

Christ-Life Seminar

***“Things I Don’t Like About The
Christian Life, BUT
What Are My Options?”***

Seminar Syllabus

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Seminar Summary

Part One
The Foundation

Part Two
The Problem

Part Three
What Are Our Options

Part Four
The Process

Part One

The Foundation

What (or Who) Is The Christian Life?

“...I am the way, the truth, and the life...” John 14:6

“I am the resurrection and the life.” John 11:25

When you read Jesus’s proclamations in these two verses that He is “the life,” what does that mean to you? For several years of my early Christian life I believed that it only meant that I have eternal life as a result of trusting Christ for salvation. Even though this is true, is it possible there is another meaning to Jesus’s words? Listen to Paul when he makes this truth more personal in Colossians 3:4:

“Christ who is OUR life.”

Christ is not only the life, but He is also your life. We see further what it means that Christ is your life in the following verses:

“In Him we live and move and have our being.” Acts 17:28

“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.....” Romans 11:36

What Does It Mean That Christ Is YOUR Life?

So what does it mean to you that Christ is YOUR life? When you look at the five verses above together, I believe that what it means that Christ is life is summed up in 1 Corinthians 1:30:

“He is the SOURCE of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.”

God gives us the answer to our original question in this verse. When He says that He is the life, it means that through His life He is the SOURCE for your life. We will explore more fully the meaning of God as our Source further into the study.

What Kind Of Life Does God Promise?

We know that by trusting Christ for salvation we have eternal life. However, God wants us as Christians to experience much more than salvation in our Christian life. He says in John 10:10 that the Christian life should be an abundant life.

“...I have come that they might have life and have it ABUNDANTLY.”

What kind of abundance do you think Jesus is referring to in John 10:10, an internal or an external abundance? _____

What Are Some Characteristics of An (Internal) Abundant Life?

- A **RENEWED LIFE** – renewing of your mind to believe God’s truth versus continuing to believe lies about yourself, God, and living life.

*“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet **inwardly we are being renewed day by day.**” 2 Corinthians 4:16*

- A **HEALED LIFE** – healing of your past and present woundedness.

*“He **heals** the brokenhearted and **binds** up their wounds.” Psalm 147:3*

- A **RESTORED LIFE** – restoring God as your Source for life by moving you from living independently of God to living dependent upon Him.

*“Jesus answered, “I am the **way** and the **truth** and the **life**....” John 14:6*

- A **VICTORIOUS LIFE** – experiencing victory over the power of sin, the flesh, the world, and the power of Satan.

*“but thanks be to God, Who gives us the **victory** through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57*

- A **FREE LIFE** – freedom from defeating sin patterns and self as the source for life.

*“So Christ has really set us **free**. Now make sure that you stay free, and don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law.” Galatians 5:1*

- A **SUPPLIED LIFE** – God as your Source to meet every need in your life.

*“My God shall **supply** all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:19*

- A **CHRIST-LIKE LIFE** – to live life consistently with a Christ-like attitude. (i.e. walking consistently in His peace, His joy, His love, His victory, His freedom, etc.)

*“Have this **attitude** in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus” Philippians 2:5*

- A **INTIMATE LIFE** - a personal, intimate relationship with God.

*“Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the **priceless gain of knowing Christ** Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may **have Christ**.” Philippians 3:8*

God As Your Source Concerning The Promises Of Abundant Living

The question we need to ask is: Who is going to initiate or produce the promises of abundant life? How does the word of God answer this question?

*“But by **His doing you are in Christ Jesus**, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.” 1 Corinthians 1:30*

*“For I am confident of this very thing, that **He who began** a good work in you **will** perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.” Philippians 1:6*

*“For **God is working in you**, **giving** you the desire to obey Him and the power to do what pleases Him.” Philippians 2:13*

*“Now unto **Him who is able** to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.” Ephesians 3:20*

The Answer:

GOD is the CAUSE and the EFFECT to produce change in your life!

