

ABOUT

Kristine DeMara is the founder of Kristine's Ministry a nonprofit organization that pastors My Savior Lives Church and does Christian speaking engagements.

She has spent her life teaching God's word. Her life is marked with the nail scared hands of Jesus and the victories of the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. She has a testimony that is all about the power of God's love and grace in her life. How God's faith, hope and love bought her through divorce, abuse and abandonment as a Christian woman.

Kristine and her daughter Rachel Oertel are co-authors of the Mind of Christ Bible Study and Support Group.

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Contents

Forward.....1

What We Believe.....2

Leaders Guide3

Meeting Format.....4

Introduction.....5

Our Faith Challenge.....6

Challenge One Humility7-10

Humility Poem.....11

Challenge Two Love.....12-16

Love Poem.....17

Challenge Three Prayer.....18-22

Prayer Poem.....23

Challenge Four Faithfulness.....24-27

Faithfulness Poem.....28

Challenge Five Patience.....29-32

Patience Poem.....33

Challenge Six Peace.....34-37

Peace Poem.....38

Challenge Seven Kindness.....39-42

Kindness Poem.....43

Challenge Eight Self-Control.....44-48

Self-Control Poem.....49

Challenge Nine Joy.....50-53

Joy Poem.....54

Challenge Ten Goodness.....55-58

Goodness Poem.....59

Challenge Eleven Gentleness.....60-63

Gentleness Poem.....64

Challenge Twelve Victory.....65-68

Victory Poem.....69

Complete List of Challenges.....70-74

Conclusion..... 75

FORWARD

My daughter Rachel Oertel was the inspiration for writing the Mind of Christ Bible Study and Support Group. She struggles with depression and does take medication. In her journey all of the challenges that are contained in these twelve studies are what has helped her maintain a lifestyle of a healthy mind. Rachel and I are not suggesting that the Mind of Christ Bible Study and Support Group is a cure for clinical depression or any other mental disorder. What we know is that the Holy Spirit inspired us to write this bible study to help people to maintain a healthy spiritual mind as a lifestyle.

Our hopes are that men and women will be helped and find the loving support they need through their struggles and beyond. Even if a person doesn't struggle with depression or any mental disorder we all are in need of keeping a fresh and clear mind.

Our purpose was to bring the word of God forward in a way that gives people a practical way to apply it to their lives and bring a deeper understanding of how the Bible applies to our minds.

It's important to do the "Your Challenges" at the end of each study. The challenges begin the inner work of each fruit of Spirit plus humility, prayer and victory.

Each study can be done independently or in a support group.

Every study points to Jesus Christ our Lord and His wonderful love and grace that He provided for us because of His death and resurrection.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

SALVATION

Because people are unable to save themselves from their sinful condition, salvation is altogether the work of God. Neither good works nor self-improvement can make up for our sin. Salvation is the free gift of God. However, like any gift it must be received. This gift is received by faith in Jesus Christ who died as our substitute that we might live. Through repentance from sin and faith toward God, we turn from our self-ruled life to trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

THE BIBLE

We believe the Bible to be the inspired and final authority, infallible (without mistakes as God inspired its writer) Word of God. (11 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is the final authority for all matters of faith and practice.

GOD

There is only one, true God, eternally existing in three distinct personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, having the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and are therefore worthy of the same worship and obedience. God is the Creator, Sustainer, and Ruler of the universe.

JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the Son of God, meaning He is coequal with the Father. He is the expressed image of the invisible God and Creator of all things. He became a man, being born of the Virgin Mary, and lived a sinless life. Jesus offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He rose bodily from the dead after three days, demonstrating His victory over sin and death. He ascended to heaven, is seated in authority, and will return again to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Leaders Guide

1. Scheduled meetings should not be cancelled unless there is an emergency.
2. It's important to rise up an assistant meeting leader to run the meeting when the leader is absent due to illness, emergency or vacation.
3. If any refreshments are served make it after the meeting.
4. Have a start time and end time.
5. Read the Faith Challenge at the beginning of each meeting.
6. Don't discuss diagnosis. If they want to share that is their prerogative.
7. Often people struggling with any kind of disorder have some paranoia. So ask permission to ask them any questions and if you feel led to pray for them and want to lay hands on them ask permission.
8. Most people struggling with a mental or physical disorder **do not** have demons. The enemy does attack us in our weakness so there could be demonic oppression involved in their struggle.
9. Let the group know upon starting the meeting there is no cross talking.
10. Give people a chance to share but try to limit the sharing to five minutes.
11. Encourage people to bring their bibles.
12. Give yourself plenty of time of preparation for each study.
13. Try and keep the study to an hour.
14. Begin on time and arrive about fifteen minutes early.
15. Let the group know what is said in the meetings is confidential.
16. When you feel a person may be in need of professional counseling or therapy have a couple of professional people you could refer them to. Be sure and talk to them privately.
17. Let people know if you provide childcare.
18. Have a signup sheet to get e-mail addresses and phone numbers.
19. Suggest to your group to journal through the weeks of this study.
20. Try and have some materials or information to help your group with the part of the study that is "Your Challenges"
21. There may be people in your group who have not ask Jesus to be their Savior when possible present the Gospel.

Mind of Christ Bible Study and Support Group

Meeting Format

1. Open in prayer (ask someone to pray).
2. Have each person say their name and share something (about themselves) or (a testimony).
3. Leader read introduction at the start of a new meeting and then each time a new person joins the group.
4. Review (your challenges) from the week before; reminder doing your challenges is what makes this program work.
5. Have someone read the Faith Challenge
6. Ask what the challenge means to them that is going to be taught in that session.
7. Read through the study (ask different people to read). Giving people the opportunity to share.
8. Have someone read the poem at the end of the meeting.
9. Pass out any helpful materials or information to help with the section on “Your Challenges”
10. Close in prayer and ask for prayer requests.

Mind of Christ Bible Study and Support Group

Introduction

The Mind of Christ Bible Study and Support Group is designed to be a guide to help build a solid mental foundation from the bible.

We live in a culture that has influenced men and women in a negative way with, anxiety, depression, sadness, anger, low self-esteem, addiction and isolation. When we stop connecting with others in a loving way a void develops within us and that's when we become vulnerable to negative influences.

