

# Step Eleven

**STEP 11: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.**

## From Step 10 to Step 11

Dearly beloved in Christ Jesus, it is truly my hope that by now you have been able to sense and feel the call of God on your life, especially for those of us who suffered the feelings of low self esteem. That crippling low self esteem, the feeling of not even being good enough, that somehow we could never measure up - this and other emotional pain is what some of us tried to cover up with anything that seemed to bring even momentary relief. The deep feelings of not belonging or unworthiness, we covered with lying, cheating, drink, drugs, sex, etc., only to feel more empty. I do realize even at Steps 10 and 11 some in the group are still feeling some of the old stuff. If this is your case, either you are new to the group, or you have not WORKED through the steps yet!

Yes, they are numbered for a reason, and they need your complete attention if you are going to reach your ultimate goal of healing. This goal of healing is a "new you" who knows who you are in Christ Jesus, and knows that you can do all things He requires of you through His strength (Philippians 4:13). It is having your burden lifted, and being freed from your prison, finally realizing that 2,000 years ago Jesus lifted that burden and set you free (Luke 4:18, Isaiah 61:1). On the cross of Calvary, Jesus broke the lock, and all we have to do is get up and be willing to walk through the door and stay on the path He has provided for us. This same Jesus, who is the Light of the world, will be a lamp unto our feet to guide our steps, and our Heavenly Father, yes, Almighty God, will guide us with His eye (Psalm 32:8). Oh yes, my brothers and sisters, our destiny is in eternity with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Such blessed promise awaits, that I cannot even imagine its fullness. What a blessed hope we have!

You may be asking, "What now? What does God have for me next?" Well, here it is - our Father has goals for us, and He will equip us with everything that is required to accomplish these goals. Yes, everything, and the ultimate goal is for us to grow from spiritual immaturity to Christ-likeness (Romans 8:29). This, my friends, is a lifelong process, and the good work started when you came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). He promises in Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave you or forsake you." That's absolute and total security! Glory to the Lord, our final destiny is to fellowship with the Creator of all creation for eternity, and between then and now, He is preparing us to rule and reign with Him in His kingdom (the 1,000 year millennial kingdom on earth, Rev. 1:5-6, Rev. 20:6). How amazing it is that this glorious God and Creator can take us and create someone He wants to fellowship with forever! Jesus promises in Revelation 3:21, "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also have overcome and sat down with My Father on His throne." What a promise to the overcomer, of which you are one if you have surrendered totally to the will of the Father. You are an overcomer because of what Jesus did on the cross at Calvary: He overcame death, sin, Satan, and this world. If you have committed your life to Him, He promises that you will overcome these things also.

We don't want to look too far into the future, but we must keep focused on Step 10, because this self-evaluating is for the rest of our life. If the Step 10 inventory is done daily, there will be much less chance of backsliding. If we keep our lives clean, we can offer a clean and bountiful gospel ("good news") to a sin-stained world which is without hope, miserable, sick and blind. That's right! We are the ones God Almighty has called to take the message of Jesus Christ and His saving grace to a lost world. So, my beloved, don't lose sight of Step 10, or for that matter ALL of the Steps covered so far. They are the tools given by God for your and my

growth and strength, and we need to go over our materials from time to time to get refreshed and renewed. As stated earlier, the instructions and tools are from God, and they must be put into action if to be of any use. Dottie and myself take no credit for these materials, as they were revealed to us for you. If you haven't already, you too will be given things from the Lord that you never thought possible - things to share with the rest of His children or potential children.

Step 11 - it is in this step that you will develop a more intimate relationship with the Lord. We hope to share with you some tools the Lord has shown us over the years that have led to successful prayer, and also the "no-no's" that will hinder prayer. We have a loving Heavenly Father who wants to give us all that is good, but we must be right with Him to receive it. We must humbly present our petitions and requests before His throne of grace, believing and trusting that He hears and is already working on it. Glory to God in the highest! But be aware of James 4:2-3, "You lust and you do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and you do not receive, because you ask amiss (wrongly), that you may spend (waste) it on your pleasures." So, we will learn in Step 11 some of the best ways, tried, tested and true, to communicate with the Lord, and to find out His will for our lives.

