead to disillusionment. Whereas mature people can and do love the imperfect. Moving from one: only loving perfection to the other: embracing imperfection in love requires faith, and a paradigm-shift because there is no other path to take. Getting old... losing stuff... making mistakes and learning from them... sinning... repenting... loving... seeing limitations... is all about maturing... those who seek perfection should only seek it in God. This comes from Jesus saying that we ought not call anyone father, or teacher... i.e. elevate them to a position too high or lofty... because none of us are perfect in faith/understanding/morality/humility/and practice. Thank the Lord Jesus Christ for loving us even though none of us have it perfect: Pope/Cardinals/bishops/Priests/Religious/and lay members...

Tuesday, August 21, 2012

I am a control freak in Adam; yet I have self-control in Jesus.

On a different note: A long time ago in reading many of Dr. Larry Crabb's books he put forth the idea that we can overcome lesser desires with greater desires. This did not ring that true for me back then... but now I see it as a workable solution to some of my bad habits or ruts. Why? Because nature hates vacuums; this is true spiritually too. Living on my own for so many years a lot of self-centered behaviors did develop. There are no over night solutions in many cases. But this strategy is a helpful part of the puzzle and should not be rejected too quickly. I am now implementing this strategy and it is working.

I remember some time ago when God gave me the image of a battleship armored with gray metal and small guns pointing out from between its roof and sides. Such was a metaphor for the way I used to be. The ship let in so little sunlight and was pretty useless in that stage of my life as far as love was concerned. It was hard and narrow; and as it stood it needed a lot of work to become a vessel for life. My mind is slowly being renewed through my relationships with Jesus and those He has brought into my life: like my beloved wife Sophie; along with those who have been there even longer in time. Good things take time to make: wine is one instance of this. "Those who despise small beginnings never do much of anything except criticize those doing something" like a fridge magnet at work

clearly points to. Each of person is a vessel of meaning: intended or not. Some are more so... other less so. But all are important.

Thursday, August 16, 2012

Today I asked myself the question: Does the “no condemnation” part in the previous entry mean God is not condemning or does it mean Satan’s condemnation is invalid or does it mean no-one’s condemnation is valid? I came to the conclusion that all of these are true. Believing that there is no condemnation for us now that Jesus has died for us means I am slowly seeing God with clearer eyes. I am becoming less judgmental too. I am having a better perspective on the different gravities of sins and not being as over reacting like before.

I don’t feel like if I stray over the line a little bit that I am condemned. I am certain that if I were to stray over the line with a BIG transgression then God who is love still has a merciful countenance towards me. I see God as gentle, patient, kind, compassionate, and loving and can feel it with certainty in my heart. It is like God’s love has broken through to stay.

Yes lies still await my mind as I begin each day and during it. But believing that God is good and that there is a path through the wilderness quickly gives me victories in each battle awaiting me. Thank you again Mom for this life-giving truth.

Monday, August 13, 2012

I finally think I know what was intended by the verse: “There is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.” We are so imperfect. We so want to do the right thing... yet we fall and trip up in so many big and small ways... and Jesus knows this. That is why He came to die for all of us: me included. When I get accused in my head by devils after I have I have sinned in small or big ways, then the truth that, “there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus” is the way to fight the accusations off because it is true. We are under grace not law. God is merciful to us long before we repent if we repent at all. Thank you Mom for this insight... and the peace and freedom it brings with it.

Sunday, August 12, 2012

My friend Dan wrote me a very long time ago about how a master martial arts instructor would charge his pupil to forget technique and focus on being in the moment. I know that I have been very hard on others and myself for way too

long a time. I have given up finding that one principle that will give me the ability to love others deeply. Jesus is the path to supernatural love.

More and more I am embracing my relationship with Jesus and He is guiding me more and more into rest peace and love. Rest from the “should’s,” and “have to do’s” in exchange for the: “I really want to be obedient” attitude. I have had so much confusion about so many things being at wit’s end so often... mostly because rotten stuff kept pouring out of me so much of the time. How does one keep a straight theology under such circumstances? Not easily! I am sure that I have been exposed to so many different opinions on certain topics and that leads me to be more tolerant than I thought I’d ever be. Truth sets free whereas falsehoods bring bondage.

God has used Neil T. Anderson to bring so much freedom to me through his: “Steps to Freedom” books. Also God has used Brad Jersak’s book: “Can You Hear Me?” very much in equipping me to hear God’s voice clearer. They both have given me so much to chew on and to renew my mind with. Thankfully my Mom suggested that I read stuff on spiritual warfare while trying to navigate through this difficult time. Nearly twenty years ago I read the Bondage Breaker by Neil T. Anderson and for the longest time I thought that was his only book. But typing his name into a Christian on line ebook store showed me that he is pretty prolific and in very helpful ways.

Saturday, August 11, 2012

When one doubts God's ability to reveal sins past or present in one's life one opens the door to Satan who willingly accuses one with false and true guilt. In doing so one closes doors either partially or completely to hearing God's voice of reconciliation and call to freedom! Thankfully He who created both ears and mouths is capable of communication on all levels!

Problem is that we are notorious for numbing our ability to feel true guilt. We do this either because we don't believe God can provide a suitable way out of the guilt or sin behind the guilt... Or we give into the lie that we will be exposed, laughed at, ridiculed, and boxed in if we confess or seek help out of bondage... Or we love the sin more than the path to life!

Even when our ears are devoted to listening to God and committed to obedience we will no matter how hard it is tune them out hear lies from devils. We must not argue with them. To do so one needs to know whom one has believed and not forget His yeses and no's that brought correct directions and that have helped to establish our course direction now!

Tuesday, August 7, 2012

Well then I finally get it. Love is not mean or mean spirited. Love is not harsh. Love is patient and kind to others and self. When one is kind to others one is not mean towards oneself in the process. Love is tolerant and not abrasive towards others. It may see wrongs done... but doesn't judge those doing them and it doesn't harden one's heart to those who sin. It is God's kindness that gets us to have a change of mind that leads to clean laundry. Just because Jesus showed us His love under brutal standards by submitting Himself to whips, scourging, cuts, wounds, nails, torture, and crucifixion on a cross doesn't mean He was being hard on Himself. Just because He did not enjoy what He did on the Cross does not mean we can't enjoy loving others. Yes Jesus' Passion was difficult. He suffered and even though it hurt Him He was not severe with Himself. His motivation was the Spirit of God who is love.

With this revelation in place I repent for being mean spirited towards others and myself from the past until now. And I repent Lord Jesus with your help from it. Love and wisdom sees things for what they are: small, medium, or LARGE. Lord God, please give me a warm or cold refreshing tongue not one that spits out poison, harshness and foul stuff. Yes I don't want to be swallowing camels because I am only focused on gnats.

Love is keeping Jesus' commandments. Jesus said: If you love me you will keep my commandments. This is not an unkind judgment. It is not an ultimatum. It is not said in a harsh or brutal way. It is not said with a whip in hand. It is said with a smile and laughter; with warmth, gentleness, in peace and love; with meaning, and purpose; as an invitation to a new way of life; a prescription from the divine doctor for how to live a loving life. It is a wedding between Jesus and I; not His commands and I. I don't try to please the Law. The Law actually only points out sin; such was its purpose. It has no power to get us to love. I actually participate in Jesus' supernatural love through faith and a commitment love: Such is called abiding in Jesus.

If one is being "mean to oneself" in trying to motivate oneself to love then one is more flesh/ law focused and very weakly love focused if love focused at all. When one is mean to oneself it will spill over into our actions towards those people we meet. I know that has been my path for such a long time.

Love is patient. It isn't demanding. Love is kind. It isn't judgmental. Love cares for those it meets. Love doesn't set up walls. Love is committed to our best interest. Love meets those where they are at. It doesn't demand. Love is generous not anal.