This program is designed to give people the necessary tools from the bible to combat the influences of today's culture and get a Christ centered mind. The bible study is designed to be done individually or in a group setting.

There are twelve challenges in the bible study based on the nine fruits of the spirit from the book of Galatians plus three solid spiritual principals that incorporate spiritual understanding, knowledge, discussion and application. Each challenge is a building block for the next one. Giving people the necessary tools to help maintain a healthy mind.

There are four sections to each study:

1. Definition – Defining each fruit of the spirit.
2. Your Goals – Teaches spiritual application
3. Topics – A time for discussion
4. Your Challenges – Suggestions to begin the inner work of a healthy mind.

Learning how to defeat the negative influences that attack our minds is essential to living a life full of the peace of God.

Prov 23:7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

The Mind of Christ Bible Study and Support Group does not replace any therapy or medication you may presently be taking. This program is meant to be an addition to whatever health services you are already receiving.

Our Faith Challenge

The Mind of Christ Bible Study and Support Meeting is about believing that the word of God can and will transform our minds.

Starting with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:13 “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

We believe that through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit we can have a renewed mind that rest in the peace of God.

Romans 12:2 “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

The Mind of Christ Bible Study and Support Meetings focuses on the fruits of the spirit in *Gal 5:22-23 (ESV) “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” Including humility, prayer and victory.*

We believe that we can get the victory through the study of God’s word and the loving support of others who are on the same path of wholeness. Being part of a loving group of people who understand that coping with stress, anxiety, depression, sadness etc., is better done with the loving support of others.

1 Cor 15:57 “But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

We cannot know the mind of God with our natural minds. But with the indwelling spirit of God and the scriptures the mind of God in Christ, are fully revealed to us.

1 Cor 2:16 For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

We are confident that the Holy Spirit works in us and through to accomplish the Will of God.

Phil 1:6 “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”

Challenge One Humility

Challenge One Humility

“To the humble mind truth is revealed”

Definition of Humility:

To realize the low estate of one's self in regards to God's greatest. To have remorse for ones sins and to know you are powerless and can achieve nothing without the help and power of God.

Recognizing His presence in all your ways, is the truest incentive to humility.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. (NLT – and give you honor)

Our pride has been diminished to a humble attitude before God and man when we totally submit to God's will.

Your Goal:

How do we become humble? To realize we cannot control anything and to submit to God's will. To become God dependent and not self-dependent

Matt 5:36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.

Asking for help is the first step to humility.

When does life become unmanageable? When we become selfish and self-centered.

Dependence upon God allows Him to manage all things.

The point is to surrender our ego and accept that we are powerless and need God's help.

John 15:5 Jesus said “Without me ye can do nothing”

When we have become aware of total dependence upon God we will no longer want to be self-reliant.

When we are trusting God for everything and not anyone else we have become God dependent and humility has begun it's work in us.

Topics: (Discussion)

What has caused your life to become unmanageable?

Compulsive or obsessive behavior is our sin nature reacting to human conditions which are anxiety, depression, disappointment, paranoia, abandonment, anger, hurt, jealousy and lose.

We were created to be dependent upon our creator for all things. That involves letting the Holy Spirit redirect our attention and energy when our compulsive, obsessive and sluggish behavior has become harmful to our lives.

We need to admit and confess our powerlessness so God can do his work in us. **Phil 1:6** 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.

Isolation keeps us from interacting with others and keeps us self-absorb; making recovery difficult.

Prov 18:1 A man or woman who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment.

Ecc 4:9-10 Two *are* better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls, For *he has* no one to help him up.

Your Challenges:

This week ask God where you need to work on Humility.

Ask a friend or leader who you can trust to pray for you.

Take time this week and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you those things that you obsess over.

Make a list of the things you know you need help with, but are too embarrassed or scared of what others may think of you if you would ask for help.

Serving others helps us to stop being self-centered which is at the root of pride.

Consider becoming a volunteer and be willing to make a one month commitment. Volunteering is a great way to further a cause, support an organization, and make a difference in your community. It can also be an opportunity to meet people that can lead to new friendships.

These challenges begin the work of humility in you. The results are based on your efforts that you put into these challenges.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:

Holy Spirit help me to put aside my pride and be willing to ask for help when I need to. Guide me to the right place to volunteer that I can make the difference in someone's life. Also, help me with the challenges in this study. Use this opportunity to mold me into the image of Christ. In Jesus name Amen.

Humility

Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord.

That's how the song goes.

My mind humbles.

Lord you are first.

The Lord never boasted.

But is humble.

Lord forgive me and humble me.

Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord.

Humble is allowing those around you to enjoy the Lord as much as you do.

By Rachel Oertel

June 2015

Challenge Two Love

Challenge Two Love

“Love is giving first”

Definition of Love:

Love is a selfless act of commitment. Love is a choice.

Love is not based on how we feel, because our feelings can change from day to day.

God chose to love us. He doesn't choose to love us based on our performance. He chooses to love us because He created us.

When we love others, we are demonstrating God, for He is love.

John 15:9 As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

Abiding in God's love is knowing that He loves us and loves us no matter what we have done. Nothing can cancel out His love for us.

1 Corth 13:13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

Love is the greatest because it is the foundation for faith and hope. Without love there isn't any incentive to live in faith and hope.

Romans 8:37-39 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

His love is complete, He isn't going to love us anymore tomorrow as He does this very day. Abide and rest in His love.

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

Your Goals:

It is God's love for us that forgives us of all our sins.
Love gives way for change and change happens when we forgive.

You may have committed every sin in the book and broken every commandment of God. Yet, the Lord continues to love you. He has not cast you aside. When Jesus hung on the cross, looking upon His enemies as He was being crucified, He said: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." That is God's love!

Forgive yourself. We are our worse critics.
As you let go of the past, it will let go of you!

Love melts away the past and brings peace to a place so deep within us that it overshadows all other emotions.

