

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Existential Therapy and Changes in Purpose in Life  
in Christian Subjects

Abstract approved:

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between two groups of Christians, two existential therapies, and the Purpose In Life (PIL) test. The Exit Questionnaire provided additional descriptive data. Forty subjects participated in the study. The subjects fit into two length of Christian commitment groups. Half of the subjects had been born again Christians for more than 3 years; half of the subjects had been born again Christians for less than 3 years. All subjects were administered a PIL pre-test. Each commitment group was divided into two therapy groups. Half of the subjects received Solomon's spirituotherapy; half of the subjects received Robertson's laws of the kingdom of

God. One month later all subjects were administered a PIL post-test, and an Exit Questionnaire.

A 2 x 2 x 2 analysis of variance of the PIL scores revealed no main effects or interaction effects for either length of Christian commitment or type of Christian therapy. Pre-test and post-test scores did differ significantly but the changes could not be attributed to length of Christ commitment or therapy.

The Exit Questionnaire revealed that 50% of the subjects exposed to spirituotherapy, and 30% of the subjects exposed to laws of the kingdom of God (regardless of length of Christian commitment) reported the therapies to be life changing. All subjects considered the therapies a positive experience (M = 8.5 on a 10 point scale); 62% of the subjects agreed with everything taught, and 82% of the subjects desired further instruction on their topic. Of the 16 subjects who reported the therapies to be positive and life changing, 10 had PIL scores which decreased from pre-test to post-test. These results led to the conclusion that the therapies may have been effective but not as regards life meaning as measured by the PIL test.

EXISTENTIAL THERAPY AND CHANGES IN PURPOSE  
IN LIFE IN CHRISTIAN SUBJECTS

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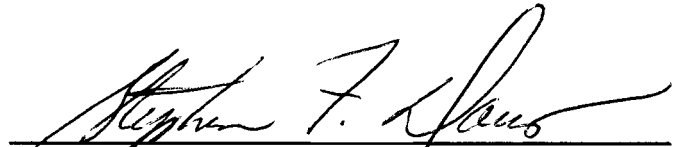
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Presented to  
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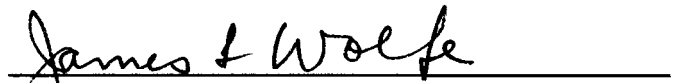
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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science

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by  
Dicki B. Kirby  
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Approved for the Major Division

  
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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

What is the meaning of life? What is the meaning of my life? Why do we live? Why were we put here? What do we live for? What shall we live by? If nothing endures, what sense does anything make? Perhaps all men throughout the history of the world have asked these same questions. Such questions seem to demand an answer. For surely there is no reason for living if life is meaningless. Indeed, Albert Camus (Jaffe, 1970) held that the only serious philosophical question is whether to go on living once the meaninglessness of human life is fully grasped. He stated, "I have seen many people die because life for them was not worth living. From this I conclude that the question of life's meaning is the most urgent of all" (p. 3).

May (1960) said that "everyone knows the despair of the feeling of meaninglessness for there is no human being who has not experienced it to some extent upon his own pulse" (p. 16). May stated that the reason people suffer personality breakdowns is because they do not have meaning in their lives. "The struggle is not worth the candle they say, so why shouldn't one give up" (p. 16).

Many experienced and well-known clinicians have found that meaninglessness is often expressed as a clinical syndrome. Jung (1966) wrote:



Absence of meaning in life plays a crucial role in the etiology of neurosis. A neurosis must be understood, ultimately, as a suffering of a soul which has not discovered its meaning. . . . About a third of my cases are not suffering from any clinically definable neurosis but from the senselessness and aimlessness of their lives. (p. 83)

Wolman (1975), defined existential neurosis as failure to find meaning in life, the feeling that one has nothing to live for, nothing to struggle for, nothing to hope for . . . unable to find any goal or direction in life, the feeling that though individuals perspire in their work, they have nothing to aspire to. (p. 156)

Hobbs (1962) stated:

Contemporary culture often produces a kind of neuroses different from that described by Freud. Contemporary neuroses are characterized not so much by repression and conversion . . . not by lack of insight but lack of a sense of purpose, of meaning in life. (p. 742)

#### Review of Existential Therapy

Frankl (1969), who has devoted his career to an existential approach to psychopathology and psychotherapy, concluded that lack of meaning is the paramount existential stress. He coined the term logotherapy to describe his theoretical and therapeutic concepts. One of the basic

assumptions of logotherapy was that man is motivated by a will to meaning.