With His love,

Pastor Tom

### **Introduction**

Greetings, my co-venturers! I admonish you all to watch with me and pray, so that the tempter does not overpower you, for though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak (Mark 14:38). It is through this watchful, sober, and prayerful communication with our Creator that we will find peace, comfort, and an illuminated path of direction (knowledge of His will for us) given by God the Holy Spirit. My fellow seekers of the will of God in our lives, it is up front I state to you that prayer is communication with God, and it is a very personal action. We are here to encourage the practice and frequency of prayer, that we may be fully blessed and walk in the joy that our heavenly Father wants to give His children. As His children, we are also His disciples (students, learners). As such we must communicate through prayer (talking to our Father) and studying His word (Him talking to us), then we must allow our lives and beings to be directed and motivated by His Holy Spirit.

Holy men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit to pen the Scriptures, the word of God (II Peter 1:20-21). When we pray and seek His will, our gracious God and Father will speak to us. As we grow in holiness and commitment to Him, He will communicate to us through His word, and as we learn to listen for His voice. Oh how sweet is that communication and fellowship with our Lord as we abide in Him ("improve our conscious contact"). But we must be warned to test everything by the written word of God, so that we don't get mixed signals. Every revelation you receive from God about His will for you must coincide with His written word. Why, you may ask? It is simply that II Peter 1:20-21 says God the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Scripture, and that it was by no man's private interpretation, so therefore the Holy Spirit will always agree with the word that He inspired to be written (the Bible). If you think you are hearing from God, and if the message is even slightly different from the written word of God, you are hearing from an imposter! That is why we must test everything by the word of God, because it never fails, changes, or compromises. Oh, we may not like the truth sometimes, but it is that truth that will set us free.

Think back a little and remember the prison we were in (staying in there, why?). Then we heard the truth that One named Jesus had removed the lock some 2,000 years earlier at Calvary, and all we had to do was get up and walk out of that prison, because we were free, yes, free indeed! (John 8:31-36) "Stand fast therefore in the liberty (freedom) by which Christ has made us free, and **do not be entangled again** with a yoke of bondage" (Gal. 3:1). "And

that they may come to their senses and escape the snare (trap) of the devil, having been taken CAPTIVE by him to do his will" (II Timothy 2:26).

My beloved, do not lose sight of John 14:6, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Remember, He is the way to go, He is the truth, the only truth, and if you know the Truth, the truth shall set you free! "I am the life" - He and He alone created life and He alone can offer eternal life to those who will to know the truth. To God be the glory!

In our study of prayer in Step 11, we must also look at some history of prayer. Many were the Old Testament saints who were given to much rich and powerful prayer: Moses, David, Daniel, Elijah, Elisha and more. Yes, God raised up great leaders and these leaders earned the respect of the people, because God would grant their requests. Also, the Jews had to give sacrifices to God through the priests, who would offer up prayer to God on their behalf. My friends, our Father did something wonderful that day at Calvary. Not only did He purchase our souls with the blood of His Son Jesus, who was the ultimate sacrifice, as He lay down His life for His own creation, but He won victory over death, sin and Satan. As Jesus gave up His spirit and died on the cross willingly, God the Father tore the veil (curtain) in the temple and opened up the way into the holy of holies (Matthew 27:50-51, Mark 15:38, Luke 23:45). In the Old Testament, the high priest could only go into the holy of holies once a year, on the Day of Atonement, to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on behalf of the people. My beloved, with all the wonder of that day, by the tearing of the curtain that separated man from God's very presence, it gave Jew and gentile alike absolute admittance to His throne room. We no longer need someone to offer up prayers for us, or a priest to sprinkle blood of an animal sacrifice. **The blood of Jesus paid for our sins once and for all**, and we have been given authority to address God personally. There is no more work to be done - it is finished! (John 19:30) So, we must realize all of this was accomplished at a great price, and therefore should not be taken except with complete reverence. We need to visualize, if you will, entering the throne room of God the Father, as we humbly offer our petitions to Him in the name of Jesus the Christ. Remember, when we go to prayer, we are accessing the mind of God! Prayer is the privilege of God's redeemed people.

Remember, Dottie and I are here to pray with you over anything at any time. In upcoming lessons, we will share with you some of the "prayer secrets" that have worked for us over the years, and made our communication with God sweet as well as powerful.