Romans 12:9-10 Don't just pretend that you love others: really love them. Hate what is wrong. Stand on the side of the good. Love each other with brotherly affection and take delight in honoring each other

1 Peter 4:8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

Love prepares our hearts to receive forgiveness and to give forgiveness.
Forgive others and situations even locations.
Declare "I forgive and say the person's name."
If you have harmed or hurt anyone ask for forgiveness.
Holding on to unforgiveness only hurts you.

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

Love prepares us for unexpected moments of loss or trauma.

Don't let yourself get caught up in the do's and don'ts of life. God will help you in this area. God loves you and in God's love there is healing.

Recognizing God's love in your life and meditating on it and thanking Jesus will help you relax.

James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

Topics: (Discussion)

Fear is tormenting and stops us from stepping out of ourselves to reach out to others.

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Breaking the thoughts of suicide takes focusing your thoughts towards knowing that you have a purpose and how much God loves you.

James 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

When we don't give in to thoughts that condemn us the enemy flees from us. Wait your thoughts out and they will pass. Redirect yourself and just make yourself read the bible and if you can't concentrate than listen to the bible on an iPod or Cd.

Psalms 118:17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

Your Challenges:

Try and spend some quiet time every day this week and mediate on how much God loves you. Eventually you will always feel God's love in your heart.

Take some time this week and make a list of people you need to forgive.

Make a list of things you need to forgive yourself for. Letting go of how much we beat ourselves up over past mistakes takes forgiving ourselves.

Also, make a list of those you might have to ask for forgiveness.

These challenges begin the work of love in you. The results are based on your efforts that you put into these challenges.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:**Psalms 119:145-149**

I cry out with my whole heart; Hear me, O LORD! I will keep Your statutes.

I cry out to You; Save me, and I will keep Your testimonies.

I rise before the dawning of the morning, and cry for help;

I hope in Your word. My eyes are awake through the night watches,

That I may meditate on Your word.

Hear my voice according to Your loving kindness;

God's Love

God's Love is patient.

God's love fulfills my favorite things.

God's love is in balance.

God's Love is strong.

Wonderful is He, greater is He within me.

God's love is motion he creates waves in your life that make you know he's there.

God is a feeling, truth, creativity, relaxing at times and He knows you.

Emotion changes you and He is there to carry you through.

God has a large sense of humor and always knows more than you, but is available to you in time of need.

God's love is in self-control.

God's love is not bashful.

God's love is grand.

By Rachel Oertel

June 2015

Challenge Three Prayer

Challenge Three Prayer

“Prayer is a conversation that mortal man is having with Almighty God creator of the universe.”

Definition of Prayer:

The Greek definition for the word prayer is to express oneself to God vividly and in worship. Prayer is eternal because prayer is worship.

Only through prayer can we stay in contact with God.

1 Peter 3:12 for the eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous, and His ears *are open* to their prayers.

Prayer is a significant part of our relationship with our Lord. When one prays compulsive, obsessive and sin behavior begins to lose its power of effectiveness in our lives. Our difficulty is found in that our praying too often comes after the fact, after sin has scarred and marred our lives.

We experience God’s mercy and comforts in our prayers.

Only a small part of prayer is about asking for our needs.

Don’t rush right into asking, take time to soak in the presence of God

It’s in our prayers that we rest in God.

Prayer taps the source that brings God’s divine power into our human events.

Prayer changes the person doing the praying. The simple act of letting go of whatever the problem is to the creator of our universe makes Prayer unique in its simplicity.

Nothing is impossible with our God. What can seem so complicated to us is simple for our Lord. I know letting go of our problems isn’t that simple. Not letting go and trying to hold on to them is a part of the fallen nature of man. Holding on, is that part of us that wants to be god and be in control. Accepting that we are powerless actually empowers us.

Psalms 143:8 let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I put my trust in you, Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.

1 Tim 2:1-2 (NIV) I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness

Prayer is life and our lives are prayers!!!!!!

Your Goals:

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Learning to depend on the Holy Spirit for guidance is developed when we take time daily to just set quieting our thoughts and emptying out our minds so that we can hear the Holy Spirit speak to us.

1 Peter 5:7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Prayer will change our perspective of the problems in our lives.

Prayer changes the person doing the praying.

The simple act of letting go of whatever the problem is to the creator of our universe makes prayer unique in its simplicity,

Matt 21:22 "And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

After asking demonstrate your faith by also thanking God in advance for answering.

Phil 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Not letting go and trying to hold on to our problems is a part of the fallen nature of man. Holding on, is that part of us that wants to be god and be in control.

Accepting that we are powerless actually empowers us.

The Source of our power is not us, but comes from an oneness with God our Creator.

Mark 11:24 "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*."

James 5:16 The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Topics: (Discussion)

The knowledge of prayer can only be learned by living within prayer.

Peace is experienced by living within prayer.

Prayer is a time of transformation because we are connecting with God in an oneness.

A time of quiet, and resting in the presence of God.

Prayer is a time of feeling life in the presence of God.

Absorbing His glory that breathes life into our mortal bodies.

When we run our lives on our own fuel we feel rattled and drained.

But when we stay within prayer we are constantly at peace and we can feel the spirit giving us life that produces energy.

The life of Christ in us will suffer when we don't nourish it.

The only way to nourish the life of Christ in us is within prayer.

Your Challenges:

Commit to spending time with God on a daily bases in prayer.

Psalms 100 is a great way to start an intimate time of prayer with God.

Psalms 100 Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing. Know that the LORD, He *is* God; *It is* He *who* has made us, and not we ourselves; *We are* His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, *And* into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name. For the LORD *is* good; His

mercy *is* everlasting,
And His truth *endures* to all generations.

And if you don't know what to praise him for **Psalm 150** tell us.

Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!

After you have been soaking in God's presence for a while you will begin to have people cross your mind. As each person comes to mind pray for them. When no more people keep coming to your mind you're done praying for others.

Then pray for your own needs before God.

And as you begin to feel your time with God come to a close thank Him and praise Him for all His answers and express your love for Him.

The challenge of prayer will increase your closeness to God. The results are based on your efforts that you put into your prayer life.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:

Matthew 6:9-13

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer

Prayer is another dimension.

Prayer is all our thoughts and worries being translated to our Lord Jesus.

You don't know what to pray.

Praise Him and he will give you a direction.

Seek Him out and He will find you.

He hears all the day long.