Through his experiences as a prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp, Frankl realized that life without meaning, goals, values, or ideals produced considerable distress and in severe forms even led to suicide. He noted that in the concentration camp the individual with no sense of meaning was unlikely to survive. Frankl stated that we need absolutes--"firm ideals to which we can aspire and guidelines to steer our lives in order to live happily and healthily" (p. 42).

#### Review of Existential Therapies Based on Religion

Many well-known psychologists who identify with Frankl are quite outspoken in their belief that a religious tradition which offers a comprehensive meaning to life--as being divinely ordained--is vital to mental well being.

May (1960) stated,

A most important change has occurred in the past twenty years. It was discovered that most psychological problems are intertwined with religions, and that religious problems have in most cases, a very clear psychological aspect. Psychotherapists began to realize that they had to deal in the field of religion whether they liked it or not, simply because the human soul--or personality, or whatever one may call that center of the individual--had to have a sound religion before it could move ahead healthily. (p. 23)

Jung (1933) expressed:

Among all my patients in the second half of life--that is to say over thirty-five--there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook in life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook. (p. 264)

Solomon (1971), is an existential clinician with a definite religious approach. He was distressed when he was able to help some clients and ran into dead ends with others as "insight" provided understanding but still left them powerless to change their lives. Solomon developed an existential therapy based on the truth of the Christian cross. He stated a spiritual transformation was the only solution to mental and emotional problems developing due to lack of meaning, purpose or identity in one's life. To avoid confusion of his therapy methods with those of Frankl or others, Solomon called his therapy spirituotherapy. It was based on the belief that the person must be changed and his behavior will follow, hence its focus was not on understanding psychodynamics. Solomon accomplished this change by teaching identification with Christ in His crucifixion and resurrection.

The goal of the therapy was to equip Christians to live the abundant or victorious Christian life. The "change" in

subjects was much like the change experienced by many at conversion and Solomon declared it was the work of the Holy Spirit. Solomon stated that spirituotherapy was "life changing" to the Christians with whom he worked, and cured many who were psychologically dysfunctional.

Robertson (1982) taught a similar type of information in his book Secret Kingdom, equipping Christians to live life victoriously. Robertson pointed out that Jesus often said, "If you do this, then this will happen." In so doing, Jesus laid down specific principles which can be considered laws of God, and just like the laws of motion and gravity, they work. Robertson said if we discovered and followed the laws of the kingdom of God, then we would succeed in the world and be considered wise by those with whom we deal. He called some of these spiritual laws reciprocity, use, perseverance, miracles, and dominion (see Appendix E).

#### Review of Purpose In Life Testing with Christians

Of principle interest to this study was the relationship between Purpose In Life (PIL) test scores and Christianity. Crumbaugh's (1968) article is a classic study establishing some "normal" scores for many categories of subjects, among them a group of active and leading Protestant parishioners. There were 1,151 subjects, comprising four normal groups and six psychiatric groups participating in the study. The individual groups and their means are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Results of Purpose in Life Test by Diagnostic Groups

| Subjects                                       | Means |
|--|-------|
| Successful business and professional personnel | 119   |
| Active and leading Protestant parishioners     | 114   |
| College undergraduates                         | 108   |
| Indigent hospital patients (non psychiatric)   | 106   |
| Neurotic outpatients                           | 108   |
| Neurotics, hospitalized                        | 97    |
| Alcoholics, hospitalized                       | 95    |
| Schizophrenics, hospitalized, Black            | 93    |
| Schizophrenics, hospitalized                   | 85    |
| Psychotics                                     | 81    |

Note: From "Cross-validation of Purpose in Life Test Based on Frankl's Concepts" by J. C. Crombaugh, 1968, Journal of Individual Psychology, 24.

This was an early study employing and testing the efficiency of the PIL test. The PIL was found to discriminate between four normal groups, ranging from highly successful to indigent persons and six psychiatric groups, ranging from neurotic outpatients to psychotics with the scores approximating the predicted descending order. Of importance to this present study is the high PIL scores (M = 114) of those parishioners who were selected for the study by their pastors as "showing evidence of possessing a clear set of life goals."