Thursday, July 26, 2012

As of yesterday and today I was struggling to love a certain person. I felt justified in my "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" mentality towards this person. And no matter how much I tried to love and be gracious I could not love. I felt stuck. The truth sets one free when it releases us from a lie or attitude, commitment or vow.

I now know a part of me was still committed to hating those who did not respect me. When the Holy Spirit pointed this out: that I was still committed to hatred within I repented in faith and found that I could love more deeply, be stronger, and be more forgiving towards those who aren't easy to love.

I was able through God's strength to re-work my attitude towards the person I was having trouble loving. Now I have peace. Thank you Lord God! Amen and Amen!

Thursday, July 19, 2012

The following food-hate-pride-fall cycle has been at work within me for a long time:

Eat continually in private.

Hate my body.

Feel guilty and ashamed of belly.

Put hateful-pressure on myself to not eat as much.

Start to feel good about my performance.

Start to feel really good after a little while longer.

Slowly lose motivation of hatred because I'm feeling so good about performance.

Start to give in to eating here and there as rewards.

Go to 1.

I realized that I needed to repent from my self-hatred and also my pride when it comes to eating so much in private. I feel freer now as though a weight has fallen off me.

Similar cycles exist for other things people dislike about themselves. The key is to watch for hatred and pride or fear in such cycles and to repent in faith with Jesus' help from them. The very things we hold onto save us often destroy us.

Wednesday, July 18, 2012

The insight below about Saint Peter brings this to the front: I don't have anything to prove to anyone including God. Not because I have proved it... but because I live out of my new identity in Christ that was made possible by a new birth as a child of God so many years ago! Because I don't have anything to prove I am not Law-focused but grace and people focused. Just because I don't have anything to prove doesn't mean I don't want to love and not sin. Therefore I am no longer in a hard-way measuring, judging, and hitting myself over the head when I fail or sin.

Not having to prove anything means I don't need to judge myself. Moreover I don't need to judge others either! If I can love God and myself I can love others.

Sunday, July 15, 2012

For sometime now I have been reading plenty of books by Neil T. Anderson on spiritual warfare. In reading them I have been strengthened and given wisdom on how to tackle certain obstacles to my spiritual path and am making progress. Today I read in his book called, "The Bondage Breaker" that Peter was only given over to Satan to sift as wheat after Peter through pride tried to exalt himself over the other disciples. I had thought that God had granted this right to Satan over all fallen humans. But now I know that is not true. I am also persuaded that the Dark Night visited on me was a result of my growth in pride when I was in university in the nineteen-nineties.

God does not have it in for us. Yes He does want us to grow. And when He gives us over to Satan it is done in the hope that we will learn our lessons, be humbled, and grow in love and truth. That is why we are called to pray in the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation/but deliver us from the evil one." This is good news. There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. God does not have it in for us. He loves us, and died for us. I as a Christian may be called to huge challenges... but God knows my heart... and He intends all hardship for growth in self-knowledge, growth in love, and growth in compassion. God does not have it out for me. There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus. God loves us!

God does not motivate us with: "If you don't love I won't love you." Fact is that God loves us and that love enables us to love. God does not motivate us with: "If you don't love I won't save you." Fact is that God saves us so we can love! If we believe these two lies somewhere within us then it will stop us from loving others deeply or at all. Truth sets us free! Lies put us into bondage!

Thursday, July 12, 2012

Going with God's blessings, truth, leading, and promises and not arguing with negative thoughts and lies planted by demons in my mind is the best way to stay sane, strong, assertive, calm, and at peace. It keeps us from the poor me mentality.

Wednesday, July 4, 2012

Today I became conscious through the Holy Spirit that I do demonize organizations/ groups/ communities/ clubs/ and cliques when they did or do something unacceptable to me or don't come through for me. I was led to repent in faith for a recent betrayal where that was the case. I am realizing that I should not make moral choices out of consternation, anger or swinging reactions to other peoples' sins or false claims. I need to make decisions base on truth informed by my faith in Jesus. God works all things for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purposes. Thank you Holy Spirit.

Sunday, July 1, 2012⁴

Here I am and to my chagrin find that I had another falsehood in my belief system: a proud attitude. I believed the lie that if I acted righteously then I was righteous. This is dead wrong; and it surprised me when I saw that this was active in my belief system. I then replaced it with: "my righteousness comes as a gift from God through faith in Jesus" which is the biblical truth I needed to replace the above lie with. When I have faith in Jesus, Jesus becomes my righteousness. Yes it is true that a good man does good deeds. But just because one does good deeds does not make one a good person. When I believe in Jesus, He comes to live in me and I therefore live in Him and out of our relationship He causes good stuff to come out of me as good fruit comes out of the branches of a vine. Jesus is my righteousness through faith in Him. Thank you Jesus!

Friday, June 29, 2012

⁴ This insight comes from Dr. James B. Richards

For most of my life when I decided on some request or ultimatum I would have the attitude of my way or the highway. And inevitably I would get the answer: "No!" and this would end the discussion because I could not verbalize the tangled messy turmoil, hardness and inflexibility in my soul or heart. But lately I have been warming up inside to the point where my requests aren't absolute and disagreements become dialogue and compromise or just acceptance.

Wednesday, June 27, 2012

I guess what I have learned since yesterday is that my conscience is not the same as the teaching authority found in my church or for that matter anyone else's conscience. I can't assume complete compliance or conformity to it. I can't blur the lines or I'll never know where I am; and I won't be able to learn or grow by making mistakes. I'll land up blaming others for my messes and won't accept responsibility for my actions and beliefs.

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

Well today I had a major breakthrough. For a long time when I went through trials or temptations I would experience overwhelming condemnation, fear, guilt, desperation, weakness, psychosis, and indecision. Today with the help of my friend Dan, I realized that I had given too much power to my church denomination to decide right from wrong. I had wrongly installed it as my conscience... and so I was devoid of genuine intuition and felt trapped when stuff pulled at me in many different ways. But today I took back that power I wrongly gave it so many years ago in the darkness of my mental illness. I can't blame my church when I stand in front of God's judgment seat... the buck stops with me... I need to own my actions and beliefs. I now know this inappropriate commitment was like a false marriage, or an unasked for cult devotion to my church. I don't know the Pope personally. I know Jesus; my loyalties lie with Him and my family. I know my wife personally; not the teaching magisterium of the church. I know my family. My loyalties lie with them, they are responsible in part for my faith and growth and perseverance. I feel freer now, like a weight fell from my shoulders. Thank you Jesus!!!

Monday, June 25, 2012

Well then (Lord God) I see that a colossal motive within me is to be happy at any cost (such is the selfish way; or at best the naïve path). I try to manipulate, plan,

and plot to get things to where I want them to be so I can be happy. I know that in my current space I would ask my God for advice/wisdom on how to get through what pains me so much... with the expectation that what God says will make me happy. I now realize that it's OK to not be happy for long spaces of time. Life has so many twists and turns: happiness is fleeting at most. I don't have to be happy all the time: I don't have to have my way all the time. Wisdom is doing now what will make you happy later. I repent in faith from having to have things my way all the time! Thank you Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

Sunday, June 24, 2012

I now realize that no one but God is perfect here on earth. If I see a person or organization as not being able to be a vehicle of truth or meaning because of dirty laundry past or present then that line of reasoning makes me unfit to be a vehicle of truth and meaning too because I too have dirty laundry. Truth is that we are all on journeys. None of us have it all together. I know that I had things wrong in many areas of my life and was blind to them. Yet God loved me anyways. I still have wrong thinking, motives, insecurity, and lusts. I am on a learning curve. So is the Catholic Church. It had to call councils to come to agreements on disputes. It has committed sins just like all of us. Sometimes it takes years (if not many years) to repent or to become enlightened. There but for the grace of God go I.