In His service,

Pastor Tom

### **First Week's Lesson - Step 11**

#### **Conditions for Effectual Prayer (James 5:16)**

**James 5:16** "...**PRAY** for one another, that you may be healed. The **effectual fervent prayer** of a righteous man **avails (accomplishes) much.**" **Effectual prayer** means prayer that is effective, that gets answered, that gets the job done. The promises in God's word for answered or "effectual" prayer, however, are conditional. If we don't meet those conditions, our prayers will probably not be answered. If we DO meet all the conditions, then we can have confidence before God, and have **PATIENCE** to wait until the right timing, and not lose faith, even if it takes a while for the answer to come (Hebrews 10:35-36).

**CONDITION #1 - The person praying MUST have a relationship with God the Father through His Son, Jesus Christ.** Jesus opens **the WAY** into the throne room of God, so that we may present our petitions (prayers) to Him. The only way you can become a child of God is through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. The only way you can approach God as your Heavenly

Father, and expect Him to hear your prayers, is **if you are His child - He doesn't answer the prayers of strangers!** The first prayer of a non-Christian that God will answer is when that person cries out to God for salvation, or the **sincere** prayer of, "If there IS a God, reveal Yourself to me!" See John 8:38-44 for who your FATHER is if you don't believe in Jesus!

- **John 14:6** "Jesus said to him, ' \_\_\_\_\_ am the \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ comes to the \_\_\_\_\_, except through \_\_\_\_\_.'"
- **Galatians 3:26** "For \_\_\_\_\_ are ALL \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_ in CHRIST JESUS."
- **John 16:23-24** "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, He will give you. Until now, you have asked nothing in My name: ask, and you will \_\_\_\_\_, that your joy may be full."
- **Matthew 7:7-8 & 11** " \_\_\_\_\_, and it will be \_\_\_\_\_ to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you: for every one who asks \_\_\_\_\_, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened." "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your \_\_\_\_\_ who is in \_\_\_\_\_ give \_\_\_\_\_ things to those who \_\_\_\_\_ Him?"
- **Hebrews 4:14-16** "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses; but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, that we may \_\_\_\_\_ mercy and find \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ in time of need."

**CONDITION #2 - We must HAVE FAITH (no doubting).** This is so hard for some people to understand. Can God answer prayers even when people don't have faith, and when they are always negative and full of doubt? Of course! He is God and He CAN do anything He wants, but He has set up certain RULES by which His universe is run, and **He then operates within those rules or laws.** Just as there is a "law of gravity" that causes you to fall when you jump off a cliff, there is **the "law of faith"** that causes your prayers either to be answered or not answered.

- **Mark 11:23-24** "For assuredly, I say to you, that whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not \_\_\_\_\_ in his \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_ that those things which he says will come to pass, he will \_\_\_\_\_ whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you \_\_\_\_\_, when you \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ that you receive them, and you shall have them."
- **James 5:15** "And the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ shall restore (save, heal) the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up....."
- **James 1:6-8** "But let him \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, with no doubting, for he who \_\_\_\_\_ is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let \_\_\_\_\_ that man suppose that he will \_\_\_\_\_ anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."
- **Matt. 15:28** "Then Jesus answered and said to her, 'O woman, \_\_\_\_\_ is your \_\_\_\_\_! Let it be to you as you \_\_\_\_\_.' And her daughter was healed from that very hour."
- **Matthew 8:10 & 13** "When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such \_\_\_\_\_ not even in Israel.' "Then Jesus said to the centurion, 'Go your way; and as you have \_\_\_\_\_, so let it be \_\_\_\_\_ for you.' And the servant was healed that same hour."

**CONDITION #3 - We must live a life that is PLEASING TO GOD.** This doesn't mean we have to be PERFECT, because that will never happen this side of heaven. However, we must be obedient to what we KNOW of God's commandments. God does not hold you responsible for what you do not know, if you are just a brand new, baby Christian, but if you have been saved for a while, He expects you to know what His word says, and do it!

- **I John 3:22** "And whatever we \_\_\_\_\_, we \_\_\_\_\_ from Him, because we \_\_\_\_\_ His \_\_\_\_\_, and do those things that are \_\_\_\_\_ in His \_\_\_\_\_."
- **I Peter 3:12** "For the eyes of the Lord are on the \_\_\_\_\_, and His \_\_\_\_\_ are open to their \_\_\_\_\_; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."
- **Psalms 34:17** "The righteous \_\_\_\_\_ out, and the Lord \_\_\_\_\_, and delivers them out of all their \_\_\_\_\_."
- **I Peter 5:5-7** "...for God resists the \_\_\_\_\_, but gives \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_. Therefore \_\_\_\_\_ yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time (at the proper time), casting all your care (anxiety, worries, fear) upon Him, because He cares for you."