Numerous theorists have argued that the anomie (feeling of isolation and alienation) characteristic of contemporary society results in a lack of meaning and personal identity and that membership in some sort of religious community serves to relieve, if not eliminate this existential vacuum. Crumbaugh, Raphael, and Shrader's (1970) study is a research landmark in this field of Christianity and PIL relationship. Subjects were 56 Dominican sisters who were at various levels of training (ranging from 1 to 7 years). The trainee Sisters' mean PIL was 119 which is an extremely high mean score. At the end of 1 1/2 years 19 of the original 56 had dropped out; 37 remained. The PIL correlated substantially with ratings of success in training. Since many factors (such as family financial problems) other than success in training influenced dropout decisions, the PIL did not significantly distinguish drop-outs from sisters who continued their training. However, the mean score was higher for those who continued. Results suggested that a high degree of purpose and meaning in life was possessed and also needed for success in the order.

Crandall and Rasmussen (1975) investigated the relationships between purpose in life and specific values. To measure the relationships they employed the PIL and Rokeach's Value Survey. They discovered that the values of pleasure, excitement, and comfort were associated with low PIL scores. The value of salvation was associated with relatively high PIL scores. This information was consistent

with the other research that suggested that religious orientation may help foster greater perceived meaning and purpose in life.

Soderstrom and Wright (1977) correlated religious commitment with PIL scores. They classified their subjects (427 college freshmen and sophomores) along three dimensions: (1) intrinsic/extrinsic religious motivation, (2) committed/noncommitted religious belief system, and (3) true believers/nonbelievers. The researchers used Allport's (1959) definition of intrinsic and extrinsic religious motivation. By this definition one who is intrinsically motivated finds his most central and ultimate motive in life in his religious faith. All other motivations are secondary and subservient to this master motive. The religion of the extrinsically motivated individual is subservient to other aspects of life, i.e., religion is instrumental in that it serves other concerns in life such as security, social status and power. The intrinsic subjects had a mean PIL score of 115 whereas the extrinsic subjects had a mean PIL of 99.

The committed/noncommitted religious belief system dimension, developed by Allen and Spilka (1967) was differentiated by the fact that the committed orientation is relevant to one's life--abstract, discerning, flexible and open, while the noncommitted orientation is detached from life--concrete, vague, simplistic, and inflexible. The

committed subjects had a mean PIL of 116, whereas the noncommitted subjects had a mean PIL of 101.

The dimension of true believers/nonbelievers was based on a model of religious orientation developed by Davidson (1972). A vertical dimension referring to one's commitment to God, and a horizontal dimension referring to one's moral commitment to his fellow man were conceptualized. Differential responding to these two dimensions resulted in one being classified into one of the five groups seen in Table 2. PIL test scores are listed for each group.

Soderstrom and Wright felt that the low PIL scores of the fundamentalists and the humanists indicated that lack of religious integration (a mature religious commitment, characterized by a strong spiritual commitment to God, paired with a strong moral commitment to one's fellow man) correlated with a lack of meaning in life.

In review of their findings, Soderstrom and Wright concluded the following:

1. Intrinsic religious motivation indicates greater meaning in life than extrinsic religious motivation.
2. Religious commitment is indicative of greater meaning in life than religious noncommitment.
3. Religious integration is indicative of greater meaning in life than a lack of religious integration.

(p. 67)



Table 2

Results of Purpose in Life Test by Religious Orientation


---

|                                       |         |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| True Believer                         |         |
| (high moral/spiritual commitment)     | M = 112 |
| Mainliner                             |         |
| (moderate moral/spiritual commitment) | M = 106 |
| Unbeliever                            |         |
| (low moral/spiritual commitment)      | M = 102 |
| Humanist                              |         |
| (high moral/low spiritual commitment) | M = 101 |
| Fundamentalist                        |         |
| (high spiritual/low moral commitment) | M = 98  |

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Note: Soderstrom, D., & Wright, E. W. (1977). Religious orientation and meaning in life. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 33, 67.

Paloutzian, Jackson, and Crandall (1978) investigated the differences in Christian conversion experiences. Some individuals view themselves as Christians because they follow the Christian moral code while others claim to be Christians basically because they have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal savior. Paloutzian et al. labeled the former "ethical" Christianity and the latter "born again" Christianity. Paloutzian et al. examined the PIL scores of several groups of students and adults, among them ethical and born again Christians. See Table 3 for results.

Table 3

Results of Purpose In Life Test by Christian Students  
and Adults

|          | Christian            | Non-Christian     |
|----------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Students | M = 112              | M = 105           |
| Adults   | M = 115              | M = 93            |
|          | Born Again Christian | Ethical Christian |
| Students | M = 114              | M = 109           |
| Adults   | M = 116              | M = 113           |

Note: Paloutzian, R. F., Jackson, S. L., & Crandall, J. E. (1978). Conversion experience, belief system, and personal and ethical attitudes. Journal of Psychology and Theology, 6, 274.