Funny how we Christians speak so much about our relationships with God but only call on Him after all options seem hopeless? I know that I have been guilty of this. I am realizing that God wants to hear about all our challenges/conflicts/ and problems. And when He hears us He speaks to us in our thoughts and relationships. He grants us grace, courage, peace, and hope to enable us to get through our fights and challenges.

Moreover just because I don't have answers for all questions important to me, that should not make me go to being melancholic or to have a pouting/ poor me attitude.

Monday, June 18, 2012

If we ignore the promise that the Holy Spirit will convict those needing conviction and pray for it ourselves... we will find prayer more and more difficult... and we will not love those we pray for because we will try to convict them which will lead to trying to control them, and judging them in attempts to correct them and get what we want.

We all make mistakes. I learned some time ago that I'm allowed to make mistakes and learn from them. This has been very fruitful for me. Today I had the revelation that I need to allow others to make mistakes so they can learn from their mistakes too.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:38-39:

You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also;

I now realize that this saying deals with me not taking revenge on others and to de-escalate volatile situations to the utmost of my ability. Self-defense is an option in dire situations.

Sunday, June 17, 20125

My journey is getting better and better as time goes by! Thank you Jesus! For such a long time I wanted to put Jesus first, but in doing so I blindly put hardness in my heart against others in an attempt to keep others from taking the place of Jesus. But because of this wrongly placed block in my heart my goal to love others could not be realized. Moreover, Jesus said that when we love others we do love Him. By that He means that we need to love others in order to love Him. I can't put up a barrier between others and myself if I am to love others. Yes Jesus is first, but love is people focused not rule focused.

Jesus feels our needs and beauty so profoundly that He hungers to love us. We love people for their own sake, not Jesus' sake. Why? Because Jesus doesn't need our praise or gifts; we worship Him for our sake. He lacks absolutely nothing for He is fully deity: completely God and so everything belongs to Him anyways. Yet in His humanity He has tied Himself to us so profoundly that He feels what we feel and wants only the best for us. He wants our good more than we do. If Jesus' wisdom does not lead us to focus on those it is intended to bring life, healing, and health to then we have missed His message. True Religion is not focused on pleasing an angry God with rules and empty sacrifices. We don't love God so He will love us: we love because God first loves us.

The word "Religion" I have been told originally meant: "to bind-up". The Jewish Religion or Old Covenant was meant to bind up the wounds of those under it by rightly applying its wisdom meant for each neighbors' good and to somehow limit

⁵ Inspired by Dr. James Richard's teachings: Google "Impact Ministries"!

the hurting of one's neighbors. But the message got twisted, warped, and hijacked by many of those called to administer its benefits. Jesus came to model it's message and fulfill the wisdom found in the Old Testament. He came to empower us to uphold that wisdom meant for our very good, and to take away our guilt in not living it out fully or at all at times. Love is the fulfillment of the Law. So we fulfill the Law by abiding in Jesus through a faith that loves. Jesus' commandments are prescriptions meant to bring love, health, healing, hope, goodness, and wisdom to our relationships. If we want to be wise we will want to live out Jesus' wisdom. Seeing His commandments as wisdom or prescriptions instead of rules will help empower us to live them out and draw others to Jesus.

Thursday, June 14, 2012

If we have shame it means that we believe that there is something wrong with us. If we have guilt it means we have done something wrong. There is a world of difference between guilt and shame. To reject shame I in part repeat to myself often that there is nothing wrong with me. Also I prayed through some past memories where I could have picked up the lie that I ought to have shame. And both of these actions has and is making me more courageous, and assertive, and giving me more self-esteem. Thank you Lord God for this revelation. Amen and Amen!

I find it amazing how I can see something done wrong by another person, and then yet another person thinking I'd never do that... only to land up doing it in short order. Yes there I go but for the grace of God! I think this thought ought to be top of my mind when I see people doing stuff that offends me.

Sunday, June 10, 2012

Well I know that I am a child of God. I know that growing in maturity is a slow process. But I also do believe the saying from 1 Corinthians 10:13 which says: "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God who is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it." This isn't an ironclad promise that we will never sin again in this life because First John says that we are not without sin. Paul said that he had not attained all the fullness that God had in store for him in this life. And the book of Roman's makes it clear that we need to renew our minds... and this is a process that takes time. However, I do believe this promise because God is not a liar. I am seeing more and more evidence in my life of the good fruit that I have never seen

come out of me before. It comes from God... and God is so kind to me... and I abide in Him through faith... and that allows me to bear this fruit as God renews my mind. I find it interesting that the stuff that restricts Lazarus' freedom when he comes out of the tomb is not apart of his identity and being. It is not a part of who he was. Yes it restricted him in many ways... but gradually those grave clothes were removed and he afterwards enjoyed fellowship with Jesus again. There is nothing wrong with me. I am free to love thanks be to God through Jesus' Christ. Amen and Amen! I feel strength enter me as I moved from fear to faith in this verse. Thanks Lord Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen!

Thursday, June 7, 2012

For such a long time I have known how to correct a lack of love after I have judged somebody or some action: I'd repent in faith through prayer. But I would not be able to stay away from judging others again for long at all. Much later on I was made aware of the truth: As a person thinks in her or his heart so are they. This leads to: if you change what you believe in your heart then you can change your actions. This comes from Jesus' call to clean out the inside of the cup so the outside will be clean too. This led to me seeing what was beneath my sinful behaviors. For example: my impatience had an "I don't care" attitude beneath it: repenting in faith from not caring enables me to practice patience much better. Judging had an "I am better than them" pride filled attitude beneath it. Repenting in faith with Jesus' help from my pride has made a world of difference. I am still tempted, tested, and I still have to fight against the darkness with the truth for the battle of my mind. Truth sets us free.

There is plenty of "sin" within me. But slowly over time it gets washed out when the Holy Spirit leads me to repent in faith from the heart where ever it is needed. God is also putting me in touch with my identity in Christ. There is nothing wrong with me! Thank you Jesus!

Wednesday, June 6, 2012

There is nothing wrong with me. I am the salt of the earth. I am the light of the world. I am a part of the True Vine a channel of Christ's life. I am hid in Christ and Christ is hid in God and the evil one can't touch me. The war is won... but I still got battles to win.

Monday, June 4, 2012

I am a reasonably healthy person spiritually considering where I have come from. Yes I have schizophrenia... but God's truth is established in my heart and mind. There is a battle for my mind. Yes my mind is being renewed daily... I still sin occasionally. Yet the devil is a defeated foe along with all his servants; and his lies and negative ideas I fend off with my sword of God's word. Satan's power over me is broken. Where the spirit of God is there is freedom.

Well then I find myself in a battle. My feelings, my emotions, and my perceptions are all over the map. I am in a battle... yes one of many that makes up a war. Life is chaotic, unpredictable, confusing, and challenging. One-moment things seem healthy another moment I am confronted with the truth and need to repent. For such a long time I went about wondering, seeking, and focusing on what I thought was wrong with me. That brought inadequacy, insecurity, gloom and low self-esteem. It brought deception and a pathway for Satan's servants to accuse me and attempt to lead me astray with all sorts of intrigues meant to give me a defeated messiah complex along with attempts to sever my relationship with God. So repentance is God's idea not mine. I need to stay open to listening to what God wants to communicate to me. After all He is the captain of my ship.

Wednesday, May 30, 2012

Everyone is looking for love.

Monday, May 28, 2012

Just because God can't give us fully His empowering presence known as grace without us letting go of our sinful attachments or commitments it does not mean He doesn't love us until we do so or welcome Him into our lives. We don't have to change so that God will love us. Fact is: God loves us; and always has. He loves us despite our poor choices. Loves us even when we sin gravely or mortally. God loves us unconditionally. Loves us cause He is love. We can't earn His love: and never will. He loves us so that we can change for the better. He doesn't drive us forward with a whip, fear, intimidation, hate, and unkindly words. His love when embraced changes us and enables us to say no to sin as strongholds get dismantled. Yes we still have temptations. Yes we are still tested. But we are new creations. God loves us more than we can imagine. He will complete the work He began in us so long as we don't give up.

