

Soaring



A Bible Study on
Letting Go the Weights
...so we can Fly

Index

Chapter	Title	Page
1	How to Soar	4
2	Faith, Key to Soaring	7
3	Coping with Life	12
4	Heart Disease	16
5	Dropping the Weights: Anxiety	18
6	Dropping the Weights: Anger	21
7	Dropping the Weights: Despair	24
8	Dropping the Weights: Guilt	27
9	Dropping the Weights: Hurt	29
10	Contentment	33
11	Trusting the God of All Grace	36
12	Trusting the God of Love	38
13	Trusting the God of Mercy and Faithfulness	40
14	Trusting the God of Wisdom and Power	43
15	Forgiveness	46



Chapter 1: How to Soar

INTRODUCTION: Read Isaiah 40:31. This will be our theme verse for this entire Bible study. We all want to fly.. But some things hold us back. Our aim in this study is to soar; to run unhindered; to shoulder the burdens of life with strength. Ready?

QUESTION 1: Read Matthew 11:28-30. This is another passage to which we will often return. What does Jesus promise?

What does the first part of verse 28 suggest that we experience instead of rest?

What wears you out and burdens your soul?

QUESTION 2: In this question and the following questions we will establish some things that the Bible says are heavy weights to bear. We will be given some initial clues how to leave these weights behind. Read John 14:27. What is the burden and what, according to this verse, is the solution?

QUESTION 3: Read Hebrews 12:3. What is the burden and what, according to this verse, is the solution?



QUESTION 4: Read Ephesians 4:31-32. What are the burdens and what, according to these verses, is the solution?

Review questions 2, 3, 4. Do you see any similarity in the solutions, yet?

QUESTION 5: Read Hebrews 13:5. What is the problem/burden and what, according to this verse, is the solution?

QUESTION 6: Read 1 John 1:9. This verse does not state the problem.. It is implied. What do we feel when we have sinned?

What is the solution to this problem?

How can we be sure that we are forgiven?

See also 1 John 3:20. How does that help with guilt and shame?

QUESTION 7: Read Philippians 2:3-5. What is the burden and what, according to this verse, is the solution?



QUESTION 8: Read John 8:32-36. What is the burden and what, according to this verse, is the solution?

QUESTION 9: Review questions 2-8 and list the burdens/weights that hold us back:

Which of these weights is a particular concern to you?

When we seek victory in the Christian life where is the battle ultimately fought according to 2 Corinthians 10:4-5?

As you consider the weights listed above, in what place must you find freedom in victory?

QUESTION 10: In the following chapters we will be seeking to renew our minds as the basis of freedom. But consider for now the following verses:

- ◆ According to Isaiah 40:31 what is necessary to soar?
- ◆ According to Matthew 11:28-30 what is necessary to be able to shoulder the load of life?
- ◆ According to Hebrews 12:1-2 what is necessary to be able to run with endurance?

QUESTION 11: According to Proverbs 3:5-6 what are the two ways a Christian may approach life?

What does John 15:4-5 have to say about this?

How do these verses relate to question 10?



Chapter 2: Faith, Key to Soaring

INTRODUCTION: Whilst it is Jesus who sets us free to soar (Please read John 8:36), Jesus uses the spiritual resources of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to do that. This chapter examines how that works. We build on chapter 1.

QUESTION 1: Read the second part of John 8:32 carefully. Complete this sentence:
Faith _____ on the truth .
How is faith described in Hebrews 11:1? (Read in the NIV for help)

Where does faith come from? See Ephesians 2:8

Contrast belief and unbelief in:

- ◆ 1 John 5:10
- ◆ John 3:18

Faith focuses on, embraces, and acts on TRUTH.

QUESTION 2: Read Romans 1:21-32 and list some of the disastrous consequences of unbelief.

QUESTION 3: What is the consequence of faith in the truth? See John 8:32

What are some of the consequences of faith in Christ? (who is the truth)... See

- ◆ John 8:36
- ◆ 2 Peter 1:2-3

If unbelief destroys and faith builds up to maturity.. What choice should we make?



QUESTION 4: Since we need truth, for faith to embrace, we will now examine truths that set us free.

- ◆ Read 1 Chronicles 16:34. What is God said to be?
- ◆ Read Exodus 33:19. When God passed before Moses what essential characteristic would Moses perceive?
- ◆ Read Psalm 25:8. God reaches out to sinners because He is
- ◆ Read Psalm 33:5. How extensive is God's goodness?
- ◆ Read Psalm 34:8. What will we conclude after a personal experience of the Lord?

- ◆ Read Psalm 52:1. Will God's goodness ever cease?
- ◆ Read Psalm 68:19. In what way is God good to His people?

Why do you think it is so important to know with certainty that God is good?

You can never say, "God has NOT been good to me."

If I know that God will be good to me always, how might that change my reactions to difficult circumstances?

LEARN: God is good always.

QUESTION 5: What needs will God meet for me according to the following verses?

- ◆ Philippians 4:13
- ◆ Philippians 4:19
- ◆ Matthew 6:31-33

The truth is that God will meet my need. If I am really confident that God will meet my needs then I won't _____. Faith in truth frees from _____.

QUESTION 6: Read 1 John 1:9. What emotion does the conscience produce that makes you feel bad until you confess?

What is promised when we confess our sins?

The truth is that God forgives confessed sin. If I am really confident that God will forgive my confessed sin, what emotion will be removed?

Faith in the truth frees from _____.

 **Soaring** 9 

QUESTION 7: What did God say to Israel in the middle of some very painful discipline, according to Jeremiah 29:11?

What does that say about God’s plans in our difficult circumstances.

What are the good plans that God has for us according to Romans 8:28-29?

Can we ever say “God has not been good to me”?

God does have _____ plans for my life always. Faith in this truth will heal from the _____ of difficult circumstances.

QUESTION 8: Read Romans 8:35-39 and Jeremiah 31:3 and fill in the blank in the following sentence: God will _____ me always. Really? Are you sure? So what difference does that make?

Knowing God loves me sets me free from.....

QUESTION 9: Read 2 Corinthians 9:8.
What is God able to make abound to us?
In what situations?

Knowing God’s abounding grace to me should set me free to show _____ to others.

QUESTION 10: What do the following verses say about God?

- ◆ Job 36:26

- ◆ Romans 11:33-36

LEARN: God is great always



Soaring

10



QUESTION 11: After reading Psalm 103:19 what would you conclude about God's control?

