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GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESSFUL FATHERING AND FATHERHOOD PRACTITIONERS

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Preface

I have read many books on fatherhood over my years of working in fatherhood programs. I have studied and reviewed tons of research on fatherhood, the importance of the roles of fathers, the consequences of father absence on children, families, communities, societies, and nations. All of them revealed important, riveting, alarming, and even frightening facts surrounding the state of fatherhood in our nations. They all offer a variety of causes of father absence, potential strategies and solutions to reducing father absence. I witnessed in many cases those strategies and solutions produce initial success to a degree in many incidences. Many fathers have been helped to get back on point, and seem to have overcome personal and systemic barriers to responsible fatherhood.

I have also witnessed many of those men fall victim once again to circumstances, situations, and scenarios (life on life's terms) that caused them to be out of position in the first place. ***The source*** of his problems have not been revealed and confronted, making his apparent success only temporary. You can help a man get employment. You can help a man get a GED or higher education. You can help a man to be able to pay his child support and to manage his arrears. You can help him to get back involved in the life of his children. But if you do not prepare him to recognize the source of his problems he will not be prepared to fight against them when they confront him again. The bible says in Matthew 12:43-45, "*When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.*"

We were born in a war for war. Satan has been at war with God since before the creation of the earth. He has lost the war and his time is limited. Satan wants to destroy as many of God's children as he can before his time runs out. Satan's strategy is to take the head of the family out and the rest will fall. Just take a look at our society today. Over seventy-five percent of children growing up in America are living in a fatherless home. Children are growing up unprotected, undisciplined, and without the love, nurturing, leadership and guidance of a godly father figure. As a result we find ourselves faced with the social ill of juvenile delinquency, poor educational achievement, teenage pregnancy, increased drug use, low self-esteem, lack of identity, and many

other negative outcomes. We must train fathers both in the natural and supernaturally to be adequately able to sustain themselves against the reoccurring attacks of their adversary.

If a man does not know the source of his problems, or who his enemy is, he will not know how to plan to defeat and conquer them. It is because of a lack of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom that fathers are unable to obtain, maintain, and sustain their place in their children's lives. It is a lack of knowledge of their true identity, purpose, and authority. Knowledge without understanding of how to use it to your advantage is dangerous. Wisdom comes from understanding the knowledge you have and exercising it in your daily life. The bible tells us that God created man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). The bible reveals God's original purpose, and meaning of fatherhood. The bible details the original blueprint for the purpose and design of all fathers by the Creator of all mankind, God the Father. God explains the purpose of fathers, the roles of fathers, and the root source or cause of father absence (being out of position).

This presentation will describe a curriculum (not in its entirety) created as an interactive guide to enlighten participants, to promote critical thinking and self analysis, and to train, develop, and restore fathers back to their original design and purpose.

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

To give subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

*A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall
attain unto wise counsels:*

*To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their
dark sayings.*

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and
instruction.*

*My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:
For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*

(Proverbs 1: 1-9)

Session 1: Introduction to the Restoration of Fathers

Restore means to bring back into existence or use; reestablish; to bring back to an original condition; to put (someone) back in a former position (The Free Dictionary).

The goal of this session is to make you think about your true identity, the purpose of fathers, what authority you possess, and your destiny as a father. Myles Munroe said in his book, *The Principle of Fatherhood*, “The greatest enemy of man is ignorance of self. Nothing is more frustrating than not knowing who you are or what to do with what you have. It is debilitating to have something but not know what it is for or how to use it. Even more frustrating is to have an assignment but not know how to do it.” (Munroe, 2001)

The lack of knowledge about your purpose as a father has a devastating impact on your life. Your lack of knowledge, not only affects your life, but it also affects the life of your children.

“My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge: because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you that you shall be no priest to Me; seeing you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children.” (Hosea. 4:6)

Have you ever asked yourself the questions; who am I? Why am I here? What am I here for? What is my destiny? When you don't know the purpose of a thing, you don't ask the thing, you ask the one who created the thing. For example; if you have never worked on a car before, you do not ask a physician how to work on a car. You ask the one who designed, created, and built the car. There is typically an owner's manual to tell you exactly how to operate and repair the car.

Destiny

God will reveal your destiny to you. You must begin the journey. You must go where He leads you. Your destiny is greatness if you go where He leads you. Your destiny is to be the example for all the generations to come after you. Your children and your children's children shall speak of your legacy. Your destiny is that because of you many others will live a prosperous life. Your destiny depends on your willingness to obey the will of God for your life. In your obedience to God, you will be transformed and your life as you know it will begin to change.