**CONDITION #4 - We must KNOW GOD'S WORD (be ESTABLISHED in the COVENANT which God has made with us in the BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST).** God's written word is His will for us, and we are promised that if we ask anything according to His will, He will answer that prayer. Therefore, we had better know what His word says!

- **John 15:7** "If you abide in Me, and My \_\_\_\_\_ abide (dwell) in you, you will \_\_\_\_\_ what you \_\_\_\_\_, and it shall be \_\_\_\_\_ for you."
- **Psalms 119:38, 58, 65** "\_\_\_\_\_ Your \_\_\_\_\_ to Your servant, who is devoted to fearing (having reverence for) You. "I entreated Your favor with my whole heart; be merciful (gracious) to me \_\_\_\_\_ to Your \_\_\_\_\_. You have dealt well with Your servant, O Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ to Your \_\_\_\_\_."
- **I John 5:14-15** "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything \_\_\_\_\_ to His \_\_\_\_\_ (His WORD), He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we \_\_\_\_\_, we know that we have the \_\_\_\_\_ that we have asked of Him."
- **Luke 22:20** "Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the \_\_\_\_\_ in My \_\_\_\_\_, which is shed for you.'"
- **Ephesians 2:12-13** "..... at that time, you were \_\_\_\_\_ Christ, being \_\_\_\_\_ from the commonwealth (blessings) of Israel, and \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, having no hope, and \_\_\_\_\_ God in this world."
- **II Peter 1:4** "By which have been given unto us exceeding \_\_\_\_\_ and precious \_\_\_\_\_; that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."
- **II Corinthians 1:20** "For \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of God in Him (in Jesus) are \_\_\_\_\_, and in Him \_\_\_\_\_, to the glory of God through us."
- **Hebrews 7:21-22** ".....the Lord has sworn and will not relent (change His mind), 'You are a priest forever', according to the order of Melchizedek, by so much more \_\_\_\_\_ has become a surety (guarantee) of a better \_\_\_\_\_."
- **Hebrews 10:16** "'This is the \_\_\_\_\_ that I will make with them after those days,' says the Lord. 'I will put my \_\_\_\_\_ into their \_\_\_\_\_, and in their \_\_\_\_\_ I will write them.'"
- **Psalms 50:5** "Gather my \_\_\_\_\_ together unto Me; those who have made a \_\_\_\_\_ with Me by sacrifice (Jesus' SACRIFICE on the cross)."

#### **HINDRANCES TO ANSWERED PRAYER:**

**(Why so many prayers seem to go unanswered)**

**OPPOSITE OF CONDITION #1 - The person praying DOES NOT know Jesus Christ.** We enter the covenant with God through the blood of Jesus. It is through this covenant (agreement) that God promises to answer our prayers. Again, He does NOT promise to answer the prayers of STRANGERS!

- **Ephesians 2:12-13** "...at that time, you were without \_\_\_\_\_, being \_\_\_\_\_ from the commonwealth (blessings) of Israel, and \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_ of promise, having \_\_\_\_\_ hope, and \_\_\_\_\_ God in this world."
- **Matthew 7:23** "And then I will declare to them, 'I \_\_\_\_\_ you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

**OPPOSITE OF CONDITION #2 - Unbelief, Lack of Faith.** I'm sorry if it seems harsh, but God says that the one who doubts (has no faith) will receive nothing from the Lord.

- **James 1:6-8** "But let him \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, with \_\_\_\_\_ doubting, for he who \_\_\_\_\_ is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let \_\_\_\_\_ that man suppose that he will \_\_\_\_\_ anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, \_\_\_\_\_ in all his ways."

**OPPOSITE OF CONDITION #3 - Refusing to REPENT OF SIN in our lives.** Holding onto sin of any kind, and refusing to repent and give it up, will greatly hinder your prayers. In Psalm 66:18, it says "If I regard wickedness in my heart" which means if I "CHERISH" or hold onto a favorite sin, and am not willing to give it up to God. Also, **harboring resentment and bitterness in your heart is a sin**, and your prayers will be hindered until you FORGIVE whoever has hurt or offended you!