God, As Your Source, Promises To:

- **RENEW** your mind to His truth. – Romans 12:2
- **HEAL** your woundedness. – Psalm 147:3
- **RESTORE** Himself as your source for life. – John 14:6
- Be your **VICTORY** over the flesh, power of sin, the world and Satan. – 1 Cor. 15:57
- **SUPPLY** or meet your physical, soulical, and spiritual needs. – Philippians 4:19
- **FREE** you from your defeating sin patterns and self as the source for life. – Gal. 5:1
- **PRODUCE** in you a Christ-like attitude. - Philippians 2:5
- **DRAW** you into intimate relationship with Himself. – Ephesians 1:5

The Christian Life Is A LifeLong Process of Transformation

*“do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed**...” Romans 12:2*

*“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, **are being transformed** into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”
2 Corinthians 3:18*

Wouldn’t it be great if God would accomplish these promises in our life over night? However, making these promises experientially real in our life is a lifelong process. The next question is: If God is the source to make these promises an experiential reality in my life, then **what is my part?**

Your Part In God's Process Of Transformation:

How Did Jesus Live On Earth In Relationship To His Father?

*“Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself**, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.’” John 5:19*

*“**I can do nothing on My own initiative**. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” John 5:30*

*“Jesus therefore said, ‘When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, **and I do nothing on My own initiative**, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.’” John 8:28*

***If Jesus as a man lived in total DEPENDENCE on the Father,
then how should you live?***

What Is DEPENDENCE?

Jesus's last three words on the cross were:

“IT IS FINISHED”
John 19:30

Since this is true, what can you add to Christ's finished work? _____.

If we can't add anything to Christ's finished work, then what is our part? We see the answer in Colossians 2:6:

*“As you therefore **have received** Christ Jesus the Lord, **so walk in Him**”*

The first part of Colossians 2:6 tells us that the process of “receiving” started at salvation when you received Jesus as your Savior. From that moment on, God's intention for you is to **continue receiving His truth, His renewal, His restoration, His transformation, and His life.**

***Since you can add NOTHING to Christ's finished work on the cross,
your part is simply to RECEIVE!***

How Do You Receive?

“For we live by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7

“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” Hebrews 11:6

The way you receive is by FAITH!

Based On What We Know Is True, How Do We Define Faith?

What We Know Is True:

- God is the INITIATOR – Philippians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 1:30
- Man is the RECEIVER – Colossians 2:6

***Since God is the initiator, and you are the receiver,
FAITH is your COOPERATION with
God’s initiation in your life.***

Part Two **The Problem**

Believing The Lie Versus The Truth

***You will not live beyond what you believe.
If what you believe is a lie, then that is how you will live.***

What Is A Lie?

For us to better understand how lies adversely affect our life, let's begin by defining a lie:

***A LIE:
Is any belief, understanding, or perception that you have
about yourself, God, or living the Christian life that
contradicts or does not line up with God's truth.***

What Are Some Of The Results Of Believing The Lie?

There are many effects in our Christian walk by believing the lie. Some of those effects are:

- 1. Continued bondage to sin.**
- 2. Continued defeat by the flesh, the power of sin, and Satan.**
- 3. No transformation to experience God's promises of abundant living.**
- 4. Trying in your own strength, without success, to resolve your impossible internal and external struggles.**
- 5. Never experiencing the promised victory and freedom.**
- 6. Never having a personal, intimate relationship with God.**

What Is The Truth?

The TRUTH:

The WORD OF GOD is truth.

“Your word is truth.” John 17:17

JESUS Himself is truth.

“I am the way, the TRUTH, and the life.” John 14:6

The Promise Concerning The Truth:

“You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.”

John 8:32

The Truth Will Set You Free FROM:

1. Your lying or false beliefs about yourself, God, living the Christian life, and the negative effects of those false beliefs.
2. Fleshly attitudes and sinful behaviors that create conflict or discord.
3. Selfishness and self-focus.
4. Unresolved conflicts caused by your false beliefs.
5. The negative effects of unmet needs and expectations.
6. Struggles that result from your finite ability to solve problems, to change yourself, or to change others.

The Lie Versus The Truth

Have you ever felt like David did in the following Psalms?

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent.” Psalm 22:1-2

“O Lord, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand? Turn and answer me, O Lord my God! Restore the light to my eyes, or I will die. Don’t let my enemies gloat, saying, ‘We have defeated him! Don’t let them rejoice at my downfall.’” Psalm 13:1-4

“Will no one listen to what I am saying?” Job 31:35

“I Didn’t Know That The Abundant Life Included Abundance of Sufferings.”