Paloutzian conducted another interesting study in 1981. This research was concerned with the complete personal changes that often occur in religious conversions. Paloutzian wondered how these happen and what personal, social, or cognitive needs were met in conversion. He asserted that one possible answer was that religious conversion satisfied a motive for meaning in life. He proposed a model which fused Frankl's (1975) view that a mature religious commitment helped satisfy the will to meaning with a cognitive need theory. Paloutzian's theory expanded upon the individual's need to perceive wholeness, pattern and meaning in the stimuli that confronted him--much like the Gestalt principle of closure. Inherent to this

model was the understanding that when one was confronted with a strange, unusual or senseless incident--one made "sense" of it by fitting it into a familiar explanatory framework. When situations did not lend themselves to patterning one felt dysphoric until a more complete understanding permitted one to fit the situation into a larger, recognizable pattern. When people were confronted with perceiving themselves in relation to the whole of life, or the cosmos, they needed to complete the picture in order to perceive meaning or purpose in life. Since it was understood in all religions that God has ordained an individual pattern and meaning for each life, adopting an encompassing religious world-view was one way of meeting this need.

A large evangelistic meeting where many students signed cards of commitment provided Paloutzian with the opportunity to research his questions about Christian conversion. Five days after the meeting Paloutzian gave his university class of 400 students the PIL. He then gave them a questionnaire which enabled their classification as either Christian converts or nonconverts. Ninety-one were converts. They were asked to indicate how much time had passed since they made their initial commitment. They could indicate less than one week, less than one month, less than six months, or more than six months. There were significant differences among the scores of the converts.

PIL scores for converts of less than one week peaked at  $M = 119$ , the same score as trainee Dominican Sisters (Crumbaugh et al., 1970). This peak effect may have reflected a psychological state of high emotion. Scores for converts of less than one month dropped to a level comparable to that of nonconverts,  $M = 109$ . This decrease was significant at the .05 level. Paloutzian postulated that this dip indicated an unstable period shortly following conversion when the individual may be re-assessing his decision to adopt Christianity. Scores stabilized at  $M = 115$  in the less than 6 months group and remained the same ( $M = 115$ ) for the more than 6 months group. This score was nearly the same as Crumbaugh's leading Protestant parishioners ( $M = 114$ ).

Paloutzian submitted the items of the PIL test to an item analysis to determine if any subset of questions was primarily responsible for the higher scores of converts. However, no specific items reached levels of statistical significance.

#### Purpose of the Study

Many psychologists agree that religion has a place in the psychology of man, and that without a sound religious outlook complete mental health is not possible. Many Christians agree too that principles of psychology have a place in their mental health. Yet, often these same Christians will not receive psychological principles unless

those principles are demonstrated in the Bible to be God's way and God's wisdom.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of 2 Christian based, existential therapies, with two distinct groups of Christians. The existential therapies were spirituotherapy and laws of the Kingdom of God. The two distinct groups of Christians were those who had been born again for more than 3 years and those who had been born again for less than 3 years. The PIL was used to quantitatively assess the effectiveness of the therapies. A questionnaire developed by the researcher was used to descriptively assess the effectiveness of the therapies. Results of the study are limited to the populations studied and the therapies employed.

If there are significant differences in PIL test scores when existential Christian concepts dealing with "abundant life" are introduced, then those concepts are of further interest to Christian counselors and psychologists. If there are significant differences in PIL test scores of born again Christians with more than a 3 year commitment to Jesus Christ, and born again Christians with less than a 3 year commitment to Jesus Christ, then study will be required to determine those elements contributing to the difference.

## Chapter 2

### METHOD

#### Subjects

Forty adults attending a non-denominational (not belonging to a denomination) church in Emporia, Kansas participated in the study. The subjects were between the ages of 20 and 56. Subjects responded to a questionnaire and checked the age group 26-35 most often. There were 16 men and 24 women. Twenty subjects had been born again Christians for 4 years to 42 years, while twenty subjects had been born again Christians for 4 months to 3 years. Subjects for each of the 2 groups were randomly selected from a population of 23 individuals meeting the requirements of length of Christian commitment for that group.

#### Instruments

Three measurement instruments were used for collection of data. A Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix A), developed by the researcher, was used to determine if the subject was a born again Christian, and for what length of time the subject had been a born again Christian, i.e., more than 3 years or less than 3 years.