He knows you.

Praise Him!

Praise Him!

Love Him!

Love Him!

And He will deliver you.

By Rachel Oertel

July 2015

Challenge Four Faithfulness

Challenge Four Faithfulness

“The Mind of Christ is Faithful”

Definition of Faithfulness:

Faithfulness is a committed devotion to God, loyal, dependable and takes ones responsibilities seriously.

Faithfulness is the bonding that preserves our faith so we can be dependable.

Prov 3:3 Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.

Faithfulness is "To follow through with a commitment regardless of difficulty."

Psalms 101:6 My eyes *shall be* on the faithful of the land, That they may dwell with me; He who walks in a perfect way, He shall serve me.

Your Goals:

If we allow His Spirit to work within us, then the fruit of faithfulness will be real and evident in our lives.

To develop faithfulness requires devotion to our Lord and believing that Jesus is equally devoted to us.

Being faithful means you are going to be a person that people can depend on.

Prov 14:5 A faithful witness does not lie, but a false witness will utter lies.

When you make a commitment you will follow through and keep your commitments.

The more we yield to the Holy Spirit guidance the less likely we are to get discouraged and waver in our faithfulness.

As we are filled with the Holy Spirit, others will find in us a reliability, a trustworthiness, a staying power through both good and bad, a faithfulness that the world doesn't understand and those around us who are watching our lives.

Faithfulness is saying, "I will not quit" There may be misunderstandings, there may be disappointments, there may be discouragements, "but I will not quit". I will not walk away because God has called me to be faithful.

Topics: (Discussion)

Concentration can be hard. But we have a promise from God that the Holy Spirit will help us.

John 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

The ups and downs of our emotions can distract us from being faithful.

Decluttering our minds with thoughts of discouragement and keeping our focus on Jesus begins the path of being able to concentrate and be faithful to our commitments.

Matt 4:4 "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

If we allow His Spirit to work within us, then the fruit of faithfulness will be real and evident in our lives.

The more we yield to His guidance, the less fickle we are and the less likely we are to get discouraged or fall into temptation.

Your Challenges:

This week be willing to be faithful in a commitment in the area of your finances or in a favor that you offer to someone.

Stay consistent in your commitments the constant repetition builds a solid foundation for you to build on.

Be willing to be faithful in reading one chapter a day in your bible or listening to the bible on audio. Concentration can be hard so it's important to pray before you start reading and ask the Holy Spirit to help you. The first goal is to complete one chapter of reading. Even if you don't completely understand what you are reading the word of God will strengthen you.

These challenges begin the work of faithfulness in you. The results are based on your efforts that you put into these challenges.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:

Holy Spirit you are my teacher help me to be faithful. Help me to keep my word and my commitments. Empower me Holy Spirit to overcome my weaknesses and get the victory. In Jesus name Amen.

Faithfulness

Not lacking.

Not proving.

Faithful!

Faithfulness is there in time of need.

Consistent.

Breathe!

Again I say, Breathe.

Faithful.

Working harder than ever for completion to do the right thing.

Faithfulness never quits.

Never back down.

Jesus never backed down.

By Rachel Oertel

July, 2015

Challenge Five Patience

Challenge Five Patience

“Patience abides in completeness”

Definition of Patience:

The ability to be slow to anger.

Slow to speak instead of speaking hastily when faced with opposition.

Luke 21:19 By your patience possess your souls.

Being willing to wait with a person during their trial.

James 1:4 But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Patience requires us to be comforting instead of anxious. Waiting with a concern heart.

Your Goals:

The Will of the Holy Spirit is in opposition to our flesh. In order to grow in the fruit of patience we must ask the Holy Spirit for help.

James 1:2-3 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

Be aware of yourself and when you make a mistake stay patient with yourself and you will notice that others will be more patient with you.

Romans 15:5-6 Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Developing the love of Christ in our hearts helps to rise above our circumstances.

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Be patient with yourself and letting go of expectations of your performance.

Topics: (Discussion)

Remembering events, days and times can be challenging it is helpful to take notes

Respecting your body and mind will bring a different reaction from situations and people.

Showing respect for yourself with your personal grooming will help others to respect you also.

When you get stuck because you have gotten angry recognize the moment and repent. Take a deep breath and redirect yourself.

Psalms 37:7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

Patience does not mean to be passive, but to be respectful when confronting a situation.

When anxiety or a feeling of being overwhelmed comes and you start crying it's important to give yourself limits. Crying too hard and too long causes us to regress and the outcome is it can take two to three days to come back to feeling oneself again. In the meantime one's ability to cope with everyday life is diminished.

Isaiah 40:31 But those who wait on the LORD. Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Your Challenges:

Practice taking some deep breaths through the day and release your thoughts to Jesus.

Make a list of those things, situations or people that make you angry. After you have written the list pray over it and ask the Holy Spirit to help you to redirect your emotions of anger to a more patient and loving attitude.

Make another list of those things, situations or people who you could show more patience and love to.

Each day find a time when you can sit and be patient with yourself and release all nervous thoughts and feelings. Receiving a sense of being at peace with yourself and God.

These challenges begin the work of patience in you. The results are based on your efforts that you put into these challenges.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:

Thank you Lord that Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I lay before you all my anxious thoughts. Lord, I am seeking your peace and your patience. I want to cooperate with your plans for me. Thank you for assuring me that your plans for me are good. As I wait on you, I will continue to turn to your Word for comfort and direction. Thank you that your word refreshes me and gives me strength. In Jesus name Amen

Patience

Patient is the one who waits.

Not with anger.

Not with a goal.

But to be patient is to contain oneself.

Without complaining

And to stand firm.

I wait for the Lord to renew my strength and patience is the reward.

By Rachel Oertel

July, 2015

Challenge Six Peace

Challenge Six Peace

“Peace is Harmony with God”

Definition of Peace:

A tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is.

Phil 4:7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Peace is complete in a relationship with Jesus Christ that the Holy Spirit leads us in. We will experience peace when we are in harmony with God.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Peace and harmony make and keep things safe and prosperous.

The opposite of fear is peace. We get from fear to peace by trusting in God.