Does Isaiah 14:27 add any detail to that?

What does this mean if I get a flat tyre.. Or cancer?

How would the flesh and faith respond differently to either of those scenarios?

Faith that God is in control, always frees me from...

QUESTION 12: Read Isaiah 41:10. The first part of this verse states God's most basic promise to us. Explain it in your own words.

Do you know any other verses that say the same thing?

Knowing that God never leaves us should make us feel

QUESTION 13: We make mistakes and we deliberately sin; but what does Numbers 23:19 say about God?

Faith rests in God. Those that wait on God are

QUESTION 14: Who is the storehouse of all wisdom according to Colossians 2:3?

Could Jesus Christ ever make a bad choice?

Why do we think that He has made a bad choice sometimes?

What should we be certain about in regard to God's choices in my life?

When hard things come our way how do we sometimes react?

How could certainty in regard to God's wise choices free us from those reactions?

QUESTION 15: From the above questions fill in the following sentences:

QUESTION COMMENT

- | | |
|----|---|
| 4 | God is _____ always |
| 5 | God will meet my genuine _____ always |
| 6 | God will _____ my confessed sin, always |
| 7 | God has _____ plans for my life, always |
| 8 | God will _____ me always |
| 9 | God will give the _____ I need, always |
| 10 | God is _____, always |
| 11 | God is in _____ of all things, always |
| 12 | God is _____ with me, always |
| 13 | God is _____, always |
| 14 | God is _____ in what He does, always |

Read over the comments. Is this how you see God?

In the circumstances of life will you believe these truths about God?

QUESTION 16: You have been given some Bible verses with this Bible study. See page 46 and ask for the A4 hand-out if you don't have it already

- ◆ Cut them out.
 - ◆ Carry them with you.
 - ◆ Memorise them.
 - ◆ Use them to meditate on God's character.
 - ◆ Encourage others with these wonderful truths.
 - ◆ Replace any contradictory thoughts with these truths about God
-

Chapter 3: Coping with Life

INTRODUCTION: How do we cope with life when there is so much that weighs us down and holds us back?

QUESTION 1: Explain how the following verses are pictures of coping with life.

- ◆ Isaiah 40:31

- ◆ Matthew 11:28

- ◆ Hebrews 12:1-2

- To fly we need to _____ on the Lord
- To bear the burden we need to _____ with the Lord
- To run with endurance we need to keep our _____ the Lord

QUESTION 2: Read Hebrews 12:1-2 again. To run with endurance we are to keep our eyes on the Lord and(verse 1)

What are these weights according to verse 1?

What sin is it that the Lord wants you to drop? The following questions will help us root out sin that should be left behind.

QUESTION 3:

- ◆ Read Exodus 20:3. Put this command in your own words.

What do I put before God in my life?

- ◆ Read Exodus 20:4-6. What is my view of God?

Is this how the Bible represents God or are my ideas of God an idol?

- ◆ Read Exodus 20:7. When I speak of God do I honour Him with the truth about Him?

- ◆ Read Exodus 20:8-11. How does this apply to us today?

What do I do on Sundays?

QUESTION 3 (continued):

- ◆ Read Exodus 20:12. How should we treat parents according to this verse? Is that consistent with the way we live?
- ◆ Read Exodus 20:13 and Matthew 5:21-26. What does anger amount to? So, what about you with this command?
- ◆ Read Exodus 20:14 and Matthew 5:27-30. Is this another sore point?
- ◆ Read Exodus 20:15. What does this include?
- ◆ Read Exodus 20:16. May I ask, are you a transparent person?
- ◆ Read Exodus 20:17. How free are we of materialism?

These areas of sin weigh us down and hold us back. So let us consider again, is there anything here we need to drop?

QUESTION 4: Read John 16:33.

What does Jesus promise for life in the world?

What does Jesus promise for life from Himself? How?

How have you reacted in difficult circumstances? (Tick your reactions)

Anxiety
 Anger
 Despair
 Bitterness
 Guilt

How should have you reacted according to John 16:33?

The problem is that these wrong reactions are another weight that stop us soaring. You know this because these wrong reactions can lead to: (Tick your problems)

Depression	Muscular tension
Phobias	Headaches
Panic attack	Insomnia
Obsessions and compulsions	Fatigue
Self mutilation	Changes of appetite
Eating disorders	Palpitations

Wrong reactions are sin and will eventually hurt us. They are weights that must be dropped. Do you agree that you've GOT to leave these weights behind?



QUESTION 5: We are to drop all sin. That includes disobeying God's _____ (question 3) and _____ reactions (question 4). Now we consider one further area of 'sin' that we are to drop. Read Luke 10:38-42.

Is it possible to carry responsibilities that God does not intend for us to carry?

What is to be our life focus?

How can we know which responsibilities of life we are to carry and which responsibilities should be dropped?

List your responsibilities.

Which of these do you know God intends you to carry? Why?

QUESTION 6: What were the three pictures of coping with life? (Question 1)

We can soar/plough/run if:

◆ We decrease the burden (get rid of the weights)

AND

◆ Increase our strength

Now we will consider some ways that we can increase our strength.

First what three aspects of our human nature does 1 Thessalonians 5:23 list as separate and yet interdependent?

How does 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 relate two of these aspects of human nature?

What effect would fatigue have on our spirit?

What other body issues might affect our spirit?

How would a balanced diet/exercise/rest programme help with the burdens of life?



Soaring

15

QUESTION 7: Now we consider another way to increase inner strength. According to John 8:32 what does truth do? Would truth, then enable you to soar?

What area of truth is particularly helpful according to Isaiah 40:31 and John 8:36?

Is that consistent with 2 Corinthians 4:16-18? Explain.

QUESTION 8: But truth is a person. How does John 15:4,7 explain the means to fruitfulness or abundant Christian living?

How does that connect to Luke 10:38-42?



Chapter 4: Heart Disease

INTRODUCTION: There are two great problems of the human heart that underlie our reactions of anxiety, anger, and despair. We need to remove these problems (weights) also, if we will soar.

QUESTION 1: Read Hebrews 3:7-12. What was the real reason that Israel did not enter the promised land.. (a picture of God's rest)?

If unbelief is the root problem, what does Romans 1:21 say happens to heart and mind as a result of unbelief?

So, if a Christian does not believe "God is good always", how will that affect their thinking and emotions?