The PIL test (Appendix B) determined the level of purpose in life and generated a score to be used in the statistical analysis of data, where analysis of variance was performed. The PIL test consists of 20 items to be rated on

a 7-point scale with position 4 designated as "neutral." (PIL raw scores 92-112 are in the indecisive range; scores above 112 indicate the presence of definite purpose and meaning in life; scores below 92 indicate lack of clear meaning and purpose).

Chamberlain and Zilka (1988) compared the PIL to the Seeking of Noetic Goals (SONG), the Life Regard Index (LRI) and the Sense of Coherence (SOC) scale. Their data suggested that although meaning in life may be measured in several different ways, the PIL may be the best general measure of the purpose in life construct.

Yalom (1980) summarized the findings of empirical research dealing with meaning in life, as defined by PIL scores in the following manner:

1. A lack of sense of meaning in life is associated with psychopathology in a roughly linear sense. That is, the less the sense of meaning, the greater the severity of psychopathology.
2. A positive sense of meaning in life is associated with deeply held religious beliefs.
3. A positive sense of life meaning is associated with self-transcendent values.
4. A positive sense of meaning in life is associated with membership in groups, dedication to some course, and adoption of clear life goals.
5. Life meaning must be viewed in a developmental perspective: the types of life meaning change over

an individual's life; other developmental tasks must precede development of meaning. (p. 460)

The third data collection instrument was the Exit Questionnaire (Appendix F). This instrument was employed to investigate, in a self report manner, the impact of spirituotherapy and the laws of the kingdom of God on the lives of the subjects.

### Procedure

Prior to testing, consent forms were given to each subject explaining the testing procedures, confidentiality, and the subject's right to withdraw from the study (see Appendix A). The subjects then responded to the Demographic Questionnaire (see Appendix B) which facilitated assignment of subjects into one of the four conditions of the research design.

In the first condition the PIL test (see Appendix C) was administered to Christians who had been born again for more than 3 years. Next Solomon's spirituotherapy (see Appendix D) was taught for 60 minutes by the researcher. In the second condition the PIL test was administered to Christians who had been born again for less than 3 years. Solomon's spirituotherapy was taught for 60 minutes by the researcher. In the third condition the PIL test was administered to Christians who had been born again for more than 3 years. Robertson's laws of the kingdom of God (see Appendix E) was taught for 60 minutes by the researcher. In the fourth condition the PIL test was administered to



Christians who had been born again for less than 3 years. Robertson's laws of the kingdom of God was taught for 60 minutes by the researcher.

One month after the collection of this data, the 40 subjects met to take a PIL post-test and respond to an Exit Questionnaire (see Appendix F). One week after the post-test and Exit Questionnaire, subjects met to respond to the Survey Questionnaire (see Appendix G).

## Chapter 3

### RESULTS

The independent variables in the present study were therapy and length of time of Christian commitment. Each independent variable had 2 levels. The therapy levels were spirituotherapy, and laws of the kingdom of God. The length of time of Christian commitment levels were less than 3 years, and more than 3 years. The dependent measures were the PIL test scores. There were two levels of the dependent variable, pre-test and post-test scores. The design was a 2 x 2 x 2 Between-Between-Within. The means and standard deviations for each group are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Groups by Therapy/ Length of Christian Commitment/PIL Test

| Therapy/Length of Commitment/PIL Test   | Mean   | Standard Deviation |
|---|--------|--------------------|
| Spirituotherapy/> 3 years/Pre-Test      | 110.70 | 16.60              |
| Spirituotherapy/> 3 years/Post-Test     | 115.20 | 10.54              |
| Spirituotherapy/< 3 years/Pre-Test      | 115.30 | 9.56               |
| Spirituotherapy < 3 years/Post-Test     | 117.30 | 8.98               |
| Laws of the kingdom/> 3 years/Pre-Test  | 115.80 | 12.10              |
| Laws of the kingdom/> 3 years/Post-Test | 110.70 | 14.22              |
| Laws of the kingdom/< 3 years/Pre-Test  | 107.60 | 3.95               |
| Laws of the kingdom/< 3 years/Post-Test | 110.40 | 9.61               |

A 2 x 2 x 2 analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data (see Table 5). Results indicated no significant differences in PIL test scores of subjects exposed to spirituotherapy or laws of the kingdom of God, ( $p > .05$ ) or between subjects with more than a 3 year Christian commitment and subjects with less than a 3 year Christian commitment ( $p > .05$ ). There were no significant interaction effects between the independent variables of therapy/length of Christian commitment. There were