- **Mark 11:25** "And whenever you stand \_\_\_\_\_, if you have anything \_\_\_\_\_ anyone, \_\_\_\_\_ him, that your Father in heaven may also \_\_\_\_\_ you your trespasses."
- **Psalm 66:18** "If I \_\_\_\_\_ iniquity (sin, wickedness) in my heart, the Lord will not \_\_\_\_\_; but certainly God has \_\_\_\_\_ me; He has attended to the voice of my \_\_\_\_\_."
- **James 4:3-4 & 6** "You \_\_\_\_\_ and do not \_\_\_\_\_, **because you \_\_\_\_\_ amiss (with wrong motives)**, that you may spend it on your pleasures (for your own desires). You adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity (hatred) with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." ".....Therefore He says, "God \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_, but gives grace to the \_\_\_\_\_."

**OPPOSITE OF CONDITION #4 - Ignorance of GOD'S WORD.** If someone is a genuine baby Christian, and has not had a chance to read and study God's word, He may answer their prayers based on their FAITH alone. However, God expects us grow and mature, and to KNOW what He says in His word. How can we pray according to the wonderful promises in God's word, if we don't even KNOW what He has promised us?

- **Hosea 4:6** "My people are \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_. Because you have rejected \_\_\_\_\_, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of your God, I also will forget your children."

One last thought on prayer and Step 11 - notice how it says that we "**sought through prayer and meditation to IMPROVE our conscious CONTACT with God**"? To me, that

gives the idea that our prayers should NOT be just asking God for THINGS that we need, or asking Him to get us out of this difficulty or that problem, as good as those prayers may be. We are also to come closer to the Lord in relationship and close fellowship. When we seek to walk with the Lord in a deeper and closer way, He DOES supply our needs and even our desires, because our desires our becoming more and more **in agreement with HIS desires and HIS WILL**. When our desires and wants are wrong, God cannot answer those prayers.

- **Psalm 37:4-5** " \_\_\_\_\_ yourself also in the \_\_\_\_\_, and He shall give you the \_\_\_\_\_ of your \_\_\_\_\_. Commit your \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass (make it happen)."
- **Matthew 6:31-33** "Therefore, do not \_\_\_\_\_, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves? For after all these \_\_\_\_\_ the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these \_\_\_\_\_. But seek \_\_\_\_\_ the kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_, and His righteousness, and \_\_\_\_\_ these \_\_\_\_\_ shall be added unto you."
- **James 4:8** "Draw \_\_\_\_\_ to God, and He will draw \_\_\_\_\_ to you."

## Second Week's Lesson - Step 11

### Bible Study - Knowledge of His Will

In the following verses of Scripture, see how often WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, and UNDERSTANDING are mentioned. We desperately need to "UNDERSTAND what the WILL of the Lord is" for our lives. If we have God's WISDOM, we will have **knowledge of His will for us**, and the opposite of that is being a FOOL! But **be WARNED**, God does not reveal His will to the casual and merely curious person who has the attitude of, "I'll see what His will is, and then if I don't like it, I don't have to do it." God will only reveal **His will for your individual life** if you have the attitude of, "Whatever Your will is, Lord, I will do it!"

- **Ephesians 5:15-17** "See then that you walk \_\_\_\_\_, not as \_\_\_\_\_ but as \_\_\_\_\_, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but \_\_\_\_\_ what the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord is."
- **Psalm 111:10** "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of \_\_\_\_\_; a good \_\_\_\_\_ have all those who \_\_\_\_\_ His \_\_\_\_\_."
- **Proverbs 9:10** "The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord is the beginning of \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy One is \_\_\_\_\_."
- **Matthew 7:21-23** " \_\_\_\_\_ everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of My Father in heaven. \_\_\_\_\_ will \_\_\_\_\_ to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied (preached) in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I NEVER \_\_\_\_\_ you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"
- **Proverbs 1:7** "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_ despise \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_."
- **Proverbs 18:2** "A \_\_\_\_\_ has no delight in \_\_\_\_\_, but [only] in expressing \_\_\_\_\_ heart (his own feelings and opinions)."
- **Proverbs 12:15** "The way of a \_\_\_\_\_ is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds (pays attention to) counsel is \_\_\_\_\_."
- **Read Proverbs 2:1-22** (Verses 1-2) "My son, if you receive My \_\_\_\_\_, and treasure My \_\_\_\_\_ within you, so that you incline your ear to \_\_\_\_\_, and apply your heart to \_\_\_\_\_." (Verses 5-6) "Then you will \_\_\_\_\_ the fear of the Lord, and find the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. For the Lord gives \_\_\_\_\_; from His

mouth (God's word, the Bible) come \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_."