Freedom from anxiety and resting in God’s peace does not come from our circumstances it comes from trusting in God. Trusting that He will come through for us. God is trustworthy.

Your Goals:

Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

We develop the mind of Christ within our own minds when we humble our own thinking process to the words that Jesus spoke. Reading the Gospels in the bible will teach us the thoughts that Jesus spoke. We must be willing to replace our thoughts with a new thinking pattern. The thinking pattern of Jesus who was humble, loving and forgiving.

Prov 3:1-2 do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you.

In this verse we receive a promise from God if we keep His commands we will have a long life and peace. Learn the Ten Commandments because they are a guide that help keep us out of sin and troubles.

Phil 4:8-9 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Taking control of our thoughts is a matter of discipline. When you are obsessing with anxious thoughts and fears it is necessary to have alternate thoughts to replace the unhealthy thoughts.

Topics: (Discussion)

1 Corth 14:33 For God is not *the author* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

Disorganized thoughts and thinking cause confusion. Writing down your thoughts helps to organize your mind.

Confusion can happen when you feel overwhelmed, threaten and tired.

James 3:16-17 For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

Understand the will of God for your life which is to be willing to yield, full of mercy, peaceable, gentle without partiality and be sincere. When our personalities reflect these qualities we will live in an atmosphere of peace and have peace in our minds and hearts.

Jere 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

God has a plan and a purpose for your life.

Psalms 16:9 No wonder my heart is filled with joy, and my mouth shouts his praises! My body rests in safety.

Rest in God and you will feel the security of the Lord and the insecurities will flee.

Relax you have good inside of you God doesn't want you to harm yourself or anyone else.

Your Challenges:

This week take time to organize your room, closets and drawers. This process will help you to begin to organize your thoughts and it will help to bring peace to your mind. Any time you are feeling confused take time to organize something.

Meditate on God's promises. During your time of mediation ask God to show you what **Phil 4:8** would look like in your life (whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy).

Journaling your thoughts and emotions brings order into your daily routine.

In your prayer time with the Lord relinquish your fears that rob you of God's peace. Be still and be at peace with yourself and with God.

These challenges begin the work of peace in you. The results are based on your efforts that you put into these challenges.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:

Lord I relinquish my deepest fears and concerns to you. Fill my mind and heart with your peace. Please give me wisdom to discern when the enemy is trying to confuse me that I may resist the devil and he will flee from me. Each day Lord guide me to understand where I need to be still and rest in you. Please direct me where in my mind I need to organize my thoughts. In Jesus name Amen.

Peace

Peace is always there always available.

My mind reaches for peace when I am anxious.

The Lord is my peace and sweet heaven.

The Lord is like a calming sea of rest.

The ocean of peace

The ocean of eternity

Never failing to bring me back.

By Rachel Oertel

July, 2015

Challenge Seven Kindness

Challenge Seven Kindness

“Thoughtful Acts of Affection”

Definition of Kindness:

Kindness is an attitude of the heart where God lives.

Acts of moral goodness with integrity.

Acts of kindness that are not determined on the bases of merit. But instead are demonstrated with God’s grace.

Acts of kindness come out of a heart that is full of God’s love.

2 Peter 1:7-8 Add to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We learn about our Lord Jesus Christ through a heart of kindness.

If we set ourselves to be hard hearted we block the knowledge and kindness of God.

Titus 3:4-6 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Kindness comes from a humble heart of gratitude.

Your Goals:

To become mindful of being kind to others whether we believe they deserve it or not. Also, to become kind to ourselves. Treating ourselves with kindness in regards to how we take care of our bodies, our minds and our spirit.

Proverbs 31:26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue *is* the law of kindness.

When we treat ourselves kindly we will find it easier to treat others kindly.

Developing a character of integrity will cause one to treat others with kindness.

Phil 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.

When we believe that God shows us kindness out of His great love for us we will show others kindness.

Kindness changes the atmosphere.

Topics: (Discussion)

When we face trials instead of feeling defeat stay loyal to your faith in Jesus Christ and you will experience the kindness of God.

Be kind to yourself by taking better care of your body and your mind. You are God's vessel and He has invested His life into you so take care of what God has given you.

Let the Holy Spirit help you to take down the walls you have built around your heart so that you are comfortable showing others kindness.

When we experience the freedom to show kindness to others we stop feeling self-conscious. Worrying about what others think of us hinders us from reaching out to others in acts of kindness.

Your Challenges:

Be kind to yourself and begin to include in your daily routine one of these: walking, running, biking, gym work out, roller skating, swimming or dancing. Something that releases endorphins and makes us breathe in fresh air. These activities help to clear our minds of clutter and over thinking situations.

Step outside and embrace the world around you with kindness.

Spend time thanking God for all the beauty that surrounds you there is so much to be thankful for.

This week do a random act of kindness for either someone you know or someone you see while you are out and about.

These challenges begin the work of kindness in you. The results are based on your efforts that you put into these challenges.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:

Holy Spirit help me to be brave so that I may be kind to others and to myself. Help me to have the energy to do some sort of activity. Guide me in learning about your kindness, Jesus. In Jesus name Amen.

Kindness

Be kind

Loving kindness blesses you and others.

Kindness is keen to others.

Belong to Christ in His kindness.

Live, love, be kind to yourself

Be Kind

By Rachel Oertel

August, 2015

Challenge Eight Self-Control

Challenge Eight Self-Control

“A sober mind masters oneself”

Definition of Self-Control:

The virtue of one who masters his or her desires and passions. Especially his or her sensual appetites.

Temperance the practice of always controlling your actions, thoughts, or feelings so that you do not eat or drink too much, become too angry, etc.

2 Peter 1:5-8 A life of moral excellence leads to knowing God better. Knowing God leads to self-control. Self-control leads to patient endurance, and patient endurance leads to godliness. Godliness leads to love for other Christians, and finally you will grow to have genuine love for everyone. The more you grow like this, the more you will become productive and useful in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Moderation in our actions, thoughts and feelings.

Your Goals:

2 Corinth 10:5 Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Controlling your thoughts is the beginning of learning to rule your own body. The body consist of the five senses (taste, touch, see, hear, smell) your intellect and emotions.