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Genesis 12:1-3)

And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. (Genesis. 17:3-8)

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. (Jeremiah 1:5)

God's truth about you has been distorted and you have been manipulated (tricked) through the world system (Satan) and the systems that you live in that are contradictory to God's truth for your life as a father (Genesis 3:1-5, 13). Satan knows what God's plan is for you as a father. Just like God has a plan, Satan also has a plan.

“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (Ephesians 6:11)

Wiles (stratagem): A military maneuver to deceive or surprise an enemy; a clever, often underhand scheme or surprise to achieve an objective (The Free Dictionary). Satan's objective is to take you out of the picture, so he can have unrestricted access to your children.

When we do not understand the problems in our life we get frustrated. Frustration is the result of being prevented from accomplishing a purpose, or fulfilling a desire; to cause feelings of discouragement or bafflement in; to make ineffectual or invalid; nullify. Typically, when men are frustrated with something, or discouraged from accomplishing something, they abandon their efforts and walk away from it. This is what Satan wants to reduce you to, so your children will grow up fatherless.

Myles Munroe (2001) said, “Without understanding, life is just an experiment, and frustration is the reward” (p.22).

“They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.” (Psalms 82:5)

Darkness in your life usually reflects evil times; times when you encounter internal conflict, adversity, trials, and tribulation. You have a dark view of your future, no vision, no knowledge or understanding of where you are headed, which can be very depressing.

Question: How do I walk out of the darkness in my life?

Answer: The lack of knowledge and understanding about being a responsibly involved father can cause problems in your life and you will be a failure as a father. Having the knowledge and understanding of your purpose as a father can lead you out of dark times and into your destiny as a father.

Question: How do I restore the foundations of the earth?

Answer: “The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.” (Matthew. 4:16)

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1Corinthians 3:11)

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. (Malachi 4:6)

The curse has been in effect for thousands of years. It did not just begin with you and your children, or with your father and his father, and his father before him. It is just not good enough to be as good a father as fathers were forty years ago, or even a hundred years ago.

“...for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me. (Exodus 20:5)

The fruit of fatherlessness is disobedient children. Fathers must be restored with knowledge and understanding of their purpose as fathers in order for their disobedient children to see them as wise men that they are willing to follow in their footsteps in order to break the curse. God wants godly fathers to prepare their children for the Lord.

“And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Luke 1:17)

Men were created in God’s image and in His likeness; therefore it is in each man’s purpose to be a father. When you discover your purpose, you can begin to live out the meaningful and prosperous life God created you to live. Fatherhood is the male’s purpose. You were designed with what it takes to fulfill your purpose. It is in your nature to be a father because that’s what God created you to be. But make no mistake, just because you can make a child, it does not make you a father.

During these sessions we are going to present and explore seven purposes of man so that fathers can be restored back into the lives of their children the way God intended since the beginning. God laid out the blueprint for successful fatherhood in the beginning. Those seven purposes of men that God reveals in Genesis will help instruct men to be a successful man, husband, and responsibly involved father. The seven purposes are:

1. Dominion
2. Fruitful
3. Multiply
4. Replenish
5. Subdue
6. Till
7. Dress

Session 2: Discovering Your True Identity: Who Am I?

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... (Genesis 1:26)

We are created in the image of God and in His likeness. Webster's dictionary defines image as an exact likeness. No man has ever laid his eyes on God because He is a spirit, which cannot be seen. Since you were created in His image, your true identity is that of a spirit which also cannot be seen. The body that you are in houses your spirit, your true identity. When you don't know what your true identity is, you spend your entire life searching for meaning and purpose. The problem is that until you get the revelation of your true identity, you don't even know that you are not what you were created to be. You go through life not realizing what's inside the body you possess. As a result, you spend your life wandering aimlessly with no vision or no certain destination.

And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. (Numbers 14:33)

Identity means the sameness in all that constitutes the objective reality of a thing (The Free Dictionary). In other words, you are the same as the one who establishes your reality. You are supposed to get your identity from the one who created you.