Tuesday, May 22, 2012

The Bible says that as a person believes in her or his heart so shall they be. So only if we change our beliefs in our hearts can we change our behaviors for good.... Just focusing on changing behaviors never works if those behaviors contradict what we believe in our hearts.

Truth sets us free whereas lies put us in bondage.

Guilt puts us in bondage; forgiveness sets us free: forgiving others and being forgiven by God or others. It is a two way street.

Today I realized through the leading of the Holy Spirit that there were things in my past that still needed to be dealt with:

Starving myself in a very harsh way while in university in Edmonton by going without lunches and breakfasts very often and taking pride in it. This phase passed but was replaced by getting cravings that led to eating too much.

While in Edmonton during my university days I was addicted to Coca-Cola.

Shortly after I got schizophrenia I was very harsh on myself. I fasted (starved) myself in an attempt to get right with God; and then not eating much for months until I got diagnosed... only after I got diagnosed did I begin to eat heavily again.

Prayed through these things and they are dealt with.

Monday, May 21, 2012

Why is when I think I am free in one or more areas in my life I immediately invite rules or criteria into my mind and measure myself and so kill the grace and terminate new beginnings?

Monday, May 7, 2012

I can't demand that others comply with my wishes. Only God can do that. When I do it then it is usually very ugly. Lord God I repent from my demanding spirit... the ugliness, the desire to control and the actual attempts to control others through abrasiveness, legalism, without grace... and through my selfishness when it comes to how I want others to behave: I repent from this all especially from using an ugly tone in my voice. I repent from my too BIG opinions of myself, my self-righteous demands, and the ugliness of this behavior... because it is full of bad fruit. Lord God I repent from seeing myself as wise and not needing anybody's

help, advise, direction, and comfort to lead me in the right direction. Lord God you work all things for the good of those who love you and are called according to your purposes. If people are to change they ultimately have to do it for you oh God and not me. My track record and approach in getting others to do stuff I want really sucks... it really is bad/evil/dark/and manipulative... and really needs to stop. It stops now through the grace of Jesus Christ. I therefore repent with your help Lord Jesus from this fruitless pursuit. Nothing is more important than doing your will. I therefore submit to your will Lord God in this area. Amen, and Amen!

Friday, May 4, 2012

Today I realized that part of not putting people into boxes is to treat each person differently... to set them free. To not treat them according to some rigid code, set of inflexible commandments, or human principles but depending on how the Holy Spirit leads me in light of the Sermon on the Mount. People are not equations that require solutions or problem solving.

Tuesday, May 1, 2012

There are many types of boxes that people try to put their victims into: slave, worthless, jerk, good-for-nothing, screw-up, lousy worker, insensitive person, leech, dirty-ass, weakling, bad spouse, slut, idiot, etc.... Each of these imprisons each person the same way through grains of truth (an incidence of incompetence or un-cool-ness) and the lie that the person can't change. The more one resists the more it seemingly is confirmed that the label or box is confirmed.

When one gets labeled one may try to immediately box one's way out of the box but in doing so one may assume some of the bad or sour identity labels and will feel trapped... having low self-esteem... and living out the lie that once an incompetent act is done by one then one is always incompetent and so fits in to the designated box.

It doesn't necessary take another human to put that label on us. Demons can, and we can be the culprits too when it comes to others and ourselves.

Sunday, April 29, 2012

While getting hammered by devils in my mind/head/heart/spirit with the possibility of fears/darkness/poverty/uncomfortable-ness and insecurity that lead to pain/discomfort/desperation/ and weakness I tried to fight off the anxious thoughts. Then no matter how horrible the ideas and costs of going in

the directions that the demons suggested I told myself: If it is God's will then so be it (even though I really, REally, REALLY don't want it) because God works all things for good of those who love Him and who are called according to His purposes. The darkness actually looks attractive and brings a degree of peace that I had not experienced with such threatening chaos/blackness challenging my being/energy/pride/faith.

Saturday, April 28, 2012

Often legalism occurs when we invent rules to keep certain commandments we take a liking to from either the Old Testament or even the New Testament (or even from our personal likes or dislikes). Often the invented rules have nothing to do with reality. We may get very angry with those people who break our invented rules because in breaking the invented rules we are so certain and fearful that these people are on the way to breaking the prized commandment. I know because I have done this so often. When we pick such structures a part in our minds with sober light we will find inconsistencies, contradictions, wrongful judging of motives, and hardening of one's heart to others exposed. When we have these structures they make us act and look like the Pharisees of Jesus' time on earth. These law based-structures have a way of killing love in our hearts and therefore in our actions too. These rules somehow become more important than the people we are called to love. They become BIG burdens and suck the life out of us. The power of sin is in the Law.

Friday, April 27, 2012

Attempting to not be selfish by trying to conform to a rule such as: "I must not or ought not be selfish" is bondage to guilt because of failure or bondage to pride because of success. The power of sin is in the law. Put another way: power to sin is in trying to conform to certain rules that seem to promise the opposite of sin. True submission to Jesus is to give up our hope that the law can make us perfect and to embrace Jesus as the way through faith to love, intimacy, peace, and rest.

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

I am entitled to my opinions. So is everyone else. There is nothing special about my opinions. I need to respect boundaries put in place by others as well as authorities God puts into place. I need to mind my own business, and focus on my own business alone. If I do then this is another way to not see myself as wise in my own eyes.

Sunday, April 22, 2012

Some lyrics from: "Learning To Be The Light" by the group: NewWorldSon
When a heart is cold as ice, you can't melt it with advice
No one wants to listen to lists of things they shouldn't do

Thursday, April 19, 2012

Whatever code one agrees to keep by sheer will power whether it be the Old Covenant, moral law, conforming to certain types of manners or behaviors, staying away from bad habits or addictions, or other ideas of perfectionism one will either grow powerless or proud. For me it has been powerless-ness when it came to keeping rules. My friend Dan once said that often when he ignores something about himself that is negative it eventually goes away. Today I sense a great truth in what he witnessed about his behaviors... because I experience it too: not focusing on rules but trusting in Jesus brings freedom. Living by rules alone is destined to failure or pride. We will either get beaten up (by negativity that comes from evil spirits), or we will grow pompous (deceived by evil spirits). JESUS is the end of the LAW. The law multiplies offences and does not stop them. True freedom comes from living out our identities as adopted children of God.

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Today I felt a spirit of perfectionism lift off me enabling me to experience peace, rest and consolation.

I then got into trouble with my wife while helping her with PREP because I let things slide and was not much of a help her. When she right afterwards complained I then thought maybe I had been deceived about a spirit of perfectionism leaving me because I was no help to her and I had no urgency or oomph at work the next day either. I prayed about my lack of motivation and God gave me some oomph... enough to perform my duties but not enough for much besides. I felt burdened to pick up my old pace but it seemed too heavy. I prayed that God would restore what the locusts had eaten... and God answered this a bit... Then I just decided to believe I could do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me! Slowly strength began to return along with even more peace as my day progressed. I guess I am learning to do things without a whip! Being free from serving another idol of perfectionism I am even freer in Christ! Thank you Lord God Almighty!

Monday, April 16, 2012

For a few weeks now I have struggled to reject that I am humble. I therefore had a proud attitude that I wanted to do away with but just could not dismiss not knowing its roots. I now know it was because I began to see myself as wise... and that is a “no, no!” in God’s kingdom. All of the insights, gems, and wisdom I have accumulated until now are gifts from God... I did not come up with any of it on my own.

Sunday, April 15, 2012

Galatians 5:22-23 says:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.