Table 5

2 X 2 X 2 ANOVA Summary Table of PIL Pre- and Post-Therapy Scores by Therapy/Length of Commitment

| Source                              | SS        | DF | MS        | F       | P     |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|----|-----------|---------|-------|
| BETWEEN BLOCKS/SUBJECTS             |           |    |           |         |       |
| Therapy                             | 244.999   | 1  | 244.999   | 1.286   | .263  |
| Length of<br>Commitment             | 288.799   | 1  | 288.799   | 1.515   | .224  |
| Therapy/Length<br>of Commitment     | 4.049     | 1  | 4.049     | .021    |       |
| Error                               | 6860.899  | 36 | 190.581   |         |       |
| WITHIN BLOCKS/SUBJECTS              |           |    |           |         |       |
| PIL                                 | 11568.049 | 1  | 11568.049 | 183.916 | <.001 |
| Therapy/Length of<br>Commitment/PIL | 36.451    | 1  | 36.451    | .577    |       |
| Error                               | 2275.500  | 36 | 63.208    |         |       |
| TOTAL                               | 21510.747 | 79 |           |         |       |

significant differences in the PIL pre-test and the post-test scores within subjects ( $p < .01$ ) but there were no significant interactions with therapy or length of Christian commitment.

A 2 x 2 Between-Between subjects ANOVA was used to analyze the pre-test/post-test change in PIL scores (see Table 6). There were no significant score changes of subjects exposed to spirituotherapy or laws of the kingdom of God, ( $p > .05$ ) or between subjects with more than a 3 year Christian commitment and subjects with less than a 3 year Christian commitment ( $p > .05$ ).

Table 6

2 X 2 ANOVA Summary Table of Score changes by Therapy and Length of Christian Commitment

| Source                          | SS       | DF | MS      | F     | P    |
|---------------------------------|----------|----|---------|-------|------|
| Therapy                         | 211.600  | 1  | 211.600 | 1.657 | .203 |
| Length of<br>Commitment         | 360.000  | 1  | 360.000 | 2.819 | .098 |
| Therapy/Length of<br>Commitment | 40.000   | 1  | 40.000  | .313  |      |
| Error                           | 4596.800 | 36 | 127.689 |       |      |
| TOTAL                           | 5208.400 | 39 |         |       |      |

The Demographic Questionnaire was used to determine subjects' sex, age, and length of Christian commitment. Results of this instrument are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Summary of Demographic Questionnaire


---

|    |   |       |     |         |             |      |
|----|---|-------|-----|---------|-------------|------|
| 1. | Sex:  | Males | 16, | Females | 24          |      |
| 2. | Age:  | 18-25 | -   | 8       |             |      |
|    |   | 26-35 | -   | 18      |             |      |
|    |   | 36-45 | -   | 10      |             |      |
|    |   | 46+   | -   | 4       |             |      |
| 3. | All considered themselves born again Christians.              |       |     |         |             |      |
| 4. | Received Christ within the last month                         |       |     |         |             | - 1  |
|    | "   | "     | "   | "       | " 6 months  | - 3  |
|    | "   | "     | "   | "       | " 12 months | - 1  |
|    | "   | "     | "   | "       | " 24 months | - 11 |
|    | "   | "     | "   | "       | " 36 months | - 4  |
|    | Received Christ within the last 5 years                       |       |     |         |             | - 2  |
|    | "   | "     | "   | "       | " 10 years  | - 7  |
|    | "   | "     | "   | "       | " 20 years  | - 6  |
|    | "   | "     | "   | "       | " 25 years  | - 5  |
| 5. | None familiar with Charles Solomon's Spirituotherapy.         |       |     |         |             |      |
|    | One familiar with Pat Robertson's Laws of the kingdom of God. |       |     |         |             |      |

---

The Exit Questionnaire investigated subjects' familiarity with and reactions to spirituotherapy and laws of the kingdom of God. Summaries of this instrument are shown by group in Tables 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Table 8

Summary of Exit Questionnaire by Therapy/Length of  
Commitment (Spiritualtherapy/> 3 Years of Christian  
Commitment)