Proverbs 16:32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

Learning to pause and consider ones angry emotions is important in building relationships. Anger destroys relationships and keeps the walls up so that you won't let any love into your heart nor can love flow out from you.

1 Peter 4:7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.

If your mind is cluttered with anger, lust and obsessive thoughts it makes it almost impossible to center yourself and pray. Learning to capture your thoughts and then releasing them to God is the beginning of self-control.

1 Peter 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

When you lose control is when you are most vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy.

Be on the alert for distractions that keep you from your goal.

Eph 4:29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

The words that you speak say a lot of the person you are. Be careful of using swear words when speaking or being sarcastic.

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

Topics: (Discussion)

1 Corth 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Losing control and bingeing with food, emotions, raging, alcohol and drugs is self-destructive. Your body is where God lives. Treating your body with respect shows that you have respect for your relationship with God.

Setting limits for yourself helps you to be able to have self-control in any area of your life that you know can easily get out of control.

Examples: eating, shopping, sex, drinking, caffeine, sugar, Facebook, talking, anger, credit cards and crying etc.

When you set limits on yourself you are making more time to reach your goals and visions that God has given you.

Setting limits on yourself will also help eliminate drama from your life.

Isaiah 40:31 But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Experiencing cloudiest in your mind makes it hard to concentrate. The cloudiest is sometimes bought on by confusion of your emotions or situation. This is a time to quiet all your thoughts and feelings before the Lord and wait until the Holy Spirit brings clarity.

Your Challenges:

Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Make a list of the things that you know you can be excessive in. Then next to each one write a limit for yourself.

Try limiting caffeine, sugar and carbs. Those kinds of foods make a person more nervous and ups their level of anxiety and can also be a source that creates the cloudiness in your mind.

Work at trying to eat a higher protein diet and stay hydrated with water.

Use self-control about the kinds of movies and TV you are watching. The movies you watch should be limited in violence and sexual content.

It's very important to filter what you are listening to and watching. Listening and watching are two ways we learn. So what we listen to and watch is what we are going to retain and learn.

Music is enjoyable to listen to make more of an effort to listen to Christian music.

This week listen to your own words and ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you need to improve what you talk about. Such as gossip, backbiting, criticism, etc....

Try fasting for a day or two on anything that you know you tend to be excessive in.

These challenges begin the work of self-control in you. The results are based on your efforts that you put into these challenges.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:

Help me this week Holy Spirit to be watchful over what I listen to and watch. Help me to use self-control in my everyday life especially in any area of my life that I tend to be excessive in. Thank you Holy Spirit that you empower me to be able to practice self-control. In Jesus name Amen.

Self-Control

To resist temptation.

May be hard but with God, we are victorious.

Take on a different goal.

Redirect your attentions.

Challenge yourself in God.

And breathe because He is there.

By Rachel Oertel

August, 2015

Challenge Nine Joy

Challenge Nine Joy

“Our fullness of joy comes in receiving Jesus”

Definition of Joy:

Joy is more than feeling happy. Happiness is based on our circumstances joy comes from receiving Jesus Christ in our hearts.

Psalms 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Believing in Jesus Christ and receiving His forgiveness and then sharing the Gospel with others you will experience joy.

As a believer we receive the joy of our Lord because He takes joy in having a personal relationship with His children.

Your Goals:

Sometimes the norm in a person's life is to constantly feel sad. You have to make a conscious decision to allow yourself to feel joy.

Psalms 126:5 Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.

Sometimes a person fears experiencing joy because of the disappointment of possibly losing their joy. At this point it's important to release your sorrows to the Lord.

Psalms 56:8 (NLT) You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.

Joy is released to us when we believe that what concerns us concerns our God.

Romans 14:16-17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Upon Salvation and the receiving of the Holy Spirit the kingdom of God is established in a person's heart and within the kingdom of God there is joy. The kind of joy that no one can rob a person of.

John 15:10-11 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.

It is God's joy to connect with us now and for eternity.

Psalms 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Worship brings alive the presence of God and in His presence there is a joy that brings a security.

Topics: (Discussion)

Hebrews 12:28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.

It is a joy to worship the Lord in song, dance, instrument and words of praise.

Psalms 95:1-2 Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

Col 3:23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men

Proverbs 16:3 Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.

1 Thess 4:11 that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.

Working is healthy it gives us a sense of accomplishment.

Even if a person collects disability it is still good to find part-time work.

Your Challenges:

Brain storm possible jobs that get you interacting with people in a fun way. Make a list of projects to help bring joy to others. As an example paint fun faces on balloons and give them away to children. Or bake some cookies and take them to a nursing home.

Explore your creative side with art, music, singing, dance and it will help your mind be filled with joy and bring joy to others.

These challenges begin the work of joy in you. The results are based on your efforts that you put into these challenges.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:

Thank you Jesus for your salvation that brings joy to my heart. Help me to explore different ways to bring joy into other people lives as well as my own. In Jesus name Amen.

Joy

Joy is my peace

Joy comes to me

Not only by the love of the Lord

But by the harmony that He gives me to spread to others.

No one can take away my joy, because it comes from God.

By Rachel Oertel

Sept, 2015

Challenge Ten Goodness

Challenge Ten Goodness

“A Heart of Excellence”

Definition of Goodness:

Uprightness of heart and life.

The quality of being honorable or honest with moral excellence.

Giving your best with a generous spirit.

Psalms 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

God’s goodness towards us is God giving us His best, His Son Jesus Christ.

God show us His goodness with generosity.

Goodness is the best part of anything and that goodness brings strength.

Psalms 33:5 He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

Let the quality of whatever we do be of excellent workmanship.

Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Your Goals:

Romans 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

God’s goodness is poured into our hearts for us to repent of our unbelief.
Believing is our first step to being healed.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Confusion will distract us from our relationship with Jesus Christ. When we feel confused it's a time to quiet our self and acknowledge God in our actions and when we do He will straighten our path out.

Proverbs 2:20 So you may walk in the way of goodness, And keep *to* the paths of righteousness.

Don't allow what seems to be a good deal or a short cut to making money compromise your God given moral standards.

Topics: (Discussion)

Psalms 107:15 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the LORD *for* His goodness, And *for* His wonderful works to the children of men!