“For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance...” 2 Corinthians 1:5

God’s process of delivering us over to death will include pain and suffering. Death to self can come in other ways, but we see in 2 Corinthians 1:5 that there will be suffering.

What are some of the things that God uses to deliver us over to death to self?

1. Brokenness
2. Suffering
3. Pain
4. Conflict
5. Desertion
6. Dark nights of the soul
7. Struggle
8. Valleys of death
9. Uncertainty

Is this the part that you would rather play?

“I want to ask for a much smaller part in the play than Job had or possibly even a role in a more off-Broadway production that I could help direct. You know, a play titled “God Helps Brent Pursue Money, Wealth, and Fame While Living a Quiet Life.” Brent Curtis – “Sacred Romance”

What We Don’t Like About God’s Ways:

“always being delivered over to death...” 2 Corinthians 4:11

He allows pain and suffering. “I didn’t sign up for this!”

The uncertainty of God. “What is He going to do next?”

The lack of response from God. “God, are you there?”

His timing. “He is too slow.”

His methods. “This is not exactly what I had in mind.”

At times I feel that He withdraws. “Where are You?”

He doesn’t love me the way that I think He should. “I can’t feel His love.”

He is not measuring up to my expectations. “And, I have many expectations.”

Are there some things that you don’t like about God’s ways?

Expectations – Conclusions

“But the other men who had explored the land with him answered, ‘We can’t go up against them! They are stronger than we are!’”³² So they spread discouraging reports about the land among the Israelites: ‘The land we explored will swallow up any who go to live there. All the people we saw were huge.³³ We even saw giants!’” Numbers 13:31-33

What are some expectations that we might have of God and some of the conclusions that we might come to? I have listed some expectations below with possible conclusions. Think about the conclusions that you sometimes come to if any of these expectations apply to you.

1. I can’t figure it, or God, out. “I must connect the dots.”
2. I can’t reconcile pain and suffering and His love. “How could a loving God...?”
3. I don’t understand why this is or is not happening. “I need to know why.”
4. Why don’t I get answers to all my “WHY” questions? “I must know why.”
5. I don’t believe God’s truth. “Therefore, it must not be true.”
6. I don’t feel God that loves or cares for me. “My feelings must be true.”
7. I don’t understand God’s truth. “Why can’t He make it simple?”
8. I don’t understand God’s ways. “It isn’t the way I would do it.”
9. I don’t understand why He is not giving me answers. “I deserve answers.”
10. I don’t understand why transformation does not happen sooner. “How about now?”
11. When are things going to change? “I have been waiting a good 60 seconds!”
12. How much will things really change? “Will I really experience any difference?”
13. Will I ever experience total or even partial victory in this area of my life? “Probably not.”
14. Will this situation ever change? “It will go on forever.”
15. Does God really care? “It does not look like it in light of these circumstances.”
16. Why did You allow this to happen to me? “You can’t possibly care for me or love me.”
17. Why did You make me like this? “You really blew this one, God!”
18. What will You allow to happen to me next? “I can only imagine.”
19. I want to know where God is taking me. “It doesn’t look like we are moving.”

Do you have any expectations other than those listed above?

Expectations of Ourselves

In addition to the unrealistic expectations that we have of God, there are unrealistic expectations that we have of ourselves as we live out our Christian life. The following are some of those expectations:

1. I should be further along in this process.
2. I should be totally free from this stronghold.
3. What do I need to do to have total victory?
4. God is not pleased with me because I am not performing enough for Him, evangelizing, discipling and ministering more to others.
5. If I could just get over this next “bar,” I would arrive.
6. God is measuring my performance, so I better measure up.

Do you have any other unrealistic expectations about your personal Christian walk?