QUESTION 2: Anger. Read Numbers 20:1-11 carefully. Do you think Moses was angry? What evidence can you give?

What was it that lead to his anger?

Now read Numbers 20:12. What does God say was the real reason for his anger? Explain how that leads to anger.

QUESTION 3: Anxiety. Life trials are sometimes pictured by storms. Read Mark 4:35-41. Were the disciples anxious (verse 40)? What was the underlying reason (verse 40)? Explain how that leads to anxiety.



QUESTION 4: Despair. Read Hebrews 12:1-3. According to verses 2-3 what is the antidote to discouragement?

So then, what might unbelief result in?

QUESTION 5: SUMMARY. According to:

- ◆ Question 2 what is the underlying issue in anger?
- ◆ Question 3 what is the underlying issue in anxiety?
- ◆ Question 4 what is the underlying issue in despair?

So we could say:

- ◆ _____ accepts the truth
- ◆ _____ ignores/rejects the truth

According to Romans 1:25 to reject the truth is to accept a _____. So unbelief believes a _____. Eg God is not enough for me at this time.

QUESTION 6:

- ◆ According to Luke 3:14 what should our attitude be to our wages?
- ◆ What had Paul learned in the ups and downs of life according to Philippians 4:11?
- ◆ Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10. What is associated with godliness?
What level of materialism is adequate for any Christian?
What are the dangers of desiring to be rich and the love of money?
- ◆ Compare the first and second parts of Hebrews 13:5. Why is the promise of the presence of God mentioned in the context of contentedness?
- ◆ What spoils contentedness according to James 1:14?

If unbelief says, "God is not enough for me at this time"...

Discontent says, "I need _____, now"

Then to be able to soar:

- ◆ Choose to _____ God is all that He promises to be
 - ◆ Be _____ with such things as He gives you.
-



Chapter 5: Dropping the Weights: Anxiety

INTRODUCTION: Certainly if we can drop worry and find Christ's peace we will be able to soar....

QUESTION 1: Read the first part of Matthew 6:25. What does Christ tell us to do?

If “do not worry” is a command then we can _____ not to worry.

Vines Dictionary explains the Greek word that is translated ‘worry’ like this:

1. *merimnao* (μεριμνάω), ..., signifies “to be anxious about, to have a distracting care,”

If worry is distracted thought what are we being distracted from when we worry?

Now what is it that you worry about? What if.....

Worry is ‘what if’ thoughts about possibilities that distract us from the realities.

QUESTION 2: In dealing with anxiety we should deliberately focus on the calming realities, not the distressing possibilities.

Read Matthew 6:27. Jesus gave one example of something that cannot be changed. How does worrying help?

State Jesus example as a principle.

Serenity prayer: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things that I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Read Matthew 6:34. What are we to focus on?

QUESTION 3: Read Matthew 6:30. What does Jesus contrast worry to?

Where is that faith to be focused according to Matthew 6:33? Read also Isaiah 26:3. What is the promise and how is it obtained?



QUESTION 4: (Matthew 6 cont.) What can we know about God according to:

- ◆ verses 25-26 and verses 28-30?

- ◆ Verses 31-32?

How do those verses help in obeying Isaiah 26:3?

What does worry say about God?

What does faith say about God?

QUESTION 5: Confidence in God allays worrying thoughts.. And reducing worrying thoughts stops the symptoms of anxiety. Now let's review some verses to increase our confidence in God.

- ◆ Romans 8:35 teaches that God will _____ me ALWAYS
- ◆ 2 Corinthians 9:8 teaches that God will give the _____ I _____ ALWAYS.
- ◆ Hebrews 13:5 teaches that God will be _____ ALWAYS
- ◆ Philippians 4:19 teaches that God will _____ my genuine _____ ALWAYS.
- ◆ Jeremiah 29:11 teaches that God has a good _____ for my _____ ALWAYS

How does knowing these truths about God change the way we will respond to the uncertainties of life?

If your mind keeps going back to negative possibilities how will you need to respond?
Read 2 Corinthians 10:5b for a clue.

QUESTION 6: Now let's go to Philippians 4:4-8 for further help. Read verses 4-6. What are the commands. How would obeying them help with worry/anxiety?

If you obey verse 4 where do you focus?

If you obey verse 5 where do you focus?

If you obey verse 6 where do you focus?



Soaring

20



QUESTION 7: Look at the verses in question 5. Which verse would you choose to meditate on and learn if you were worrying about:

- ◆ A need?
- ◆ A situation?
- ◆ Ability?
- ◆ God's care?

QUESTION 8: (Philippians 4 cont.) Read verses 6-7. What is the difference between what Paul advocates here and 'worrying on-line'?

Why does thanksgiving help so much? Who is the focus of prayer?

Are you able to tick the statements below?

- As I come to God I know that He loves me personally
- Am I sure that God will always do wisely what is best, even if I ask for the wrong thing.
- I am sure that God will give grace to help in time of need.
- I am willing to come to God confessing His glory and my sin
- I pray giving thanks for all my circumstances
- I do not have to be in control.. I can leave the details with the Lord
- I am absolutely convinced that God is trustworthy
- I come away from prayer with His peace

QUESTION 9: (Philippians 4 cont.) Read verse 8. If verses 4-5 are about doing right, and verses 6-7 are about praying right, verse 8 is about _____ right. List the things we are to think about.

What do all these have in common?

Worry should be replaced by _____ thoughts. Use the stop/think cards to arrest worrying thoughts when they begin and replace them with comforting thoughts of our great God. What if you don't have a stop/think card?

	<h1>Soaring</h1>	21	
<h2>Chapter 6: Dropping the Weights: Anger</h2>			

INTRODUCTION: Certainly if we can drop our anger and react like Christ we will be able to soar....

QUESTION 1: Read Matthew 5:21-22. Can you see two reasons in those verses why anger would be considered as serious by God?

Can you list and explain the kinds of anger in Ephesians 4:31?

What excuses do we make for our anger? Are these excuses acceptable to God?

QUESTION 2: Read verse 22a. What do you think Jesus means when He talks about anger “without a cause”?