One can’t earn this. It is a gift and a grace granted through faith in Jesus Christ. If one believes one opens oneself up to it. If one does not believe one won’t have access to it. The fullness is made possible from clean and purified hearts and minds... yet even the filthiest hearts and un-renewed minds can bear this good fruit through the grace from and faith in Jesus. Yet blocks to this fruit can exist. Prayer to and listening to Jesus will allow the blocks to be removed. God wants us fruitful more than we want it ourselves.

Thursday, April 5, 2012

“There but for the grace of God go I.” I almost cried today because of the preciousness of this thought. Thank you Lord God!

Tuesday, April 3, 2012:

I recently realized that when I give my opinions on any matter dear to me these days I am no longer experiencing low self-esteem, sad negative emotions, or insecurity because people don’t say: “Hey René that was profound or interesting or sharp or insightful.” When one sees oneself as wise then such things will go through one’s mind and heart while giving one’s opinions. On the other hand if one does not see oneself as wise in one’s own eyes then one isn’t the center of attention anymore and so peace will reign. For so many years when I attended Bible Studies I found myself insecure when it came to how I saw my opinions. On one hand I thought myself wise on certain topics... but when people did not pat

me on the back I also felt empty or that something was out of place. Proud people care more about what others think about them... hence the insecurity when there is no applause.

Monday, April 2, 2012:

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.⁶

In the past I never really owned this passage because I saw it purely as a reference to not having to fear going to Hell. But today I realize that God gives us a new way (Jesus): one of not bowing to old or new fears: real or imagined. Fears that others won't love us, accept us, be there for us, or no longer like us because of our incompetence, shortcomings, or flaws. God's love drives out fears of rejection and fears of not being good enough. By embracing the truth with the faith He has given us fears will shrink. God's love is all that matters. He accepts us (with all our flaws, shortcomings and dirty laundry) because of His love. He will by no means drive us away because He invites us into His presence continually.

Sunday, April 1, 2012:

Today, while participating in the Palm Sunday Mass I realized that if we all had the attitude that Saint Paul had which was to consider himself as the worst of sinners then there would be so little judging going on in this world so that we might all get along better than we do.

Praying for a Spirit of revelation for people (myself included) when in darkness. Praying that the season of sin would end for those in it.

I can't sweetly, manipulatively or abrasively demand obedience to God.

True love meets people where they are at and doesn't demand that they meet us where we are at.

Just because I follow a recipe for prayer does not obligate God to answer me the way I desire. God is not a Pepsi-Cola machine: as if the right coin and button will get me what I want.

Friday, March 30, 2012:

⁶ Romans 8:15-17

I am learning that I can't put the way God actually communicates to me into a box or formula. What I mean is that I can't expect God to do things only in particular ways as written in stone. I need to be more flexible; more open minded, and not treat God as a Pepsi-Cola-machine. God wants more; He wants relationships.

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life and no one comes to God except through Him! Techniques, principles, maxims, and other truths that are not anointed or God breathed won't bring life or connection to God if God doesn't blessed it or use it. Faith in Jesus and following Him is the path to the Father; there is no other person or way. There are so many books out there that promise many different ways of contacting God. One needs to be careful to not replace Jesus with anyone of those authors (or their techniques), so that those authors won't become idols. I know, cause I made these very mistakes.

Sunday, March 25, 2012:

After having a very black and white worldview that was darkly judgmental and not too compassionate... I finally jettisoned it all. Then when I was shown masses and masses of people my mind would go blank saying I don't understand it all as though a lot of dead wood had been removed from my eyes (conscience). That means there is plenty of soil within my heart to grow the fruits of the Spirit (like compassion) that are directed towards humanity instead of my former judgmental ism. Thank you Lord God for this milestone in my journey!

Thursday, March 22, 2012:

I just realized earlier tonight that I have not been practicing a very important aspect to Listening Prayer. There are so many aspects to prayer... and for those who persevere and are open to learning... there is more to learn... and more to experience. In the past I was quick to go to God when I wanted to be certain about stuff important to me... but I have not been consciously attentive to the voice of God out side of this. Brad's thesis in his book, "Can You Hear Me?" is that the living God is always speaking... we just have to tune in to hear and listen to Him. I intend from now on to tune into what God is speaking to me because I value our relationship. This is an important part to relationship: listening to each other. I can't shut God out only to listen to Him when it is convenient for me.

One Dark Night:

The following is a poem by Saint John of the Cross. It became precious to me through my Dark Night or Journey. It took on new meaning for me while God was setting me

Free from my past resentments, imploded anger, judging, hatred, legalism, intolerance, pride, un-belief, distorted view of each human, and my self-centeredness.

STANZAS OF THE SOUL⁷

1. One dark night,
fired with love's urgent longings
- ah, the sheer grace! -
I went out unseen,
my house being now all stilled.

2. In darkness, and secure,
by the secret ladder, disguised
- ah the sheer grace! -
in darkness and concealment,
my house being now all stilled.

3. On that glad night,
in secret, for no one saw me,
nor did I look at anything,
with no other light or guide
than the one that burned in my heart.

4. This guided me
more surely than the light of noon
to where He was awaiting me
- Him I knew so well -
there in a place where no one appeared.

5. O guiding Night!
O night more lovely than the dawn!
O night that has united
the lover with his beloved
transforming the beloved in the lover.

6. Upon my flowering breast
which I kept for Him alone,
there he lay sleeping,
and I caressing Him

⁷ K Kavanaugh, O.C.D, O Rodriguez, O.C.D, The Collected Works Of St. John Of The Cross, ICS Publications (1991), pp. 358-359, or P. 2.; John Michael Talbot has beautifully put the words of this poem to music along with others on his CD called, "The Lover and the Beloved".

there in a breeze from the fanning cedars.

7. When the breeze blew from the turret,
as I parted His hair
it wounded my neck
with its gentle hand,
suspending all my senses.

8. I abandoned and forgot myself,
laying my face on my beloved;
all things ceased; I went out from myself,
leaving my cares
forgotten among the lilies.

Initially, the Dark Night or Journey was terrifying to me. I was gripped by the fear of not remaining loyal to Jesus. Looking back now, I see it as Saint John of the Cross does. I see it as a glad night; paradoxically, a mountaintop experience deep in a valley!

While waiting for God's promise to be fulfilled, I was fired with love's urgent longings, passionately looking forward to my crucial longings being met (the joys that only relationship with God can provide).⁸

God's grace being what my heart now runs on I can truly cry out aloud with Saint John - ah, the sheer grace. Humbling myself through repentance and faith I went by the secret ladder, disguised on the narrow way belonging to Jesus. In the process I found my house being now all stilled. This was seen by having my inordinate appetites reduced to their proper proportions under the control of the Spirit.

As my Dark Night continued to draw to a close, the brightness I saw waiting for me at the end of my tunnel, guided me/ more surely than the light of noon. All of the chaos, confusion, darkness, and oppression slowly lifted off me.

When the one dark night ended is difficult to say. It ended in part on May 1, 2001 when I gave up my first of many resentments and joy began to return to me. It ended in part when the Gale blew itself out. It ended in part when the major negative symptoms from my schizophrenia disappeared during June 2006. It ended in part when I found quiet reign within me starting mid August 2011. And it will finally end completely when I am clothed as the opening quotation in this chapter commands or promises.

As I have yet to die and be made perfect, I still suffer from concupiscence. This means that I have an inclination towards sin. There are still times when I am tempted towards doing wrong and giving into temptations. The only difference is that I don't have any compulsions, or addictions towards any particular sins anymore. I am Free. When I sin, and I do sin, I confess my faults to God (or go to confession), and move on.

I am not a "Saint" in the sense of Catholic tradition, but I am a "saint" in the sense that the apostle Paul used in the Bible. I don't think that the Church will ever canonize me - I'm no paragon of virtue, but I am holy (which is what the word saint means) by virtue of

⁸ Cf. Larry Crabb, *Inside Out*, NavPress (1988), p. 87

being a temple filled with God.