Every trial begins with a cry for help that God responds to by revealing His Salvation and calling us to give Him thanks for His love, goodness, mercy and His salvation.

When a person is misunderstood and rejected they tend to isolate. A cry for help brings relief and comfort from God through many different resources. It's important to keep an open heart towards God so that He can bring help.

Any kind of addiction or abuse imprisons a person and that means nothing is flowing out or flowing in. A cry for help will bring God's goodness through a loving support group.

Colossians 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds;

When those who care for you ask if you are regularly taking your medication is your answer honest.

Keeping yourself pure from sexual immorality is part of God's goodness. We are the temple of God so it's important to have moral excellence.

Sexual immorality will lead a person into deception.

Your Challenges:

Listen carefully to your own words that you speak about yourself and others. If you notice you don't speak honorably about others or yourself than take time to think before you speak and ask the Holy Spirit to help you.

Check yourself this week are you being honest and doing your best. Remembering your manners and showing respect to others.

Ask God to show you a perfect moment to be generous in any form whether it be financial, encouragement or a friendly deed.

Make a list of those things that make you angry and then next to each one write what action of goodness you could do instead of getting angry.

Prayer:

Thank you Jesus for your goodness. Teach me how to give goodness. Help me to be honorable, truthful and have moral excellence. Please help me to do my best at everything for your glory. In Jesus name Amen.

Goodness

God's gives us His best.

God gives us strength when needed.

Comfort in those hard times.

Love when all else fails.

God wants us to lean on Him.

He has greater things in store for us.

Surely the goodness of God WILL follow you all the days of your life.

By Rachel Oertel

October, 2015

Challenge Eleven Gentleness

Challenge Eleven Gentleness

“A Gentle Spirit is Strengthening”

Definition of Gentleness:

Moral goodness, integrity, meek. Meekness towards God is that disposition of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore do not dispute Him. In the bible the meek are those completely relying on God rather than their own strength to defend them against injustice.

1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

Gentleness is never self-important but is considerate, courteous, and modest.

Phil 4:5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

Gentleness is a non-threatening character that originates from Christ and takes the position of strength and authority.

Your Goals:

James 3:13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom.

Gentleness includes true humility that does not consider itself too good or too exalted for humble tasks.

Gentleness is doing our best for others without expecting anything in return.

It takes courage to be gentle in the midst of difficulty.

Be confident that you are empowered by God to stay calm in the middle of chaos. So that confusion doesn't overcome you.

James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

In our daily lives we cannot help coming into situations that bring conflict with people. It is easy for us in the natural to react with anger, especially if we feel insecure. But when we accept the reality of who we are in Christ and trust the Holy Spirit to help us, we can be gentle, whatever conflicts may arise.

Topics: (Discussion)

Matt 11:29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Be gentle on yourself and stop thinking you should have the strength in yourself to do all things.

But instead **Phil 4:13** We can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens us.

Jesus is our power source.

Jesus knew who He was but He was gentle and humble.

When our confidence is secure in Jesus Christ we will be gentle and humble also.

Proverbs 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Think before you speak so your words are gentle. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you with a gentle response. Gentleness doesn't mean you are passive or weak it means your heart is free of malice and you can speak objectively with gentleness to bring a God centered resolution.

Your Challenges:

This week ask God to release gentleness within and through your unique personality.

Make a conscience effort to give a kind and gentle answer when you may already have a quick harsh answer.

Make a special effort to be on time and keep your appointments.

Ask someone you know well what can you do to help them achieve the goal they are working towards and don't expect anything in return.

Remember to be an encourager and also encourage yourself.

These challenges begin the work of gentleness in you. The results are based on your efforts that you put into these challenges.

Expect a great moving of God in your life!

Prayer:

Thank you Jesus that you are gentle towards me, help me to demonstrate gentleness towards others. Stop me from being harsh and please give me the courage to speak gently to people especially those I live with. Please help me to always do my best and when I am weak please strengthen me. In Jesus name Amen.

Gentleness

Less be your wit.

Less be your mouth, talk kindly.

Less be your strength, more the Lord's strength.

Less be your attitude, be respectful.

Gentleness is a way above all ways.

Be like a gentle breeze.

God gives us Love eternally.

The Lord will prevail in your life.

Walk in gentleness my friend.

*By Rachel Oertel
September. 2015*

Challenge Twelve Victory

Challenge Twelve Victory
“Faith in Christ Gains Us the Victory”

Definition of Victory:

To be liberated, be saved and to be delivered.

Being ready to move forward.

1 Corinthians 15:57-58 But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Victory is becoming immovable in your faith in Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.

Becoming born again by your faith in Jesus Christ is your first victory.

Compromise weakens your faith.

Victory can only be obtained if there is a battle. Be ready for the battle with the knowledge of the word of God.

Faith is the foundation of all our victories.

Your Goals:

Psalms 98:1 Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! For He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory.

Victory is obtained and kept by trusting in the Lords great strength.

Romans 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

You serve a victorious Lord and when you realize all that Jesus overcame and conquered you will be strengthen within your spirit.

Proverbs 21:31 The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the LORD.

Mark 11:23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.

Surrender is not concession in the Lord it is submission to the greater power of Jesus Christ who lives in you.

Topics: (Discussion)

2 Corinthians 12:9 And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Anyone can have moments that they feel weak those are the times you would want to turn to the Lord for strength.

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

It takes strength to win and keep the victory in your lives.

Negative thinking drains you of your strength and faith in Jesus Christ.

It’s important to know your weakness so that you know what you need to ask the Holy Spirit to help you with and even give you alternative ideas.

Deut 20:4 For the LORD your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory."

Remember Jesus lives inside of you and goes with you everywhere ready to give you strength and direction upon a moment's notice.

When necessary regroup and give yourself a moment to allow the Holy Spirit to help you rethink your situation.

Remember weaknesses are opportunities for God's miracles.

Your Challenges:

This week ask the Holy Spirit to give you an opportunity to share your testimony of either your salvation or a victory you have won through Jesus Christ.

Create a collage of the battles you have won in Jesus to encourage yourself.

Pray for someone who needs help in an area where you have gotten or need the victory.