---

|    |   |     |         |
|----|---|-----|---------|
| 1. | I was taught concepts of  |     |         |
|    | a. Spiritualtherapy.  |     | 9       |
|    | b. Secret Kingdom.  |     | 0       |
|    | c. I don't remember.  |     | 1       |
| 2. | I   |     |         |
|    | a. was familiar with this information.  |     | 4       |
|    | b. knew this information but had never heard it presented in quite this way.  |     | 2       |
|    | c. had heard some of this information before but some of it was new to me.    |     | 3       |
|    | d. had never heard this information before.                                   |     | 1       |
| 3. | I   |     |         |
|    | a. agreed with everything taught.   |     | 4       |
|    | b. agreed with most but not everything that was taught.                       |     | 6       |
|    | c. disagreed with much of what was said.                                      |     | 0       |
|    | d. never thought much about what was said.                                    |     | 0       |
| 4. | I found this information to be  |     |         |
|    | a. life changing.   |     | 5       |
|    | b. interesting.   |     | 5       |
|    | c. less than interesting.   |     | 0       |
| 5. | I would like to read a book or receive further instruction about the concept. | Yes | 5, No 5 |

Table 9

Summary of Exit Questionnaire by Therapy/Length of  
Commitment (Spiritotherapy/< 3 Years of Christian  
Commitment)

---

|    |  |    |
|----|--|----|
| 1. | I was taught concepts of   |    |
|    | a. Spiritotherapy.   | 9  |
|    | b. Secret Kingdom.   | 0  |
|    | c. I don't remember.   | 1  |
| 2. | I  |    |
|    | a. was familiar with this information.   | 1  |
|    | b. knew this information but had never heard it presented in quite this way.               | 2  |
|    | c. had heard some of this information before but some of it was new to me.                 | 6  |
|    | d. had never heard this information before.  | 1  |
| 3. | I  |    |
|    | a. agreed with everything taught.  | 10 |
|    | b. agreed with most but not everything that was taught.                                    | 0  |
|    | c. disagreed with much of what was said.   | 0  |
|    | d. never thought much about what was said.   | 0  |
| 4. | I found this information to be   |    |
|    | a. life changing.  | 5  |
|    | b. interesting.  | 5  |
|    | c. less than interesting.  | 0  |
| 5. | I would like to read a book or receive further instruction about the concept. Yes 10, No 0 |    |

Table 10

Summary of Exit Questionnaire by Therapy/Length of  
Commitment (Laws of the Kingdom of God/> 3 Years of  
Christian Commitment)

---

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | I was taught concepts of  |   |
|    | a. Spirituotherapy.   | 0 |
|    | b. Secret Kingdom.  | 9 |
|    | c. I don't remember.  | 1 |
| 2. | I   |   |
|    | a. was familiar with this information.  | 0 |
|    | b. knew this information but had never heard it presented in quite this way.              | 1 |
|    | c. had heard some of this information before but some of it was new to me.                | 9 |
|    | d. had never heard this information before.   | 0 |
| 3. | I   |   |
|    | a. agreed with everything taught.   | 7 |
|    | b. agreed with most but not everything that was taught.                                   | 3 |
|    | c. disagreed with much of what was said.  | 0 |
|    | d. never thought much about what was said.  | 0 |
| 4. | I found this information to be  |   |
|    | a. life changing.   | 3 |
|    | b. interesting.   | 7 |
|    | c. less than interesting.   | 0 |
| 5. | I would like to read a book or receive further instruction about the concept. Yes 9, No 1 |   |



Table 11

Summary of Exit Questionnaire by Therapy/Length of  
Commitment (Laws of the Kingdom of God/< 3 Years of  
Christian Commitment)

---

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | I was taught concepts of  |   |
|    | a. Spirituotherapy.   | 1 |
|    | b. Secret Kingdom.  | 8 |
|    | c. I don't remember.  | 1 |
| 2. | I   |   |
|    | a. was familiar with this information.  | 1 |
|    | b. knew this information but had never heard it presented in quite this way.                      | 3 |
|    | c. had heard some of this information before but some of it was new to me.                        | 5 |
|    | d. had never heard this information before.   | 1 |
| 3. | I   |   |
|    | a. agreed with everything taught.   | 8 |
|    | b. agreed with most but not everything that was taught.   | 2 |
|    | c. disagreed with much of what was said.  | 0 |
|    | d. never thought much about what was said.  | 0 |
| 4. | I found this information to be  |   |
|    | a. life changing.   | 3 |
|    | b. interesting.   | 7 |
|    | c. less than interesting.   | 0 |
| 5. | I would like to read a book or receive further instruction about the concept. Yes      8,      No | 2 |