Let’s look at some situations where people may become angry. Identify the sort of hurt involved in the following.. Also assess what may be the underlying spiritual issue:

- ◆ Genesis 4:4-7
- ◆ Genesis 37:4
- ◆ 1 Samuel 17:28
- ◆ 2 Chronicles 16:7-10
- ◆ Proverbs 15:1, 17:14

It’s not hurt but something else that is felt in the following situations:

- ◆ Esther 3:5
- ◆ Daniel 2:10-12

Read Numbers 20:1-12. We note that Moses was angry in verse 10. In verses 1-2 what two factors were underlying issues in Moses’ anger?

What did God see as the real problem that led to the anger? Verse 12

QUESTION 3. Read James 1:20. How does man's anger differ from God's anger?

MAN

Let's contrast man's anger

- ◆ Verse 22 a
- ◆ Verse 22b

Again let's contrast the anger of Simeon and Levi (read Genesis 34:1-27) to the anger of Jesus (read John 2:14-17)

- ◆

Was it right for Simeon and Levi to be angry?

Why did they get so angry do you think?

What would have prevented their anger getting out of control?

So then, by adding this to the list of spiritual issues in question 2, what issues need to be dealt with before anger can be resolved?

How do the following verses help with the underlying issues in anger?

1 Peter 5:6-7

Matthew 5:44

Romans 12:19

QUESTION 4: Read Matthew 5:23-25. Why does Jesus talk about reconciliation after talking about anger?

How urgent is reconciliation according to Jesus?

How urgent is reconciliation according to Paul? Read Ephesians 4:26-27

Compare Matthew 5:23 and Matthew 18:15. Who has the responsibility for reconciliation?

Read Romans 12:18. What further helpful comment does this verse make in regard to reconciliation?



Soaring

23



QUESTION 5: Read Ephesians 4:31-32.

- ◆ Anger is replaced by....
- ◆ Volcanic reactions are replaced by.....
- ◆ A root of bitterness is replaced by.....

Read Galatians 5:22-23. What do we need to succeed in controlling anger?

What are we aiming for according to:

- ◆ James 1:19
- ◆ Proverbs 12:16
- ◆ Proverbs 14:17
- ◆ Proverbs 14:29
- ◆ Proverbs 25:28

Additionally what do we learn about anger in Proverbs 22:24-25?

How does that give us hope in regard to controlling anger?

What does Paul say about controlling anger in 1 Timothy 2:8?

QUESTION 6: Summary and strategy. When we start thinking “that is not right” and we know we are getting angry:

1. Stop
 2. Think. Recognise God’s control. Pray. Use the stop/think cards
 3. Act.
 - ◆ Deal with the situation ; don’t attack the people
 - ◆ Defer to the Spirit and not the flesh. Pray
 - ◆ Seek reconciliation.
 - ◆ Remove underlying issues that enhance anger
-



Chapter 7: Dropping the Weights: Despair

INTRODUCTION: Certainly if we can drop our despair and trust Christ we will be able to soar....

QUESTION 1: According to Psalm 42:3 how is the writer to this Psalm feeling?

What is a common reason for feeling like this? (HINT: read verse 9b)

What can happen to hope when there has been a major loss?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and comment on Christian hope.

See also 1 Peter 1:3-5 to comment on Christian hope.

QUESTION 2: Read Psalm 42:1-2, 9a. In this period of great loss what has happened to David's relationship with God?

Read verse 4. In this time of grief what has happened to David's relationship with people?

For another reason for David's despair read verse 7. What is David describing there? One commentator says, "The psalmist's misfortunes did not come singly, but in tandem. Wave after wave of the troubled seas had swallowed him up" and another states, "He alleges that God is ultimately responsible for the oceans of trial in which he seems to be drowning". David feels over_____.

For an example of overload read 1 Kings 18:19, 22-24, 29, 36-40, 46, 19:1-3. From those verses list Elijah's activities for ONE day.

What was Elijah's reaction when finally overwhelmed? See 1 Kings 19:4

Physical depletion from all kinds of situations (e.g. after child birth) can cause despair.

QUESTION 3.

- ◆ In question 1 we discovered one cause for despair was I_____.
- ◆ In question 2 a second reason for despair was found to be overl_____.
- ◆ A **third** reason for despair is described by David in Psalm 51:8, 12, 14. Note David's state in verses 8 & 12. Note the reason in verse 14. What is it?

- ◆ A **fourth** reason for despair is described in Proverbs 12:25. What is it?

- ◆ A **fifth** reason for despair can be observed by a careful reading of 1 Kings 21:1-4. In verse 4 'sullen' can be translated sad or down.. Like someone who is despairing, "Displeased" means angry. So what might have been the reason for the despair?

Something could be added
chronic problems eg chronic
time

QUESTION 4: In Psalm 42 David takes some measures to move through his despair.

- ◆ Read verse 5a. What has David observed about himself?

How might a correct evaluation lead to final healing?

- ◆ Read verse 5. What did David do with his observation? Is any circumstance reason enough to despair when you have God?

- ◆ Read verse 5-6 together. Who did David determine to remember/focus on? Read 1 Kings 19:11-12. Was it the same thing that helped Elijah? Explain.

- ◆ In verse 11 David moves from a focus on God to what?

Moving through despair could be summarised as:

1. _____ the problem
 2. _____ the problem (STOP, THINK)
 3. Remember the _____ (use the verses on the STOP, THINK cards to focus)
 4. _____ the Lord
-



QUESTION 5: Which of the STOP/THINK cards would be a help to you? List them.

Write out at least 2 relevant verses from memory:





Chapter 8: Dropping the Weights: Guilt

INTRODUCTION: Guilt is the heaviest of weights around our necks and MUST be dropped

QUESTION 1: Read Romans 2:14-15. What is the function of the conscience?

Is what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 1:12 consistent with the stated function of the conscience, above?

QUESTION 2: Read Ezra 9:6-7, 13-15. What is Ezra feeling and why?

Read Psalms 32:3-4, 38:3-9. What is David feeling and why?

Conclusion: When the conscience detects sin it sounds a warning to the soul by producing _____.

Read Hebrews 12:1. Do you really want to carry guilt? So what needs to be done?

QUESTION 3: When guilt screams for action we should act. But what? Read 1 John 1:9. What does this verse say should be done when we feel guilty?

If we really confess are we really forgiven? What if the sin is very great? What if the sin is a repeated sin?

If we really confess, will we always feel forgiven? If we really are forgiven, why might we fail to feel forgiven?

How could we move towards feeling forgiven?