Expectations About How God and His Promises Will Function In Our Life

Another set of unrealistic expectations revolves around how we believe that God's promises of freedom, victory, healing, etc. will play out in our lives. Below are some examples of those unrealistic expectations:

I expect to experience:

- Total freedom from struggles such as anxiety, fear, insecurities, inferiority, inadequacy.
- Total victory over strongholds such as drugs, lust, critical attitude, judging others.
- Freedom over financial struggles.
- Total freedom from lying beliefs.
- Freedom from any more marital conflicts.
- Feelings of love and acceptance by God and others.
- Complete healing of past hurts or complete physical healing.

What are some of your expectations concerning God's promises?

Part Three

What Are Our Options?

As much as we struggle with God and His ways, what are our options in dealing with our unrealistic expectations, our feelings about what God is doing or not doing in our life, and what we want from God that He is not doing or giving? We only have two options when faced with these struggles.

Option #1 – Believe The Truth

In these next few verses, we see David's struggle with God. However, what conclusions does he come to? What (Who) does he turn to in spite of his struggle with God?

"BUT God"

"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent." Psalm 22:1-2

"BUT You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered them. They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed." Psalm 22:3-5

"O Lord, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand? Turn and answer me, O Lord my God! Restore the light to my eyes, or I will die. Don't let my enemies gloat, saying, 'We have defeated him! Don't let them rejoice at my downfall.'" Psalm 13:1-4

"BUT I trust in Your unfailing love. I will rejoice because You have rescued me. I will sing to the Lord because He has been so good to me." Psalm 13:5-6

"BUT" What Do We Know Is True?

The benchmark for the Christian life is always The Truth. So even though we have unrealistic expectations that may reinforce our lying beliefs about God or ourselves, what does God say is true of Himself and you?

Truth About God:

1. God loves you. - John 3:16
2. God is for you! - Romans 8:31
3. He wants you in intimate relationship with Himself. - Ephesians 1:5
4. He is relentlessly pursuing you for intimacy with Himself. - Psalm 23:3
5. He knows exactly what you need at the precise time in your life. - Philippians 4:19
6. He knows when you need to know and not know and why you need to know or not know. - Hebrews 11:6
7. He is in control.- Jeremiah 29:11; Job 42:2
8. He is trustworthy. - Psalm 22:5

9. He is not angry with me and judging me. - Romans 8:1
10. He is not measuring my progress nor expecting me to jump through any hoops. - Romans 6:14
11. You can rest knowing that you are in the hands of this God. - Matthew 11:28, 29

Truth About You:

1. You are in an inseparable union with God. - John 14:20; Ephesians 2:5
2. You have God's life in you to live from. - John 14:6; Galatians 2:20; Acts 17:28
3. You have God's power that will transform you. - Ephesians 3:20; Colossians 1:29
4. You have a new identity. - 2 Corinthians 5:17
5. You can participate in God's unconditional love. - John 17:26
6. You have His power over sin, the flesh, the world, and Satan. - Romans 6:11, 12; Galatians 5:24; John 16:33; James 4:7

There is Always A "Divine Good" Purpose That God Is About InThe Struggle That We Have With His Ways

God is using every circumstance and relationship to accomplish His "divine good" purposes in your life (Romans 8:28). Paul reveals God's purpose when he was sharing his struggles with the Corinthians. Is it possible that even though you may not see or believe God's good in your unrealistic expectations of God, it does not change the truth of Romans 8:28?

"Brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the trouble we suffered in Asia. We had great burdens there that were beyond our own strength. We even gave up hope of living. Truly, in our own hearts we believed we would die..." 2 Corinthians 1:8-9a

"...BUT this happened so we would not trust in ourselves but in God." 2 Corinthians 1:9b

REMEMBER:

***What you believe or how you feel about the truth does not change the fact that it is
TRUE!***

Option #2 - Continue To Believe and Live From The Lies

Continuing To Believe The Lies Results In Misery Of The Soul

*“Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this **death?**” Romans 7:24*

If you choose to continue to believe the lies, there will be “death” that Paul refers to in Romans 7:24. Death is defined in Vine’s New Testament dictionary as “misery of the soul as a result of sin.”

What are some examples of “misery” of the soul?

Condemnation	Distrust	Anxiety	Shame	Unforgiveness
Critical spirit	Anger	Guilt	Pride	Bitterness
Self-pity	Inadequacy	Fear	Worry	Frustration
Unworthiness	Blame	Rejection	Insecurity	Resentment

What do you think the misery of your soul will look like as a result of believing the lies?