Step out of your comfort zone and do something that you have always wanted to do but didn't think you had the ability to do it.

Prayer:

Thank you Lord for giving me the victory in the areas of my life that I am weak in. Please strengthen me every day to be strong in my faith so I can believe that all things are possible in you Jesus. In Jesus name Amen

Victory

In the beginning there was a battle.

The struggle was lack of faith.

Then I asked Jesus to come in the middle.

My faith grows and grows and grows.

Victory I say unto the Lord

By Rachel Oertel

September, 2015

Complete List of Your Challenges

Week One Humility Challenges:

This week ask God where you need to work on Humility.

Ask a friend or leader who you can trust to pray for you.

Take time this week and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you those things that you obsess over.

Make a list of the things you know you need help with, but are too embarrassed or scared of what others may think of you if you would ask for help.

Consider becoming a volunteer and be willing to make a one month commitment. Volunteering is a great way to further a cause, support an organization, and make a difference in your community. It can also be an opportunity to meet people that can lead to new friendships.

Week Two Love Challenges:

Try and spend some quiet time every day this week and meditate on how much God loves you. Eventually you will always feel God's love in your heart.

Take some time this week and make a list of people you need to forgive.

Make a list of things you need to forgive yourself for. Letting go of how much we beat ourselves up over past mistakes takes forgiving ourselves.

Also, make a list of those you might have to ask for forgiveness.

Week Three Prayer Challenges:

Commit to spending time with God on a daily bases in prayer.

Psalms 100 is a great way to start an intimate time of prayer with God.

Psalms 100 Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing. Know that the LORD, He *is* God; *It is* He *who* has made us, and not we ourselves; *We are* His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, *And* into His courts

with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name. For the LORD *is* good; His mercy *is* everlasting, And His truth *endures* to all generations.

And if you don't know what to praise him for **Psalm 150** tell us.

Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!

After you have been soaking in God's presence for a while you will begin to have people cross your mind. As each person comes to mind pray for them. When no more people keep coming to your mind you're done praying for others.

Then bring your own needs before God.

And as you begin to feel your time with God come to a close thank Him and praise Him for all His answers and express your love for Him.

Week Four Faithfulness Challenges:

This week be willing to be faithful in a commitment in the area of your finances or in a favor that you offer to someone.

Stay consistent in your commitments the constant repetition builds a solid foundation for you to build on.

Be willing to be faithful in Reading one chapter a day in your bible or listening to the bible on audio. Concentration can be hard so it's important to pray before you start reading and ask the Holy Spirit to help you. The first goal is to complete one chapter of reading. Even if you don't completely understand what you are reading the word of God will strengthen you.

Week Five Patience Challenges:

Practice taking some deep breaths through the day and release your thoughts to Jesus.

Make a list of those things, situations or people that make you angry. After you have written the list pray over it and ask the Holy Spirit to help you to redirect your emotions of anger to a more patient and loving attitude.

Make another list of those things, situations or people who you could show more patience and love to.

Each day find a time when you can sit and be patient with yourself and release all nervous thoughts and feelings. Receiving a sense of being at peace with yourself and God.

Week Six Peace Challenges:

This week take time to organize your room, closets and drawers. This process will help you to begin to organize your thoughts and it will help to bring peace to your mind. Any time you are feeling confused take time to organize something.

Meditate on God's promises. During your time of mediation ask God to show you what **Phil 4:8** would look like in your life (whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy).

Journaling your thoughts and emotions brings order into your daily routine.

In your prayer time with the Lord relinquish your fears that rob you of God's peace. Be still and be at peace with yourself and with God.

Week Seven Kindness Challenges:

Be kind to yourself and begin to include in your daily routine one of these: walking, running, biking, gym work out, roller skating or dancing. Something that releases endorphins and makes us breathe in fresh air. These activities help to clear our minds of clutter and over thinking situations.

Step outside and embrace the world around you with kindness.

Spend time thanking God for all the beauty that surrounds you there is so much to be thankful for.

This week do a random act of kindness for either someone you know or someone you see while you are out and about.

Week Eight Self-Control Challenges:

Make a list of the things that you know you can be excessive in. Then next to each one write a limit for yourself.

Try limiting caffeine, sugar and carbs. Those kinds of foods make a person more nervous and ups their level of anxiety and can also be a source that creates the cloudiness in your mind.

Work at trying to eat a higher protein diet and stay hydrated with water.

Use self-control about the kinds of movies and TV you are watching.

Music is enjoyable to listen to make more of an effort to listen to Christian music.

This week listen to your own words and ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you need to improve what you talk about. (gossip, backbiting, criticism, etc.)

Try fasting for a day or two on anything that you know you tend to be excessive in.

Week Nine Joy Challenges:

Brain storm possible jobs that get you interacting with people in a fun way.

Make a list of projects to help bring joy into other people. As an example paint fun faces on balloons and give them away to children. Or bake some cookies and take them to a nursing home.

Explore your creative side with art, music, singing, dance and it will help your mind be filled with joy and bring joy to others.

Week Ten Goodness Challenges:

Listen carefully to your own words that you speak about yourself and others. If you notice you don't speak honorably about others or yourself than take time to think before you speak and ask the Holy Spirit to help you.

Check yourself this week are you being honest and doing your best.

Remembering your manners and showing respect for others.

Ask God to show you a perfect moment to be generous in any form whether it be financial, encouragement or a friendly deed.

Make a list of those things that make you angry and then next to each one write what action of goodness you could do instead of getting angry.

Week Eleven Gentleness Challenges:

This week ask God to release gentleness within and through your unique personality.

Make a conscience effort to give a kind and gentle answer when you may already have a quick harsh answer.

Make a special effort to be on time and keep your appointments.

Ask someone you know well what can you do to help them achieve the goal they are working towards and don't expect anything in return.

Remember to be an encourager and also encourage yourself.

Week Twelve Victory Challenges:

This week ask the Holy Spirit to give you an opportunity to share your testimony of either your salvation or a victory you have won through Jesus Christ.

Create a collage of the battles you have won in Jesus.

Pray for someone who needs help in an area where you have gotten or need the victory.

Step out of your comfort zone and do something that you have always wanted to do but didn't think you had the ability to do it.