Soaring

28



QUESTION 4. An overactive conscience. Read 1 John 3:18-20. These verses could be explained like this:

This is the way we know that we belong to the way of truth. When our hearts make us feel guilty, we can still have peace before God. God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

OR

It is by our actions that we know we are living in the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before the Lord, even if our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

These verses make it clear that there are times when our hearts (conscience) make us feel _____ but we are right before _____.

That is, our conscience is producing _____ when there should be none. Thus, at that point, the conscience is faulty (overactive). According to these verses how can we reassure an overactive conscience?

So then, an overactive conscience needs to be retrained according to God's _____. How is the mind (conscience, in this case) renewed according to Colossians 3:10?

What would retraining the conscience involve, practically?

QUESTION 5: An underactive conscience. This is by far the commoner situation. What does Paul predict for our times according to 1 Timothy 4:1-2?

How does a seared conscience come about according to Ephesians 4:17-19?

Conversely how does a tender conscience come about according to Psalm 119:11 and Hebrews 5:13-14?

What do you need to do to have a conscience that convicts when there is sin and excuses when there is no sin?

How do you keep the conscience clear?

According to Isaiah 40:31 and 1 John 3:21 how will trusting God's promise affect your life?



Chapter 9: Dropping the Weights: Hurt

INTRODUCTION: Inevitably, in relationships, hurt occurs. The person who sins and causes the offence is the offender. The one hurt by the sin is the victim. Without reconciliation the offender carries the weight of sin and the victim carries the hurt. Both must drop their weights if they are to fly.

QUESTION 1: The offender; Step #1.

Describe the situation of Matthew 5:23 in your own words.

What is the command in verses 24?

This command then becomes the goal of the offender. But Christ doesn't detail the process in Matthew 5. The rest of the Bible does give the process of being reconciled to a victim when you have been the offender. Who, is sin ultimately against, according to the following verses:

- ◆ Genesis 39:9
- ◆ Psalm 51:3-4
- ◆ Luke 15:18

Therefore what is the first step for the offender according to 1 John 1:9?

QUESTION 2: The offender; Step #2.

The first and second steps toward reconciliation are given in Luke 15:18. What is the second step?

In view of the prodigal's confession, which of the following would be appropriate words to the victim:

- I apologise for..
- I'm sorry about..
- If I offended you when...
- I wronged you when you wronged me.
- I sinned in that..

QUESTION 3: The offender; Step #3.

Read 1 Corinthians 5:1. What was the sin here?

What should the offender do according to steps 1 and 2 above?



QUESTION 3. (continued)

Had he done that as indicated by 1 Corinthians 5:2?

What was the church called on to do, according to verses 4-5?

Read 2 Corinthians 2:6-7. How did the offender respond to the disciplinary action by the church, do you think?

The principle that can be observed in this incident is: the more public the sin the more _____ the confession should be.

So after the offender has confessed to God and the victim, who else should he confess to?

QUESTION 4: Offender; Step #4.

Read 1 Samuel 15:30. What does Saul say that may indicate full confession?

What does Saul say that indicates that he was more sorry for getting caught than being truly repentant?

Read 2 Samuel 16:11 and 2 Samuel 12:10. Why does David accept the life circumstances in chapter 16?

Contrast David and Saul's reaction to consequences following sin.

What conclusion, in regard to life consequences, can you make about true repentance?

Let's summarise. To reconcile the relationship the offender must:

- ◆ Confess to _____
 - ◆ Confess to the _____
 - ◆ Confess to _____ affected by the sin
 - ◆ Accept the _____ of sin
-



QUESTION 5: Offender; Step #5.

Read Luke 19:1-8. How would you describe what Zacchaeus did in verse 8?

Read Numbers 5:6-7. What is the Biblical name for Zacchaeus' action?

Where it is possible compensation is also part of being reconciled.

QUESTION 6: Offender; Step #6.

Read Matthew 5:29-30. What is an offender to do to make sure he does not re-offend?

QUESTION 7: Victim.

What does Jesus command the victim in Matthew 18:15?

Is this similar to what Jesus commanded the offender in Matthew 5:24 (see question 1)?

So who is responsible for restoration of the relationship? (tick the correct answer)

- The offender?
 The Victim?

QUESTION 8: Victim; Step #1.

Read Romans 12:19. What is the victim not allowed to do?

Is obeying this command always easy?

What attitude is necessary to be able to obey this command according to Ephesians 4:32?

The issues for the victim centre around forgiveness, as the issues for the offender centre around genuine confession.



Soaring

32



QUESTION 9: Victim; Step #2.

If step #1 for the victim is to give up revenge what else must be given up according to Ephesians 4:31?

QUESTION 10: Victim; Steps #3 & 4.

Read Matthew 5:44. If we are to love and bless those who have sinned against us and hurt us, what 2 other positive actions does this verse command toward the offender?

QUESTION 11: Victim; Step #5.

The victim, armed with the right attitudes is now ready to obey the command of Matthew 18:15, which is?

God makes most provision for the victim. What resources does the victim have according to verses 16-17, if there is no restoration of the relationship at this point?

QUESTION 12: Offender and victim.

What is to be the final result of healing according to John 13:34-35?

With the offender dropping the weight of sin, and the victim dropping the weight of hurt, by their faith and obedience to the Scriptures, what can they expect for their Christian experience according to Isaiah 40:31?

	<h1>Soaring</h1>	33	
<h2>Chapter 10: Contentment</h2>			

INTRODUCTION: It should be obvious to all, that those who complain, who are dissatisfied, who are discontent, won't be flying; they will be held back; they will be weighed down; they'll find themselves grounded. Faith AND contentment enable us to fly.

QUESTION 1: Read Philippians 4:10-14. Where was Paul when he penned those words according to Philippians 1:12-13?

When was Paul content? (Philippians 4:11)

What were some of the circumstances where Paul found contentment according to verse 12 and 2 Corinthians 11:24-28?

QUESTION 2: According to 1 Timothy 6:6-10 when was Paul content? (see especially verse 8)

Do material things affect Christian contentment? (see verses 7-8)

QUESTION 3: According to Hebrews 13:5 when should I be content?

QUESTION 4: What do the following verses say about the way to find contentment?