I'm not completely healthy but I will add any further updates to my blog when I'm aware of them (see link on my Website's first page).

Insights:

Two weeks ago I realized with Sophie's and the Holy Spirit's leading that the command to serve meant to serve the best interest of those we are serving. The literal interpretation leads to anger, conflict, and frustration when followed to the letter.

On the weekend I realized this kind of thinking applies to alms giving too. When somebody asks for alms I need to give her or him and what is best for them... If money then money ... If food then food... If comfort then comfort... If a job then a job... If time then time... and if friendship then friendship. Somehow I need to invest in the lives of the less fortunate for their benefit... And I am definitely called to not finance other peoples' laziness, or narcissism.

Lending is not the same as alms giving. Somehow I thought it was because of a combination of psychosis, legalism, and laminating one verse onto another... so I had it wrong! These insights remove even more legalism and rubbish from my conscience.

Thank you Sophie and Holy Spirit. Amen, and Amen!

Monday, March 12, 2012:

In order to change one's thoughts/paradigms/attitudes one need not always argue one's way out of the old into the new. The new is a gift from God through Jesus Christ... it is part of our inheritance. Often the old dark thoughts are just smoke put there by evil spirits hoping to convince us that we thought them and that we must be evil or spiritually deformed because we have such evil thoughts enter into our heads. One ought not waste one's time arguing with them. For too long evil spirits have lied their way into our lives robbing us of our true identity. They lie by saying that we have a sinful nature that is bad, depraved, and evil when in fact we don't. Yes we do sin. Yes we do have darkness within us, but it is a lack of Holy Spirit. Sin does not come from a nature but from our wills.

Sunday, March 11, 2012:

I have been editing my story and I came across some truths that I had forgotten about in all their fullness. Negativity is from the dark side. The devil lies to me about people and myself, and tries to destroy my good expectations for people and myself. The devil does not want me to see people's potential. Neither do devils want me to see my potential. Demons want me to focus on flaws so they become big and distorted... to the point where I get hopeless and angry... with things getting dark and with me becoming unkind... and so I sow bad seeds of unbelief, animosity, judging, controlling, and attempts of manipulation, instead of kindness and freedom.

Thursday, March 1, 2012:

Today I had a great day. I now realize that everyone has both good and bad attributes. I know that I have tended to go from one extreme to the next in how I viewed or treated

people. The land in between is land that needs to be plowed (it hurts to plow). When I can see others somewhere in between the two extremes with good and bad attributes then I am more able to see myself there too. That makes me more accepting, humble, and at peace. And the more balanced view I have of myself the better. I know that in the past when I saw others as purely evil my energy towards them became hostile, unkind, angry, and hateful. But now I feel at peace!

Thursday, February 16, 2012:

Today I asked the Lord for a word and He said: "Love as I have loved you." Boy does that ever pack a punch of clarity and soberness! It comes from John 13:34-35: "Love one another. As I have loved you!" Jesus loves us to death. Lord God thanks for putting love into my heart. It comes out every now and then. Please lead me in the way of ever lasting.

Some Issues Resolved:

Starting on February 12, 2012, I began to learn through reading: "How To Hear God's Voice"⁹ that:

- Truth based principles have their place in the spiritual life: they are channels' of God's grace. They aren't the source of life instead they draw real life from the only source who is God.
- I also was re-informed that we all have a longing for God. We are all made for God. We may not seek Him out, we might not embrace Him more than others... but He is the cry of each person's heart... unfortunately some actually substitute the counterfeit that can't satisfy for the real thing. I realize that everyone no matter how small this desire is within them ought not be mocked, laughed at, or judged for expressing their feelings.
- When one studies a subject only by one's natural self instead of in cooperation with God, then pride is the natural out growth. When one invites God into the picture... when one becomes open to the Spirit (by asking God to teach us)... one is no longer alone in darkness (devoid of warmth and love and light)... and one will not be motivated out of fear and dread... one will be motivated out of community and fellowship and love from and with God... one will be open to joy: not despair, open to love: not pride, open to HD (the full picture: true knowledge) not analogue (partial knowledge and sometimes misleading ideas). One won't take the credit for learning new things (One will thank God for what one learns: insights and revelation). One will become teachable... and one will ask God to wash one from one's sins instead of having un-confessed sins.

Nice Or Messy?

In theoretical mathematics there are often concise and beautiful, equations with elegant solutions. In applied mathematics there is often a mess... with computer generated solutions along with hand waving. Today I wanted to approach life as though

⁹ Mark & Patti Virkler

it was like theoretical mathematics... but today I realized again that life is messy... and that everything that comes my way does not fit into a perfect row of ducks.

Wednesday, February 1, 2012:

Today I realized that aiming to keep the following saying from Jesus:

‘You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also¹⁰

... by minimizing, and denying the wrongfulness of an evil person’s actions against me is doomed to failure. We have God given boundaries¹¹. If we minimize or deny the wrongfulness of evil actions against us we move boundaries. And we will quickly judge, get angry, and harden our hearts against others with chaos and hurt as a result. We will violate other people’s boundaries too, besides allowing others to violate our imaginary boundaries (because our boundaries have moved). To keep these words from Jesus one must always recognize the wrongfulness of evil acts. But this is not enough by itself. To many people Jesus’ words above seem like we aren’t fighting or standing up for justice if we don’t physically resist an evil person’s violent actions against us. But by taking a non-violent stance we are fighting on a different level... a more powerful level. Look at what Martin Luther King Jr. accomplished for Negro’ rights in the USA through non-violent resistance. It may seem like we are weak, cowardly, and throwing our lives away by non-physical resistance... but our fight is not against flesh and blood, but in the spiritual realm.

Moreover, looking at Jesus’ words above as a “must do”, “have to do” (no choice in the matter), and “no way out of it” command, rule, or principle to conform to, keep or aim for in one’s own power is also doomed to failure. It will also become a very heavy burden to carry with such motivation. Only by focusing on and cultivating a relationship with Jesus and following Him by faith and trust will we have the power to keep those words above from Jesus when needed.

Moreover the words: “turn the other cheek” are not necessarily always applying to physical confrontation. But it can be taken to be talking about not returning insult for insult.

Actions And People And Sadness:

If Parents have healthy spiritually they will always love their children no matter what they do. That doesn’t mean they will always like or agree with what their children do. No they may be appalled, outraged, or pissed off but their love for their children will remain. Children can choose paths away from the parent... and that means the healthy parent will respect the decisions made by the children. But not necessarily agree with those decisions. God is the healthiest parent alive. He loves us no matter what we do...

¹⁰ Matthew 5:38-39, NRSV

¹¹ Deuteronomy 19:14

but he doesn't always agree with what we do. How about that? God is love and not hatred and that means we have hope. He will give us what we want: Him or emptiness. Today I was feeling incompetent in a certain area in my life and I realized that I was wrongly projecting a hatred for me as opposed to just not liking the results from my performance onto the person who was witnessing my efforts. When I realized that the person did not hate me but just wasn't happy about my efforts I had an, "ah ha" moment of insight, knowing truth, seeing change and repenting towards freedom. I also realized that I was in the habit of hating myself for what I saw as my poor efforts when others along with myself weren't happy with the results from my performance. When I realized this (along with feeling this deep sadness) I immediately repented from it and felt connected to myself along with feeling more deeply consolation and relief as though a BIG burden fell off my shoulders. I now realize that I need to make a distinction between actions and the people making the actions under scrutiny. This is something I have realized of late but had no idea that I was dysfunctional in this area in the way I describe above. Praise God for allowing situations to come my way that the Holy Spirit can point out where I am not living truth.

I thanked the Lord for this progress... but unlike previous times I did not assume that this was it. I asked God if there was more to the situation. He pointed to the sadness and informed me that I was in the habit of drowning my sorrows/sadness in eating food to comfort myself. I repented with Jesus' help through faith and felt like I had dealt with the sadness. But later I would realize that I needed to invite God into that emptiness. That I did... and my then impatience vanished and I had peace!