God gives you your true identity in Genesis 1:26. Before He ever gave you a body He gave you an identity. Knowing who you are is so important that God made a point of establishing your identity so you would not go around wondering who you are even if you grew up in a home where your natural father was absent. Children are supposed to learn their identity from their father. Likeness refers to a copy, portrait, appearance, resemblance, similarity (The Free Dictionary). Likeness implies a closer correspondence than just similar. Genesis 5:1 says, "*We are in the likeness of God.*" Genesis 9:6 says, "*...for in the image of God made he man.*"

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than God, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. (Psalms 8:4-5)

And God said, *Let there be light: and there was light. (Genesis 1:3)*

And God said, *Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters... (Genesis 1:6)*

And God said, *Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so (Genesis 1:9)*

And God said, *Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. (Genesis 1:11)*

And God said, *Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven... (Genesis 1:14)*

And God said, *Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. (Genesis 1:20)*

And God said, *Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so (Genesis 1:24)*

God spoke and things became living. When we speak we give life to what comes out of our mouth. You are created in His image and His likeness. So, you have the power to speak blessings into the life of your children. You are to speak the wisdom that you receive from God to your children. If you speak harsh, and negative words to your children, you curse them and those words can become their destiny.

My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. (Psalms 49:3)

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. (Proverbs 4:23)

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. (Proverbs 23:7)

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. (Matthew 15:18-19)

But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. (James 3:8-10)

God Is Your Source

Once God created man, He became the source, the point of origin, the beginning of all that is to follow. The source has to do with ancestry. An ancestor is one from whom a person is descended; a prototype or progenitor (The Free Dictionary). Like God, you are the progenitor, the originator, the source of all who are born after you. God is your example, role model for all the things you are suppose to do for your children and your children's children. You set the standard. Whatever you are, your children and your children's children will be in your image and in your likeness.

Have you ever heard a family member say about a child who has never seen their father, "Look at him, he acts just like his no good father, his father wasn't no good and he aint gonna be no good either."

Session 3: Dominion

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. (Genesis 1: 26)

Dominion is the first purpose God establishes for fathers. God intended for man to have dominion on earth. Dominion is defined in The Free Dictionary as the control or exercise of control; sovereignty; a territory or sphere of influence or control. Sovereignty is defined as royal rank, authority, or power; complete independence and self-government (The Free Dictionary). When God said “Let us create man in our own image, after our likeness,” it was done; you were created in His image and you were in heaven with Him. However, in order to have dominion, you have to have your own place to be ruler of. That is why He restored the earth and put you into a body made from the dust of the earth so that you could have a place to rule over just like Him. God formed you, shaped you, and equipped you with everything you need to fulfill the purpose He created you for.

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Genesis 2:7)

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. (Genesis 1:27)

Genesis 1:27 reveals that God created two spirits in His Image. In man, God created both male and female. God said let them have dominion, and blessed them. God created man and woman to be equal to one another. They had the same purpose (and still do), but different roles. The female’s role was (and still is) to be man’s helpmate.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. (Genesis 2:18)

And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. (Genesis 1:22)

And God blessed them (spoke divine favor over them), and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Genesis 1:28)

In Genesis 1:26 God said, “*Let them have dominion...*” God never gave either of them dominion over a human being. Man was not created to have dominion over woman, nor woman to have dominion over man. He gave them dominion over the earth, the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, and every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

In Genesis 1:22 God blessed the birds in the air and the fish in the seas, but He did not give them dominion. He positioned them in the air and in the sea where they are to fulfill their purpose. Birds do not have to learn how to

fly, and fish do not have to learn how to swim. When God blessed them, He equipped them with the ability to fulfill their purpose. God positions you where you are supposed to fulfill your purpose and equips you with the ability to fulfill it.

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.
(Genesis 2:8)

The purpose of a thing is found in the intention of the creator of the thing. Nobody knows a thing better than the one who created the thing (Pastor R. Pitts, personal communication, 2003). Nobody knows Mercedes cars better than Mercedes. Nobody knows Cadillac better than Cadillac. God knows what He created you for. God gave you the authority to rule over the earth. He made you sovereign lord over a particular territory.

Everything that God created He blessed, which means He equipped you with everything you need to fulfill your purpose. It is your responsibility to bless your children. When you bless your children, you release prosperity into your bloodline. You are the progenitor, source, and originator. God blessed man when He said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion... Remember, when God speaks a thing, it is done. Since God created you to be like Him, you are to speak blessings over your children; you are suppose to reveal to them their purpose so they don't go wandering in the wrong places seeking their identity and purpose. Like God the father, you as the earthly father are to let your children know who they are and what they are suppose to do with their life.

If you desire to know your purpose, get into God's presence, the one who created you, and ask Him.