- ◆ Philippians 4:12-13

 - ◆ 1 Timothy 6:6 (Compare what false teachers want to gain in verses 3-5 and what Paul wants to gain in verse 6)
-

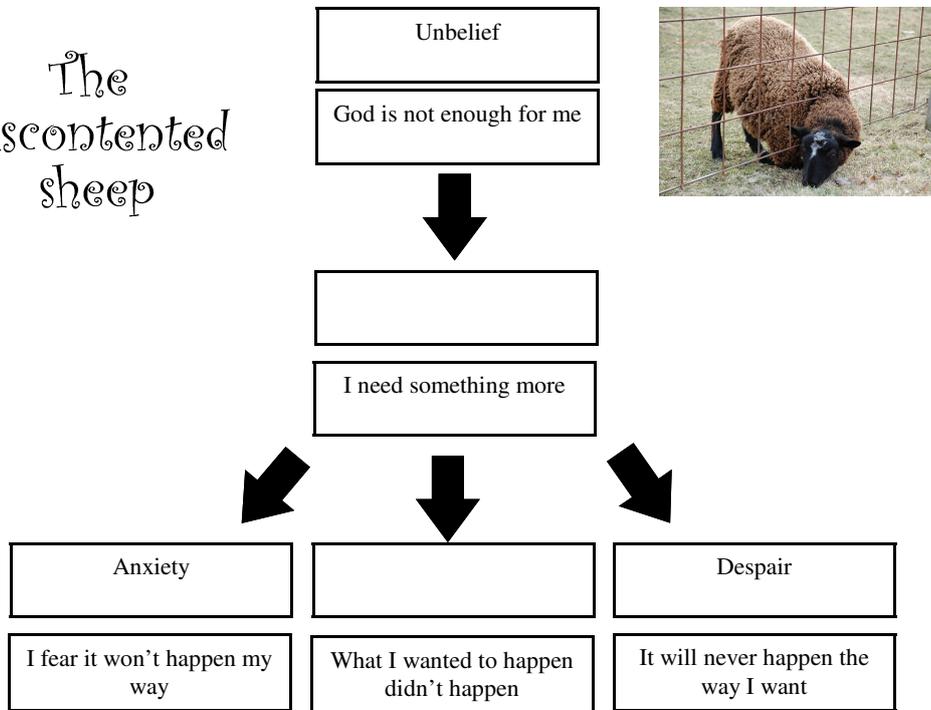
QUESTION 4: (continued)

◆ Hebrews 13:5

Discontent means that I want something other than _____.

Contentment is satisfaction in _____.

The
discontented
sheep



The contented sheep



God is sufficient for me



Contentedness

I need nothing more



Acceptance

God is in control. His plans are good. He loves me.

God is in control. His plans are good. He loves me.

God is in control. His plans are good. He loves me.

Chapter 11: Trusting the God of All Grace

INTRODUCTION: We need God's grace to: rest and not be anxious, to accept and not be angry, to hope and not despair, to be forgiven and not feel guilty, to heal and not hurt from relationships. So how do we experience God's grace daily?

QUESTION 1: Knowing God is a God of grace.

Read Ephesians 1:7. How abundant is God's grace?

Now read Ephesians 1:3-8 and list the evidences of God's grace mentioned in those verses

If verse 8 is true what does it mean in regard to God's grace in our lives?

Read Ephesians 2:4-7. What extra word is added in regard to God's grace in verse 7?

Read 2 Corinthians 9:8. In what situations can you expect to enjoy the exceeding riches of God's grace?

Is there any situation, circumstance, contingency, or scenario that is left out by the promise of that verse?

On the basis of these descriptions and promises what should be the image of God that we have in our minds?

What confidence should that give?

QUESTION 2: How to receive God's grace.

What is one channel for grace according to Ephesians 2:8-9?

What is another channel for receiving God's grace according to 1 Peter 5:5?

Read Hebrews 12:14-16. Verse 15 talks of a man who fell short of the grace of God. Who was that?

What did he lack according to Ephesians 2 and 1 Peter 5?

Now we will look at the consequences of failing the grace of God. What are the consequences of failing God's grace according to the following phrases:



QUESTION 2 (continued):

- ◆ “Lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble”
- ◆ “lest there be any fornicator”
- ◆ “(lest there be any) profane person like Esau

Regarding bitterness compare Jobs response to calamity in Job 1:21 and 2:10 with that of Naomi in Ruth 1:20.

Job:

Naomi:

Why is grace needed to prevent sexual immorality?

Regarding profanity what was it that Esau did that was considered profane? (read Genesis 25:31-34)

Summary: to fail God’s grace will mean:

I will not accept God’s _____ and become bitter

I will not choose _____ and go in the direction of sexual immorality

I will not value _____ riches leading to profanity

QUESTION 3: Now lets consider the consequences if, by faith and humility, we receive God’s grace.

What did Paul find God’s grace sufficient for ?

- ◆ 2 Corinthians 12:8-9
- ◆ Romans 5:20b
- ◆ 2 Corinthians 9:8

How would receiving God’s grace help with:

- ◆ Anxiety
- ◆ Anger
- ◆ Despair

How does believing God to be a God of all grace connect to Isaiah 40:31?

Chapter 12: Trusting the God of Love

INTRODUCTION: Are we really sure that the God of heaven loves us?

QUESTION 1. First we explore the characteristics of God’s love. What do the following verses teach?

- ◆ 1 John 4:16
- ◆ Jeremiah 31:3
- ◆ Deuteronomy 7:7-8
- ◆ Psalm 103:8
- ◆ Romans 5:5
- ◆ Luke 15:18-24
- ◆ Isaiah 49:15
- ◆ Hosea 3:2-3
- ◆ 1 John 4:8-10

How should we respond then when God allows things in our lives that we don’t expect from a loving God?

After Calvary it should forever be a blasphemy the God does not love His people!!

QUESTION 2: What were we like when God set His love on us?

- ◆ Romans 5:6-8
- ◆ Ephesians 2:4-5

Can God love us more than He does now or less than He does now?

QUESTION 3: Read Romans 8:35-39. Make a list of situations that are difficult but the love of God is still present.

God loves me despite what I am and despite the circumstances of life.

QUESTION 4: Read 1 John 4:16-18. According to verse 16 how must we respond to God's love for us?
According to verses 17 and 18 how does that change us?