Thank you the Holy, True, and Living God for caring for me patiently. Amen, and Amen!

Repentance & A Insight on: Sunday, January 29, 2012:

Because I was such a proud and hateful person despite my conversion in 1989, when I read a book from a certain author I grew to harden my heart against Saul the first king of Israel because of his spiritual defects. I now know he landed up a mess because he took one step at a time in getting there. He wasn't always that screwed up. I now see his life as a lesson and warning for me.

I think I finally understand the nature of judgment: judging is hardening one's heart towards a person and involves hating the person i.e. being devoid of love for them. So how does one not judge the person but judge the hurtful act? By not judging a person who has wronged me means I don't harden my heart towards them... but I don't accept their wrongful behavior. Hence the saying: I can love the person but hate the sin... just like I knew I did to myself for some time. If I can love myself when I do a wrong then I can do it to others with Jesus' help. People who are always nice to not only good people but the bad too, lack this understanding. Jesus was not a nice person. He stood up to injustices.

Friday, January 27, 2012:

I recently downloaded some Praise and Worship music from the 90's. It is much like what I used to listen to before I became ill with schizophrenia. It sounded beautiful... but I had judged in a proud way those who were fans of it after many years of moving on

with my life. When I realized this pride I repented from it and was more able to listen to the music. Then I realized that I used to love this kind of music even when I became pompous and full of pride around the time the promise from God came for me: "To be broken into freedom". So there was some distrust in me for where the music may have led me to. Fact is Jesus was with me to save me way back then... and so long as I don't see my emotions as proof of my faith in, commitment to, and love for God then I'll be okay. There is nothing wrong with the music. The music is good and meant to be enjoyed... and that is what I intend to do: enjoy it. Not realizing I had this self-accusation I went through years of not enjoying what God wanted me to enjoy. Thank you Lord God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for neither leaving me nor forsaking me and patiently restoring me. Amen, and Amen.

Living In The Present: (Thursday, January 26, 2012):

Committing to not attach, covet or hold onto yesterday's victories when it comes to how my day will go today is the way to live in the present. No two days are exactly the same.¹² Living in the present means I am not aiming for yesterday's successes and trying to avoid yesterday's failures. Today is a new day. Living in the present means I am not expecting and setting my heart on things to go as smoothly as yesterday or in times or years past. If today they go smoothly fine: that is a bonus: praise GOD. Living in the present means I am not aiming to feel like I did yesterday if yesterday went well. Living in the present means I am not aiming to have pious feelings or trying to fabricate them. Living in the present I am open to today's challenges; open to love; open to letting God choose the agenda. Living in the present I am open to new ideas; I am open to learning new stuff; doing new things; not getting set in one's ways; and insulating oneself from boredom.

But how does hope play into living in the present? When things are tough then the promises of God sustain us in the present. How does working towards a goal play into living in the present? Goals that are to be fulfilled in the future need doable game plans. Each day I work on the small portion needed that will help achieve the goals I desire.

Jettisoning Another burden:

The parable of the Good Samaritan has been a long time on my mind. And in the process it did become a burden with devils using malice to suck the joy and love out of me that was meant to motivate me into becoming a Good Samaritan. I wanted to be a Good Samaritan... but my strategy in getting there was not by simply abiding in Jesus through faith (and trusting Him to energize and motivate me in that direction), but instead my strategy was one of self-flagellation together with a rule to aim for. In this vein I drew a picture of the Good Samaritan and began to paint it as a prayer that one day I would do just that. But it became a far-off lofty goal that I increasingly felt powerless to perform in the many small ways that presented themselves to me each day. When Jesus expects us to do something He always gives us the grace to do it even when it is difficult. Jesus has everyone's best interest at heart; mine included. I have decided to leave this

¹² Thank you Colin for this freedom principle.

situation in Jesus' hands. I now trust Him to motivate me. I trust Him to guide me. I trust Him to save me. His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. He is patient. He is my Good Shepherd.

After this revelation... I briefly lost my footing and love. Then the Holy Spirit let me know that I don't have to sustain a loving attitude all by myself. I can let Him carry me. God wants me to rest in Him through faith.

Hope?

I now realize that in the past I had very little faith in believing that conflicts or disagreements would be resolved. I therefore battered myself within until there were resolutions. Now I have faith and remind myself that things can, and do get better; and therefore I don't have to be hard on myself.

Grace & Forgiveness:

During my Evangelical days I learned that grace in part was un-merited favor. This is correct. I also learned that forgiveness meant treating an agent of hurt as though they had never done anything wrong. I now see this as a twisted truth. Forgiveness does not mean: It is OK; I'm OK, you're OK, and we are OK. The following comes from the Clarion Journal¹³ and was written by Brad Jersak after listening to a First Nation's speaker:

1. **Forgiveness is NOT saying "It's okay"**. It is NOT okay what happened. Abuse and oppression are never written off as acceptable. Forgiveness must not minimize the wrong-doing or the damage done by any injustice.
2. **Forgiveness is NOT saying "I'm okay"**. I may need years to go through the healing process. Genuine forgiveness does not ask anyone to skip any stages of the grieving and healing process.
3. **Forgiveness is NOT saying "You're okay"**. The offender is not simply off the hook. They still need to walk through repentance and all its consequences, often including retribution, rehabilitation, restitution and restoration.
4. **Forgiveness is NOT saying "We're okay"**. Forgiveness may include but does not require the victim of oppression and injustice to enter or re-enter a relationship with the offender. That may not even be wise or safe. One can forgive and be healed without ever being reconciled. They have a choice whether to re-engage or simply walk away. If forgiveness is not saying: It is OK; I'm OK; you're OK, we are OK, then what is forgiveness and how does it complement grace or unmerited favor?

Forgiveness is giving up resentments, anger, bitterness, and sometimes hatred. Minimizing what others have done in the past helps us to lose perspective on what are acceptable boundaries. We will become overly sensitive and judgmental towards those who violate our boundaries real or imagined if we minimize or deny injustices or moral wrongs.

When we are gracious or forgiving we can accept people and love them yet still reject their actions. Condoning or minimizing or denying wrongs from the past energizes our

¹³ http://www.clarion-journal.com/clarion_journal_of_spirit/2009/06/reconciled-to-what-by-brad-jersak.html

judgmental-ism in the present. The very image of God stamped onto our souls cries out for justice. Denying justice through denial or minimization in one area confuses our sense of personal boundaries. When we do this we get confused about what to stand up for or what to tolerate.

God opposes the proud but gives His grace to the humble. That means He tough loves those who are at war in certain areas of their lives with Him. He doesn't pretend all is OK when things are not OK. And yet, God's kindness leads us to repentance. He also doesn't treat us as our sins deserve. He doesn't approve of our sins... but He loves us anyways.

When I learned what grace was and that God gave it to me; I immediately wanted to give it to others. But I wrongly approached it by minimizing people's faults instead of loving the people despite their wrongs.

God dispenses His grace to the humble, and opposes (tough loves) the proud. If I am to give grace to others like I want to then I need to not judge them but still stand up to injustices. Injustices are not okay. Injustices have consequences. But how does one love the person but hate the sin? Like CS Lewis, I know that I have love for myself, but still despise my sins. So if I can treat myself like this... I should be able to love others in the same way. I can't throw stones at others because I am guilty too.

Working to build my life on the Rock (Jesus' truth) by forgiving and discarding lies has led me here. I am pretty well free... but every now and then while heading in the river of life and grace I find myself on the shores. So I still have a bumpy road to travel on at times. With my schizophrenia... stress and conflict both challenge me. But I'm not giving up because God loves me. That I am sure about!

Another Change Of Attitude...

For sometime I have looked down on a phenomena within Christendom because I have seen and experienced much by going through my Dark Journey to the point of downgrading the important truth/experience/and gift that this phenomena is.