God Is A Provider

And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. (Genesis 1:29 & 30)

God provides for everything that He creates. As a father, the source and progenitor, you are supposed to provide for your children. Not only are you supposed to provide nourishment for their body, you are to provide them with a place for them to establish dominion. You are to position them as God positioned man (Genesis 2:8).

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:9)

God gave you free will. He gave you the freedom to make choices in life. Remember, to have dominion means the exercise of control; complete independence and self-government (The Free Dictionary). God gave you dominion and a place to exercise it. As a father to your children, you have to establish a place for your children to have dominion and to exercise it.

I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:
(Deuteronomy. 30:19)

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)

God allows man to make his own choices. However, you must realize that every choice has a consequence. You can be raised by good parents, trained in the way you should go, and make wrong choices in your life. You have to maintain the position that God has placed you in if you want to experience the blessings in your life.

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. (Jeremiah 1:5)

When you become a father, God has positioned you over that child's life and destiny. God is the source of all life. He is the progenitor. Your children are not an accident. You were not an accident. You are not the product of your mother and father's passion. You are God's creation and so are your children. You are to maintain your position in the life of your children if you are to train them in the way they should go. God has positioned you to be the father of your children. Since He has positioned you, He has equipped you with the ability to fulfill that purpose as a father. Any male who is of age can be a father, but it takes a special man to be a daddy. Your purpose in life is to exercise dominion over a territory God has placed you in. Your purpose as a father is to bless, provide for, and protect everyone and everything in your territory. The Greek word for father is pater. That word simply means protector and provider.

God tells us how to have dominion: be fruitful, multiply, and replenish, and subdue.

Session 4: God Gives Instructions: Fruitful, Multiply, Replenish, Subdue, Till and Dress

Fruitful

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful... (Genesis 1:28)

According to The Free Dictionary, fruitful means to be conducive to productivity, producing something in abundance. When you are fruitful, you are being productive. You have to be careful about the fruit that you are producing. Regardless of the fruit that you produce, good fruit or bad fruit, it yields a seed that will reproduce itself. Since you are the progenitor of all the fruit that comes after you, you have to make sure that you develop yourself to produce good fruit. Being fruitful is the first order of business. You are created in the image of God. You are the fruit of God. God reproduced Himself in you. You are not a product of your natural father. God only used him as a vessel to get you into the world. You represent heaven on earth. Reproduce does not mean go around making babies. It means continued growth and development of yourself, so that when the time is right you can multiply the fruit that you have developed.

And now the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. (Matthe 3:10)

Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. (Matthew 12:33)

Producing good fruit is part of the process for fulfilling your purpose of having dominion on earth. What do you do with a product that you bought for a specific purpose, that does not do what it is suppose to do? You get rid of it, or you take it back to the manufacturer to have them repair it. When a team drafts a quarterback number one in the draft, they expect him to produce wins. They train him to make him good so that he can produce good fruit (wins). If he does not develop into the player they trained him to be, the fruit that he produces could be disastrous. When that quarterback does not produce victories, the team usually gets rid of him. A quarterback is known by his reputation for being a winner or for being a loser.

Multiply

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful , and multiply ... (Genesis 1:28)

God is a God of order, and God establishes the order.

In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. (2 Kings 20:1)

Let all things be done decently and in order. (1 Corinthians 14:40)

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. (Psalms 37:23)

There is an order that must be followed to fulfill your purpose. You must produce the right kind of fruit before you multiply. To multiply means to increase the amount, number, or degree of something (The Free Dictionary). When you multiply before you are fruitful, you are functioning out of order. When you are functioning out of order you are functioning in chaos. Your life is in disarray and unmanageable. Families,

neighborhoods, communities today are living in chaos because fathers are not functioning in God's order. Too many men (and boys) are multiplying before they have produced any Godly fruit. Your children are your increase; they are you multiplied.

Replenish

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth... (Genesis 1:28)

Replenish means to fill or make complete again; add a new stock or supply (The Free Dictionary). You are to fill the earth, or at least the territory that God has positioned you in, by multiplying the fruit that you produce. When God created the earth in the beginning, He created it in perfection. At some point in time it became without form and void, and darkness covered the face of the deep.

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. (Genesis 1:2)

God wants you to replenish the earth back to the way He created it in the beginning. But first, you must become fruitful. He created you in His image and likeness. You are His seed that He planted and positioned on earth to have dominion like He has in heaven. He created you to fulfill a purpose. In order to fulfill that purpose, you must become fruitful, develop the fruit in you by investing in yourself, multiply that fruit in your children, and replenish the earth with your children who you have trained, developed, provided for, and given instruction to.