Part Four
The Process
(God's Process Of Setting You Free From The Lies)

What Faith Looks Like In The Process of Being Set Free

Since God is the only one who can move us from unbelief to belief and our part is faith, what are some examples of what that looks like in our life?

“Lord, I am believing the lie that I am _____. I am **entrusting** my lie to You and **asking** You to replace this lie with the truth that in You I am _____.”

“I am believing the lie that You are (or are not)_____. I am **entrusting** my lie to You and **asking** You to renew my mind to the truth that You are _____.”

“I am **presenting** my lying belief(s) of _____ to You for You to renew my mind to the truth and to set me free.”

“I am **asking** you by faith to set me free from the effects of my lying beliefs.”

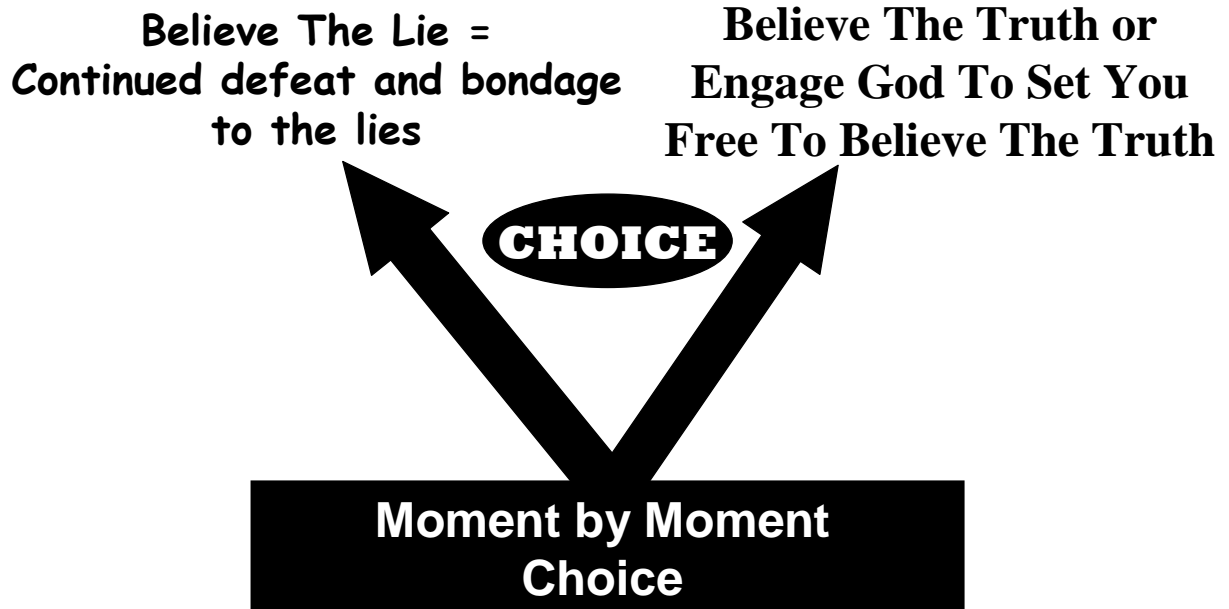
“Because of my lying beliefs, I feel that you are (angry, condemning, unhappy, indifferent, cold, etc.)_____ towards me. I am coming to You and **asking** You to replace these lying beliefs with the truth and to set me free from the feelings tied to those lying beliefs.”

“My lying beliefs are adversely affecting my walk with You. Set me free from those lying beliefs so that I can experience the fullness and abundance that is mine in You.”

In The End You Have A Choice To Make

You Can Either Choose To Believe The Lie Or To Believe God's Truth

By this point in the study, you have an idea of the effects that your lying beliefs have on your life. Therefore, God's desire is that you believe the truth and be set free from the effects of those lying beliefs. However, for many of those lying beliefs we are going to have to engage God by faith in order for Him to set us free from them. Ultimately, however, you have a choice to make:



What Choice Will You Make?

***“I do not write to you because you do not know the truth
but because you do know the truth.
And you know that no lie comes from the truth.”
1 John 2:21***