I've heard it said that there are God shaped vacuums in the hearts of all people that Jesus does and can fill for those who welcome Him. I unfortunately looked down on this thinking rather proudly thinking that there was more to the Christian life than that experience. Boy was I ever wrong. Such is the beginning of Spiritual life... And everything after is built on the foundation of this phenomenon. The only way to grow spiritually is to invite Jesus into our God shaped vacuums and allow Him free reign over our hearts so He can dispel the darkness within us by His light/goodness/and presence.

I have repented from my pompous attitude... and feel relieved!

Tuesday, January 10, 2012:

Today I realized that the kids I am helping Sophie my wife teach in Prep Classes are much like the kids who rejected me in South Africa when I was a child. Looking back... can I really let such kids determine my self worth, my self-esteem, and my destiny since then and up to today? Absolutely NOT!

They are so erratic, simple, full of energy, draining, and full of ignorance. They have some smarts, some understanding, and some kindness... but don't have the maturity that adults' respect and aim for. They are not fully developed. They have potential

though. They see simple things that we are often blind to... yet we see so much more that they are blind to. Their opinions are simple, embellished, and most of the time can't be taken seriously. Yet they are loved, cared for, have worth, and are teachable. They know nothing with deep certainty; yet they easily believe the absurd and sometimes the best. They barely think logically. They have passion. They can't be expected to hold too much responsibility. They celebrate little achievements as we do BIG ones. They are hungry for love. They don't want to be ignored. They seek attention. They have wants and needs. They want to be seen as special, unique, cherished and spoiled deeply. Most things they set their hearts on they pursue dogmatically for brief moments until something easier comes along.

I forgive them with Jesus' help... I forgive with Jesus' help myself for being a prisoner of my own pride, my own selfishness, and my own disillusionment. I repent with Jesus' help from giving to those who rejected me so much power over my future and whom I decided to be and where that led me. I take the power that I gave them back with Jesus' help. I was one of them in the fullest sense; my pride and selfishness blinded me from seeing that. I forgive myself with Jesus' help. Amen & Amen!

A dramatic fruit I am experiencing now that this has been prayed through is: a wall has come down between me and my brother and sister. It is like I am seeing them for the first time... and it feels really good. Also a wall has come down between me and pretty well everyone I know or meet. What a relief.

Monday, January 2, 2012:

A while ago my wife told me that she did not treat me as though I had schizophrenia. That scared me a little, but then I became glad. Yesterday I realized that I still treated myself as though I had schizophrenia... and I decided to stop it, to stop limiting myself by it's negative aspects... and to treat myself as though I were healthy. I am therefore no longer viewing myself as a victim of evil spirits or my own life choices. I am viewing myself with potential, with hope, with promise, and I am no longer defining my life by my negative schizophrenia symptoms.

I am not demanding that my music do this or that for me... I just accept it for what it is... and land up enjoying it a whole lot more despite my illness. This by-passes the mentality that I had for a long time of saying that I'd only declare myself to be healthy if I could experience my favorite music like I used to do before I became ill with schizophrenia. People change and so see and experience music, stories, and art differently as they get older.

Old wine skins vs. New Wine skins:

Jesus said:

No one sews a piece of un-shrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is made. Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are

destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.¹⁴

The old life (old wine skin) needs to be abandoned completely. The new life (new wine skin) needs to be wholly embraced. We can't pick and choose what we are to incorporate into our lives from the new life: adding one or two good things and leaving the rest un-changed is not wise. If we mix old with new then everything can be lost if there is no movement to growth in commitment to Jesus. We need to do away with the old works (old wineskins or old attitudes) that the devil spun into our lives with our permissions. And to fully embrace the life Jesus offers us.

If we have an old cloak and don't want to trade it in for a new one, and only want to patch it up, then we are committed more to the old life than the new life. Wanting a new life more than the old one enables us with God's power to discard the old cloak (old life) and to receive a new cloak (new life). This is a process. It is motivated by slowly growing in commitment to following Jesus through faith. This is the case when we want God's will more than anything else and are willing to pay for it through suffering.

Listening To The Voice Of God Better Than Before:

I have had a lot of success in recognizing God's voice when I ask Him questions especially since I got fitted with a good foundation from Brad Jersak's book: "Can You Hear Me?" But when I am really attached to something, I want to manipulate, change, or argue with what I hear in my mind. This is a tendency that I embraced and struggled with... but now recognize as something I need to jettison or say no to. God is most easily approached when I believe He is good.

Truth Wins Out Over Lies Everytime:

Expose any lie with truth, and truth is like light and the lies will vanish like darkness. Am I being tempted to judge? Is my judging others based on a supposed lack of justice coming my way? Do I believe I am getting the short end of the stick? Am I believing demonic lies about the motives of others? Don't I realize that I can't see into the minds and hearts of others? Am I still using: "Oh... so they are like that" thinking when I harden my heart in the worst and darkest sense? Yes... but not all the time. I am making progress with Jesus' help. Truth always wins out. I got to find the right truth to fight off the lies from the enemy. If I build my attitudes, thinking, and actions on Jesus' words then my judging will evaporate. It can't get any simpler. The truth is that I don't know the attitudes, beliefs, judgments, blindness-es, clarity, understanding, consciences, motives, thinking, reasoning, examples and intents of those I see at church in the pew, or on the street, or in my own house. I need to remember that... if I am going to stop judging people who do things I disagree with.

Tonight I got serious about my judging problem. And the Lord pointed out a judgment I made a while back... and whoosh it washed away with His help. But during Communion I had so many negative thoughts enter my mind anyways... it was a torrent... a gush of lies and judgments and accusations that tried to push me away from God, the Church, and my brothers and sisters. Demons are behind all the accusations I hear in my mind. Not

¹⁴ Matthew 9:16-17, NRSV

all thoughts in my mind come from me. If they are negative and hateful then they are rooted in the kingdom of darkness. Just because evil ideas come into my head does not mean I am a bad person. Do I give into them sometimes? Yes... but not always.

Sometimes they are so powerful, overwhelming, insidious and tenacious. Worse than picking out weeds in a fertile field... they come at me so quickly... I don't know what to do with them at first. Or they seem to agree with me so much except I know they lead away from love and so I don't want them.

I also realized that judging is just as prevalent in my life as lies used to be.

I am learning how to love people. It is a slow process. I'm learning to love one person at a time... and so I am slowly learning to love everyone because we are all made in the image of God. I have a sword... I need to pick it up and fight with it against the devils who wish to lead me astray. My sword is the word of God.

No Longer Beating Myself Up With Satan's Help!

I have picked up my sword and it feels strong; the sword being the truth of God's Holy Word. I am having confidence in the word because it has proved true through all my trials. I don't have to be ashamed of it in the presence of anyone. The word is also like seed. It grows us and positions us for spiritual prosperity. It removes the demonic strongholds, and breaks the chains of powerlessness, of shame, of condemnation, of negativity in our lives. If we don't have negativity in our lives we can't beat ourselves up anymore.

I did not expect it so soon that I'd need to use my sword in another area of my life after going through so many trials, darknesses, and intrigues victoriously. Those victories are a result of God's grace, my perseverance, and me believing the words written in the Bible in those areas of my life where I was being tested. The storms did come (many more may come). I have driven the remaining darkness out of my life with faith in what God's word says about me, about God, and the devil.

Satan can put so much bullshit into one's head, and if one is not careful one will think and believe that it is a reflection of oneself and one may possibly own those ideas and as a result feel guilty, angry, judgmental, critical, negative, intolerant, and proud; and so possibly give up. We are designed to love, be joyous, be gracious, be kind, be encouraging, and to be giving... but if we don't fight off Satan's air attacks we will feel defeated and possibly give up so that Satan neutralizes us or wins the war for our souls. We need to fight the good fight, because it is winnable! Thank you Jesus for showing the way.