Subdue

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: (Genesis 1:28)

Subdue in this context means to bring the land under cultivation, to nurture, and promote growth (The Free Dictionary). God's intention was and is for you to control the land. You are supposed to train and tame the land so that it works in your favor and not against you. God created the earth so that it provides for your every need, not to work against you. But you must nurture, train, and develop the earth in order for it to produce a harvest that you can multiply, so that you can replenish the earth. Sound familiar? God establishes a pattern for success in your life. This is also the pattern that you are to follow as a father to your children.

You must subdue the earth and prepare it to provide for you and your children, as God prepared it for you in the beginning. God has instructed you as to how to have dominion in your life. As a father, you are to position yourself in the lives of your children so that you can instruct them how to be successful at having dominion in their life. When you operate in God's order you eliminate the chaos in your life and you prevent your children from growing up with chaos in theirs.

God has provided you with everything you need to have dominion on earth. He has given you precise instructions on how you are to fulfill your purpose. He has given you the exact order in which you are to function successfully. He has provided, instructed, directed, and ordered your footsteps. God is the best example for you to follow on how to be the best father you can be to your children.

Till

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Genesis 2:4-7)

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. (Jeremiah 1:5)

God created you with a purpose before He even formed your body. Till means to work land as by ploughing in order to make it ready for cultivation (The Free Dictionary). In other words, you are supposed to have a job and go to work. God prepared the land for you, but He did not allow it to rain upon the earth until there was a man to till (work) the ground. God did not want the earth to grow wild and out of order. He took care of the earth with a mist until He put you here. He put you here to work the land, but not for the land to work you. He wants you to control, and cultivate, and keep chaos from evolving in the earth.

You are to take care of the earth until your children are able to. Fathers are to cultivate their children. You are to train and develop them by instructing them in the things they need to know in order to obtain success and dominion in their lives.

Dress

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. (Genesis 2:15)

In this context, to dress is the same as cultivate, to prune and trim; to put into the proper or systematic order (The Free Dictionary). Once the land is subdued and you have established order in the territory in which God has planted you, you have to continue working to fine tune it. You have to ensure that it does not grow wild. This is what God the Father did to show you what you must do to be in His likeness as a father.

Session 5: God's Order for Marriage

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. (Genesis 2:8)

God gave man a place of his own to have responsibility and sole authority over before He gave him a wife. You should not still be living in your parent's basement after you get married. You have no authority in your parent's house. You may have some responsibility, but it is not the sole responsibility of caring for, managing, and maintaining your own domain. To have dominion, you must have your own domain/territory. Remember, God plants you in the place that you are to fulfill your purpose. The place that God puts you in is perfect. It has everything you need to be happy and successful.

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:9)

God prepares everything for you with the expectation that you will obey and follow His instructions and commands.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (Genesis 2:16-17)

Before you get married you should be able to provide for your wife financially. You should have the resources and access to resources that enable you to take care of your wife. God anticipated that you were going to need money (and lots of it) to keep your wife satisfied, that is why He showed Adam where all the gold and precious jewels were located.

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. (Genesis 2:10-12)

You have to prepare a place for your wife, just as God prepared a place for you.

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. (Genesis 2:15)

He wants you to demonstrate that you can handle the responsibility of exercising authority over your domain before you have a wife depending on you to be a man. You should be stable and fully established in your position of authority in your domain. When you exhibit stability, resourcefulness, authority, and dominion, God will send your virtuous woman.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. (Genesis 2:18-20)

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life... (Proverbs 31:10-31)

You were created out of God as He breathed the breath of life into man's nostrils and man became a living soul. God is your source and progenitor. Because you were created out of Him, He anticipates and provides for your every need. He instructs, teaches and directs your footsteps.

And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (Genesis 2:22-24)

You were created in God's image and likeness. God was the father to Adam, and Adam became the father of **ALL** who came out of him and after him. Eve was the first to come out of Adam, therefore God intended for Adam to be a father to her as He was to Adam. She was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. Husbands are supposed to treat their wives the way a father treats his children according to the principles of fatherhood outlined in this curriculum. A father is the **originator, the source, provider, protector, sustainer, instructor, and director**. As the director, you provide vision for your wife and children, you orchestrate their life as God gives you direction and instruction. God gave instructions on how to prepare yourself for the responsibilities of marriage when He said be fruitful, multiply, replenish, subdue, till, and dress. Husbands are to instruct their wife according to the will of God. Your wife is to help you carry out God's instructions. God created man and sustained him in the place where he is planted. As the husband/father, you are to sustain your wife. In all that she endeavors to do, you should provide the necessary resources to see it through, support and encourage her, uphold and affirm her, and nurture her along the way.