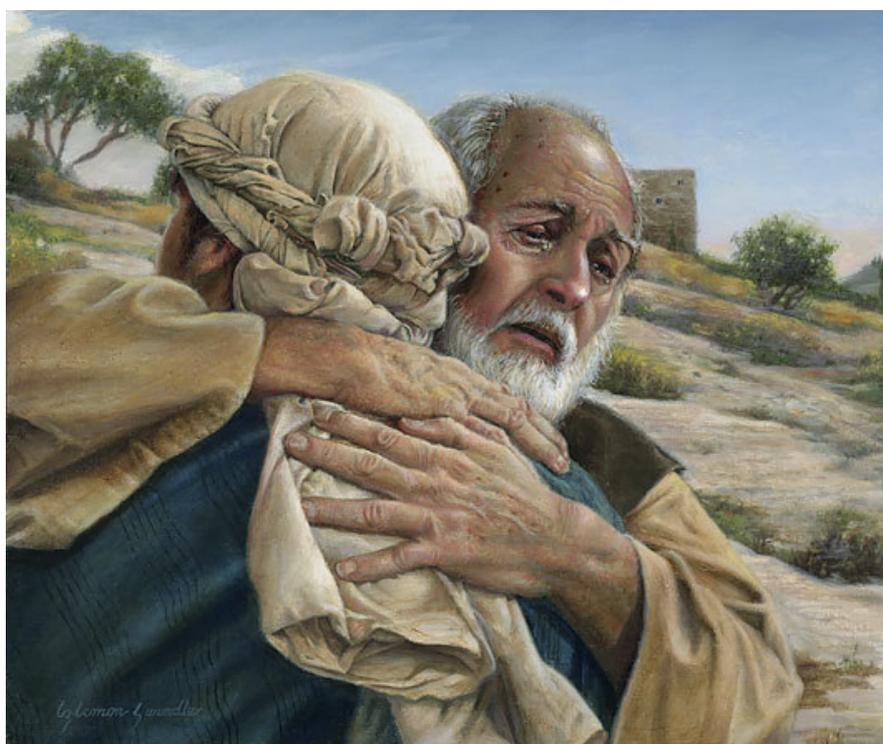
What do we need to pray for according to Ephesians 3:17-19?

How is Psalm 34:8 relevant to God's love in our lives?

In what way is faith in God's love a blessing for us according to Isaiah 40:31?

Learn:

- ◆ Jeremiah 31:3
- ◆ Romans 8:35-39



Chapter 13: Trusting the God of Mercy and Faithfulness

INTRODUCTION: In the course of life, circumstances crowd our minds and we have to re-adjust our thinking, to know God is merciful and faithful.

QUESTION 1:

- ◆ Read 2 Peter 1:2. What does Peter want multiplied to his readers?

Where do grace and peace come from according to that verse?

- ◆ Read verse 3. What has God's power given us?

By what means do these spiritual resources come to us?

- ◆ Read verse 4. What is the purpose of the 'exceeding great and precious promises'?

- ◆ Relationship is the key to the Christian life. What does John 8:36 have to say?

QUESTION 2: Read Ephesians 2:4-5. What was our past situation according to verse 5?

How is God's mercy described in verse 4?

What did it do for us according to verse 5?

Can you suggest a definition of mercy based on these two verses?

QUESTION 3: Read Ephesians 2:1-3. See if you can find 6 situations/problems that God's rich mercy has rescued us from.

Indeed what does Isaiah 55:7 promise the unsaved man?



Soaring

41



QUESTION 4: In what situations can we find God's mercy according to Hebrews 4:16?

God's mercy operates for 3 main needs we have:

- ◆ Exodus 15:13:
- ◆ Psalm 136:17, 21-24, especially verse 24:
- ◆ Nehemiah 9:27-28:

What might be a good prayer when we need mercy? See Psalm 25:6.

What can we affirm even in the greatest of tragedies? See Lamentations 3:22-23, 31-33

QUESTION 5: Read Psalm 103:1-5. What should our response be to God's mercy?

Read verses 8-11. How is God's mercy described? Do you expect to experience such mercy in your life? If not, what might influence your expectations?

What does the New Testament have to say? See 2 Corinthians 1:3

QUESTION 6: What do Malachi 3:6 and James 1:17 say about God?

How is this related to faithfulness?

What do the following verses say about God's faithfulness?

- ◆ Deuteronomy 7:8-9
 - ◆ Psalm 36:5
 - ◆ Psalm 119:89-90
 - ◆ Lamentations 3:23
-

QUESTION 7: The New Testament teaches God is faithful to:

- ◆ 1 Corinthians 1:9
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 10:13
- ◆ 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24
- ◆ 1 John 1:9

What does Hebrews 10:23 instruct us to do on the basis of God's faithfulness?

If you trust God to be merciful and faithful in your life what should you experience according to Isaiah 40:31?





Chapter 14: Trusting the God of Wisdom and Power

INTRODUCTION: Do we really expect God to perform according to profile and promises?

QUESTION 1: In 10 verses of Scripture God is said to be wise AND powerful. Read Job 9:4, Job 12:13, Psalm 147:5.. (Which are 3 of the 10 such references). What would it mean for us if God was not BOTH wise and powerful?

How will knowing that God is wise and powerful help us? See Isaiah 26:3.

QUESTION 2: Read Daniel 2:20-23.

- ◆ What is God's wisdom associated with in verses 20, 23?
- ◆ When Daniel says, "He changes the times and the seasons;" what is it that Daniel is saying God's wisdom determines?
- ◆ When Daniel says, "He removes kings and raises up kings;" what is it that Daniel is saying God's wisdom determines?
- ◆ Where does wisdom come from according to verses 21-22?
- ◆ Who has the greater wisdom according to verse 22?

QUESTION 3: What do the following verses say about God's wisdom?

- ◆ Romans 16:27/1 Timothy 1:17/Jude 25
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 1:25
- ◆ Romans 11:33-36

QUESTION 4: In what areas is God's wisdom evident?

- ◆ Psalm 104:24/Proverbs 3:19
- ◆ Ephesians 1:7-8
- ◆ Proverbs 8:22
- ◆ Isaiah 31:2



QUESTION 5: What does Psalm 139:1-5 teach about God?
How would this attribute of God effect His wisdom?

As David considers the reality of God's knowledge and wisdom what is His response according to verse 6?

What is the response of heaven to God's wisdom as He winds up this present evil age according to Revelation 15:3-4, 19:1-2?

What should our response be to the wisdom of God?

How does that response help us?