**Definition: "Circumspectly"** - To look around, be cautious, CAREFUL to consider all circumstances and **POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES**.

**Definition: "The Fear of the Lord"** - Reverential AWE and RESPECT for God, especially as evidenced by OBEDIENCE to His commands and **DOING His will**. The New Testament equivalent is HOLY LIVING and being FILLED with the SPIRIT. As we OBEY God's commands that we see in His word, even the simplest ones, He will REVEAL **MORE of His will** for our lives to us. We should read and study our Bible with the thought in mind, "Lord, what is your will **here in what I'm reading** that you want me to do?" Why should He give us more detailed information if we don't even obey His will that is revealed in His word?

- **Deuteronomy 10:12-13** "And now, Israel, what does the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ of you, but to fear (reverence) the Lord your God, to \_\_\_\_\_ in all His \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ Him, and to \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord your God with all your \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your \_\_\_\_\_, and to \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_ and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your \_\_\_\_\_?"
- **I John 3:22** "And whatever we ask, we receive from Him, because we \_\_\_\_\_ His \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ those things which are \_\_\_\_\_ in His \_\_\_\_\_."
- **II Corinthians 7:1** "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves from all \_\_\_\_\_ of the flesh and spirit, perfecting \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God."
- **Ephesians 5:17-20** "Therefore do not be \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_ what the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_, speaking to one another psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Giving thanks \_\_\_\_\_ for ALL things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,"
- **I Thessalonians 5:18** "In everything \_\_\_\_\_; for this is the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus for \_\_\_\_\_."
- **Galatians 5:16** "I say then, ' \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_, and you shall \_\_\_\_\_ fulfill the \_\_\_\_\_ of the FLESH (the "old man", your sinful nature)."
- **Romans 13:12-13** "The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of \_\_\_\_\_, and let us put on the armor of \_\_\_\_\_. Let us WALK (conduct our lives) properly, as in the day, \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, not in licentiousness and lewdness, not in strife and envy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its \_\_\_\_\_."
- **Proverbs 20:1** "Wine is a mocker, intoxicating drink arouses brawling (fighting), and whoever is \_\_\_\_\_ by it is \_\_\_\_\_."

**Definition: "DISSIPATION"** - "to use up foolishly", being **WASTEFUL**, aimless living, "extravagant **pursuit of pleasure**", which is **UNWISE** use of our time here on earth.

**Definition: "The WILL of GOD in Christ Jesus for YOU"** - We see in Ephesians 5:20 and I Thess. 5:18 that GIVING THANKS in all circumstances

and situations is God's will for us. Ephesians 5:17-20 is all about being filled with the Spirit, which is God's will, and then describing some effects of being filled with the Spirit. One of those effects is the ability to give thanks in ALL situations, so this can be done only as we are constantly filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit.

**Definition: "Filled with the Spirit"** - Paul contrasts BEING DRUNK with BEING FILLED with the Spirit. INSTEAD of being drunk, which is to be "UNDER the INFLUENCE" of alcohol, we are to be "UNDER the INFLUENCE", or CONTROLLED BY the **Holy Spirit**. In other scriptures, it is also called "walking in the Spirit", "letting the word of Christ dwell in you", and "putting on the Lord Jesus Christ." This is NOT a ONE-TIME experience, but a continuous YIELDING of ourselves to the Holy Spirit's control in our lives (the literal translation of the Greek is "**keep being filled**" with the Spirit). In Ephesians 5:17, it says you are un-WISE if you do NOT understand what God's will is for your life, therefore, **to be WISE or have WISDOM** is the way to KNOW and UNDERSTAND God's will. How do you get wisdom? The Bible tells us that The FEAR of the Lord is the BEGINNING of WISDOM. An attitude of REVERENCE (fear) for God, a WILLINGNESS to STUDY His WORD to get to KNOW Him better, and a COMMITMENT to DO what you see in His word will RESULT in your GAINING WISDOM and a practical, working knowledge of God's will for your life.