As the protector, you are to protect your wife from evil people and spirits whose purpose is to deceive and manipulate her to turn against your instructions.

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. (Genesis 3:1-3)

God speaks to those He has given authority to. He gave Adam his instructions, and Adam instructed Eve. God is a God of order and He establishes the order in which He disseminates His instructions. Eve stepped outside of that order when she entertained and listened to the wrong voice. Eve was manipulated, deceived, and tricked into doing what she was instructed not to do.

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil/ (Genesis 3:4-5)

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. (Genesis 3:6)

Adam was with Eve in the garden while the serpent was talking to her. Eve did not have to go to the other side of the garden to find Adam to tell him what she had done. She did not have to wait until she got home to tell him. Adam was standing right there next to Eve allowing the serpent to have authority in a place where he was suppose to have authority and dominion. Adam was supposed to protect his wife and tell that serpent that this is my garden, my domain, God gave me authority over this territory; now get out! But Adam did not exercise his position of authority. He was out of position and out of God's order.

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. (Genesis 3:9-12)

God, the father, is also a disciplinarian. God and Adam are talking to one another, not God and Eve. God talks to Eve only to discipline her after Adam cast all the blame on her. That is what many men do today. They blame someone else for their failure.

And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; (Genesis 3:13-17)

God disciplined His children, Adam and Eve. He also disciplined the serpent because He is the father of all He created. God established an order for success in a marriage. When your marriage is out of God's order, you open up the door for the serpent to walk right on in and exercise his authority over your marriage. Adam was out of order because he did not exercise dominion in his territory that he had authority over. He listened to his wife, who had been deceived, instead of following God's instructions and commands. As a father, you are supposed to discipline your children when they get out of order. A lack of order lets Satan know that there is no authority present to keep him from doing whatever he wants to your children.

Session 6: God's Blueprint for Fathers and Families

A blueprint is a detailed plan of action, a model or prototype that influences subsequent design or practice (The Free Dictionary). It is intended as a guide for making something; a series of steps to be carried out or goals to be accomplished. Before God created the heaven and the earth, in the beginning, He had an idea. He thought about what He wanted to create before He created it. That conclusion can be arrived at simply by looking at how He obviously anticipated every need that man would have and put a spectacular plan in place to meet those needs. God had a plan and a purpose for His creation. Once His plan was laid out in His mind, He began to build. God had all the raw material needed to build His creation. He only needed to speak (authority), and it was done. As for man, you must consider the cost of raw materials needed before you begin to build. You must count the cost.

Question: Can you produce, or supply everything you need to build your family with?

God is a provider, so His plan included all the necessary provisions. So, when all things were considered, and in place, He began to build His creation.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)

God began to miraculously and purposely orchestrate His design. Everything had a purpose, and was well thought out, or planned, to fulfill the purpose for which it was created. Everything you need to fulfill your purpose as a father was created within you.

Once your blueprint has been laid out, and your domain/territory has been determined, you now lay your foundation that you are going to build on.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. (Isaiah 28:16)

Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. (Psalms 102:25)

Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. (Psalms 104:5)

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. (Matthew 7:25)

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. (1 Corinthians 3:10).

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: (Ephesians. 2:20-21)

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: (Matthew 7:24)

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:18)

Jesus built His church upon the revelation from God that Peter had received. Revelation from God is your foundation. A revelation is a manifestation of divine will or truth. It is God's disclosure of His own nature and His purpose for mankind. Jesus knew that to build something that would withstand the storms that would blow against it, it would have to be built on a revelation from God.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion... (Genesis 1:26)

To be created in His image and likeness means that fatherhood was in you when you were created because God is The Father, Progenitor, Originator, Source, Author, and Beginning of all things that came out of Him.

Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee, and established thee? (Deuteronomy. 32:6)

I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (Psalms 2:7)

He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. (Psalms 89:26)

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting. (Isaiah 63:16)

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. (Matthew 6:9)

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34)

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. (John 5:18)

Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. (John 8:42)

But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence. (John 14:31)

You get the point. The scriptures go on and on declaring that God is The Father; and you were created just like Him. He is the foundation that you were built upon. He created you perfectly in His image, a spirit, equipped to have dominion and authority over the elements in the environment you have to survive in. God had, and has, a plan for you. God put **you** in a body so that you can produce fruit, multiply, replenish, subdue, and till the land. He gave instructions on how His creation was to be used. He is a **teacher**. He provided everything you need to **sustain** you.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. (Genesis 1:28-30)

You were created with a purpose, for a purpose!