QUESTION 6: When things go badly wrong we tend to ask "Why me, why this, why now?" These questions show we don't really trust the wisdom of God. When we ask 'why' we may need to be reminded of God's wisdom. That is how God counselled Job when he asked 'why'. Put in your own words these questions that God asked of Job:

- ◆ 38:4
- ◆ 38:12
- ◆ 38:16
- ◆ 38:24
- ◆ 38:31
- ◆ 38:36
- ◆ 39:1
- ◆ 39:26-27

Did Job know the answers to these questions?

Do we know the answers to these questions?

When we don't understand God's wisdom do we have anything to say? See Jobs response in 40:4, 41:2, 41:6.

Are we right to question God? See 40:2, 8

What will you do the next time God does something you don't understand?

QUESTION 7: What does Colossians 2:3 say about Jesus Christ?

Can we trust Him to be wise ALWAYS?



Soaring

45



QUESTION 8: God is all powerful which means He is able to do that which we cannot. What is God able to do according to the following verses?

- ◆ Matthew 3:9
- ◆ James 4:12, Matthew 10:28
- ◆ 2 Timothy 1:12, Romans 16:25, John 10:29
- ◆ Philippians 3:21
- ◆ Hebrews 2:18, Jude 24
- ◆ 2 Corinthians 9:8
- ◆ Ephesians 3:20-21

QUESTION 9: Abraham was a man who trusted in God's power. What was Abraham's test according to Genesis 22:1-2?

How did he respond according to:

- ◆ Genesis 22:3
- ◆ Genesis 22:8
- ◆ Hebrews 11:17-19

What should we learn from this?

QUESTION 10: What happened when Joseph was obeying his father according to Genesis 37:27?

What happened to Joseph when he reacted with integrity to Potiphar's wife's aggressive advances according to Genesis 39:20?

What happened to Joseph when he showed kindness to a fellow prisoner according to Genesis 40:23?

Would you be thinking that God was demonstrating His power in these incidents?

Yet Joseph was confident of God's power to bring His purposes to pass. Comment on these verses:

- ◆ Genesis 45:5, 8
 - ◆ Genesis 50:20
-

	<h1>Soaring</h1>	46	
<h2>Chapter 15: Forgiveness</h2>			

INTRODUCTION: Whenever there is sin towards another, there is hurt; and wherever there is hurt there is a damaged/broken relationship; whenever there is a damaged/broken relationship it should be restored.

QUESTION 1: Read Matthew 18:15. When there is sin what is the ultimate aim in responding to that sin?

Luke 17:3-4 describes some detail not mentioned in Matthew 18. The two passages complement one another. If there is repentance on the part of the offender what is required on the part of the victim?

QUESTION 2: The need to forgive. Read Mark 11:25-26. Why is it necessary to forgive any and all offences?

- ◆ How are we to treat enemies as Christians (those who had deliberately and callously hurt us)? See Matthew 5:44. Does Jesus ask you to trust them?

- ◆ What does Ephesians 4:31-32 have to say about bitterness?

- ◆ What does Romans 12:18-21 have to say about revenge?

SUMMARY: So when we are hurt how are we to respond to that hurt, irrespective of the offender's attitude to us?

So what does it mean to forgive?

What is to be done, if hurt/bitterness arises in our hearts, later?

Forgiveness is a decision, but that decision may need to be repeated **many times**; so then, forgiveness can be considered to be a _____.



QUESTION 3: The need to confront. If we have been hurt what should our response be according to:

- ◆ Matthew 18:15

- ◆ Luke 17:3a

QUESTION 4: The need of repentance. Read Psalm 32:5, Acts 8:22, and 1 John 1:9.
What does God require before He forgives?
Would God ask us to forgive if He does not forgive?

In question 2 we saw that when we are hurt we are not to hold it against the offender.. But that does not mean the relationship has been restored or the offender can yet be trusted. Full forgiveness (which includes restoration of relationship and restored trust) depends on another step.

SUMMARY: Step #1. You let the offence go, in that you do not hold it against the offender.

Step #2. You confront the offender.

The ball now is in their court. What is required of the **offender** before there can be full forgiveness according to Luke 17:3?

Does that reflect what God requires from sinners before He restores relationship?

Is tears and sorrow enough to indicate repentance? (See 2 Corinthians 7:9-10 and compare with Matthew 27:3)

What further is required to demonstrate that repentance has taken place? (see Matthew 3:8)

How long would that take to see that in a person's life?

So if someone says "I repent", it will need _____ to pass before we can assess if they have really repented.

Could full forgiveness be given before repentance has truly occurred?

QUESTION 5: The need of consequences. Read 2 Samuel 12:1-13. Did David repent according to verse 13?

Did God forgive him?

Did God remove the consequences of sin? (verses 10-12)

Why is that so, do you think?

What if there were never any consequences to sin; what difference would that make?

QUESTION 5 (continued):

When God forgives He does not remove consequences. When we forgive would He expect us to remove consequences?

What implications does this have when a crime has been committed?

Would a renewed trust in the offender, mean that all consequences had to be removed?

Why might it be a loving thing to leave consequences in place?



▶ **He will meet my genuine need, ALWAYS**

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

(Philippians 4:19) "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

(Matthew 6:31-32) "'Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' {32} 'For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.'"

God is good, always



▶ **He will forgive my confessed sin, ALWAYS**

(1 John 1:9) "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

God is good, always



▶ **He has good plans for my life, ALWAYS,**

(Romans 8:28-29) "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. {29} For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

(Jeremiah 29:11) "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

God is good, always



▶ **He will love me, ALWAYS,**

(Jeremiah 31:3) "The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you."

(Romans 8:35-39) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?{38} For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, {39} 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."

God is good, always



▶ **He will give the grace I need, ALWAYS**

(2 Corinthians 9:8) "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work."

(2 Corinthians 12:9) "And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." ..."

God is good, always



▶ **He is in control of all things, ALWAYS**

(Psalms 103:19) "The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all."

(Isaiah 14:27) "For the LORD of hosts has purposed, And who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, And who will turn it back?"

God is great, always



▶ He is present with me, ALWAYS

(Isaiah 41:10) "Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

(Hebrews 13:5) "...For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you.""

God is great, always



▶ He is trustworthy, ALWAYS

(Numbers 23:19) ""God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

God is great, always



▶ He is wise in what He does, ALWAYS

(Colossians 2:3) "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

God is great, always

▶ God never changes, NEVER

(Malachi 3:6) ""For I am the LORD, I do not change; .."

God is great, always



Soaring



A Bible Study on
Letting Go the Weights
...so we can Fly