God's blueprint for successful fatherhood was laid out in the beginning. He created a plan of action, a model or prototype for you to use as a model. He created the steps to be carried out by you. You are God's pride and glory. Your children should be your pride and glory. If you want to be successful as a man, husband, and father you must use the blueprint God established in the beginning.

Like the Father, an earthly father develops his wife and children. He plans their growth in every aspect of life—spiritually, physically, intellectually, and emotionally.

Just like God the Father had a plan to develop His creation, you, as an earthly father are going to write your plan for developing your family. Before you create a family, you first have to be able to sustain it. To sustain means to provide with nourishment; to keep going; to hold up; to support (The Free Dictionary).

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: (Genesis 3:8)

God spent time with his children in the garden in the cool of the day.

This is now your plan for developing your family, complete with a vision for your family. Remember, fathers are also visionaries.

OUT OF MARRIAGE CAME CHILDREN

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.
(Genesis 4:1-2)

God has established the order in which children are to be brought into the world. Adam knew his wife, not his girlfriend. His wife bore his children. When you have children outside of the order that God intended for children to be born, you place yourself, the mother of your children, and your children at a disadvantage. God makes provisions for those who are walking in His will. He is a **protector**. He protected Adam and Eve from the serpent until the day they decided to step outside His will and listen to the wrong instructions. God told Adam what would happen if he did not follow His instructions/blueprint.

He said, *“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”* (Genesis 2:17)

And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. (Genesis 3:17-19)

God speaks to the head of the family. In God’s order, the man is the head. The problem with families today is that there is no order in them. There are too many single mother headed households, and that is not the order that God established. God gave Adam all the instructions. He never spoke to Eve until she caused Adam to eat the apple.

And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat... Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.
(Genesis 3:13, 16))

Question: How did the woman know what God said?

Answer: Adam told her everything God had instructed him to do.

Consider the game of football. When the coach of a football team calls a play, he only gives the play to the quarterback (the head of the team). The quarterback then tells the rest of the team what the play is. The rest of the team follows the play as though the coach had spoken directly to them. That reflects the order of the team. No one questions the quarterback. They just execute the play. Without the quarterback to receive the play from the coach, the rest of the team has no clue as to what to do on the field. The team then becomes separated from the coach and does not know what to do. The back-up quarterback (Satan) steps in and leads the team into chaos. Order has been lost; team members lose hope and give up on the game. This is what happens to children

and families when the father is not in place. The foundation has been replaced by the back-up, and it is not designed for you to succeed.

God is the foundation on which the marriage and the family are to be built upon. There has to be a father in the home, married to the wife, in order for God to provide instruction and guidance. God gives the father His instructions (gives the play), and the mother tells the children (rest of the team) what the play is. The children know not to question their mother because they know the order in which the play was originated (from the father). They know that disobeying the mother is just as if they were disobeying the father (the disciplinarian). Cain and Abel were born after Adam had sinned and God cursed them. He decided to deviate from the blueprint. At that point he became separated from God and all His provisions. His children were born under the curse (separation from God) and all who came after him. Since Adam was separated from God, he was now fatherless. Fatherless children reproduce fatherlessness, perpetuating the problem. Cain and Abel were born without the protection of God therefore they were vulnerable to Satan and all his devices. Satan became the back-up father. His blueprint, or game plan is for you to fail as a child of God, husband, and as a father. He will lead you to abandonment of God's original blueprint, self-destruction, and abandonment of your responsibilities as a father to your children. When God said be fruitful and multiply, He did not mean just go around and make a lot of children and not take care of, provide for, direct, sustain, nurture, teach, and discipline them.

As a father, you are a builder. You have to plan before you begin building. You must first build yourself up and establish yourself as a qualified, skilled, and knowledgeable builder. You have to prepare to build by making all the provisions necessary to begin building. You must lay a foundation to sustain what you build before you begin building **your family.**

Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. (Psalms 104:5)

Session 7: Conclusion: Restoration

Now that God's blueprint for successful fatherhood has been revealed to you, you have the knowledge that you may have been missing to understand your true purpose as a father. You can no longer say, "I don't know how to be a father because I didn't have a father in my life." God has always been your example of a father even if you didn't have a natural role model for a father.

Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? (Malachi 3:7)

It is evident that since man's fall and separation from God, that God has desired man's return to Him. Man displeased God in the days of Noah. It made God sad that man behaved according to his flesh instead of the spirit that He created in him.

And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years...

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth;

both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. (Genesis 6:3, 5-7)

God reestablished His covenant with man and told Noah and his son's to be fruitful, multiply, and replenish the earth (Gen 9:1). God told Abram to walk before Him and be thou perfect because He wants man to return to Him and stay connected to Him.

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. (Genesis 17:1-4)

God wants to reclaim you and restore you back to righteousness. Restore means to bring back into existence or use; reestablish; to bring back to an original condition; to put (someone) back in a former position (The Free Dictionary).

He told Pharaoh, *"Let my son go, that he may serve me."* (Exodus 4:23)

From the book of Exodus through the book of Judges, through the books of the Kings, the Prophets, and the New Testament God has been orchestrating and leading His children back to Him. The prophet Isaiah talked about a people walking in darkness, or an absence of the knowledge of the Lord; a separation from God. You have been walking in darkness, lacking the knowledge necessary to see your way out. He prophesizes about the light that will restore God's children.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined... (Isa. 9:2) For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. (Matthew 4:16)

Walking in darkness can be frightening and troubling. When you can't see where you are going, you can fall into all sorts of pitfalls and traps. As men and as a father, when you do know where you are going, and how to get there, you typically avoid or neglect that area of responsibility, leaving your children unprotected and without any vision or direction. The bible says, where there is no vision people perish. When vision is impaired, failure is your destination. Vision determines destination. There is no peace in your life when you are troubled.

So, how do you create, or establish a vision so that you can be restored back to your place as a father and head of the family?

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (John 14:1)

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27)

God sent His only begotten son so that you can be forgiven for your sins, and restored back to Him.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. (Malachi 4:5-6)

And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Luke 1:16-17)

In the 15th chapter of the book of Luke, the story of The Prodigal Son exemplifies how you, as God's children and father to your own children, have gone astray. But at some point you must come to your senses and return to the Father, broken, humble, and ready to serve God as He created us to do. God sees you from a great way off, long before you come back to Him. He is waiting for you with open arms ready to restore you. He wants to celebrate your coming back to Him. He is waiting for you so much so that He sent Jesus to make a way for you to return. Jesus died on the cross at Calvary so that you can be forgiven and restored back to your place as the head of the family and in the lives of your children.

Jesus lets you know right from the beginning of His ministry what your first step to becoming restored is.

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matthew 4:17)

To repent means to feel such regret for past conduct as to change your mind regarding it; to make changes for the better as a result of remorse or contrition for your sins (The Free Dictionary). You have to acknowledge that the way you have been doing things are wrong, you feel bad about it, and in your heart you truly want to change your ways. Romans 2:4 says, *“that the goodness of God leads you to repentance.”*

Question: Do you want to experience the goodness of God in your life? _____

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (Romans 3:23)

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Romans 10:9)

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19-22)

Confirmation, Validation, and Reassurance

Now that you are restored, you have to take back everything the devil stole from you. Jesus told Peter in Matthew 16:18:

And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

You have to exercise the dominion and authority God created you to have in the beginning. You were born in a war for war. That means that God and Satan have been at war since the beginning of time. You are a soldier in that war whether you want to be or not. What you have to do is choose what side you are going to fight on. Satan is already defeated. But, he is going to fight until his time is up. That means he is not going to just hand everything over to you. A gate is usually a point of access; an entrance or an exit to something. It is put up to either protect those on the inside from those on the outside, or to keep those on the inside from getting out. The gates of hell are not there to protect those on the inside, nor to keep those inside from getting out. The gates of hell are there to keep **you**, now that **you** are restored, from coming in and taking back everything the devil has stolen from you; your children, family, finances, position, ect.

Nehemiah 4: 13-14 says:

Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:12:

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Speak your destiny and claim it with boldness to everyone around you. Remember, you are who God created you to be. You are created in His image, and like Him. You have the power and authority He created you with. Satan has no power over you. However, he will try to deceive and manipulate you just as he once did Adam in the Garden of Eden.

Eph 6: 11 says:

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

II Corinthians 10:3-5 says:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the disobedience of Christ;

The battlefield is in your mind. Walk boldly and confidently in your renewed state of mind, restored position in life, yet remain humble and as a servant of God.

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