The Survey Questionnaire investigated the degree to which subjects regarded the therapies a negative or positive experience. The results of this instrument are shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Summary of the Survey Questionnaire by Therapy/Length of Commitment

| Therapy/Length of Commitment  | Mean |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Spirituootherapy/> 3 years    | 8.6  |
| Spirituootherapy/< 3 years    | 8.5  |
| Laws of the kingdom/> 3 years | 8.8  |
| Laws of the kingdom/< 3 years | 8.4  |

## Chapter 4

## DISCUSSION

The standard deviations for the pre-test groups were large, indicating that length of Christian commitment did not create homogeneous groups as regards life meaning. The analysis of variance of the PIL test scores indicated that neither spirituotherapy nor laws of the kingdom of God had a significant influence on life meaning as measured by the PIL test. Looking at the group analysis, there were significant changes in PIL scores from pre-test to post-test. However, individual paired scores revealed that exactly half of the subjects' scores remained the same or increased while half of the subjects' scores decreased. Further comparison of paired pre-test and post-test scores revealed that 23 of the 40 test scores changed dramatically (extremes of +43 and -22) while the others remained fairly constant ( $\pm 5$ ).

The Exit Questionnaire revealed clearer data. Overall, 63% of the subjects agreed with everything taught, 40% of the subjects found the therapies to be life changing, and 82% of the subjects found the material so interesting that they desired further information in these areas.

Since half of the PIL scores decreased following therapy, it is possible that although the therapies were considered interesting (60%), or life changing (40%), they none-the-less, had a negative effect on life meaning. To determine how subjects felt about the therapies, each

subject was asked to "Rate the therapy as a negative or a positive experience, on a 10-point scale, with 1 being very negative and 10 being very positive. The mean for all subjects was 8.5, demonstrating that subjects regarded the therapies as positive experiences.

Although "life changing" was not defined for the subjects and therefore its meaning may have been somewhat ambiguous, it was still an important research finding that 50% of the subjects exposed to 60 minutes of spirituotherapy, and 30% of the subjects exposed to 60 minutes of laws of the kingdom of God found those therapies to be positive and life changing. Any information which requires such a small investment of time and is life changing to any segment of our society deserves further investigation and study.

Both spirituotherapy and laws of the kingdom of God may be effective counseling techniques. However, it appears that the PIL post-test scores did not measure primarily the effects of therapy. Of the 10 subjects who reported spirituotherapy to be a positive, life changing experience, 6 had a lower PIL score on the post-test than on the pre-test. Of the 6 subjects who reported laws of the kingdom of God to be a positive, life changing experience, 4 had a lower PIL score on the post-test than on the pre-test. It may be that the PIL test was sensitive to subjects' feelings toward celebrating Thanksgiving later that week.

There are numerous possibilities for further research in this area. The study could be replicated and planned so that the PIL post-test was administered at a less stressful time of the year. Further research might also identify if spirituotherapy is more effective than laws of the kingdom of God or if it only appeared that way in the study because of variation in the sample. Subjects might also be recontacted in 6 months and asked if the therapies are still effecting their lives. Also, other methods of determining therapy effectiveness might be employed. These variations might yield some valuable information for Christian counselors and psychologists.

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APPENDIX A

## INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I affirm that I am eighteen (18) years of age and that I am participating in this research study voluntarily. If I desire to seek information regarding the results of this research, I have been instructed to submit my request in writing to Research, 917 Walnut, Emporia, KS 66801. I understand that my participation in this research is anonymous and that the only form containing my name is this informed consent form, which will be kept separate from all data instruments. I also understand that I may withdraw from this study at any time, if I decide not to participate.

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a significant difference in purpose in life (as measured by the Purpose In Life test) between self-proclaimed born again Christians exposed to spirituotherapy and those exposed to laws of the kingdom of God. It will also be determined if there is a significant difference in purpose in life as measured by the Purpose In Life test between Christians with less than a three-year commitment to Jesus Christ and Christians with more than a three-year commitment to Jesus-Christ.

---

Participant's Signature

---

Date

APPENDIX B

## DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

For each question, please circle the one response which best describes you.

1. Are you
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
2. Are you
  - a. 18-25 years old
  - b. 26-35 years old
  - c. 36-45 years old
  - d. 46 years or older
3.
  - a. I consider myself a born-again Christian.
  - b. I do not consider myself a born-again Christian.
4. I received Christ into my life within
  - a. the last week.
  - b. the last month.
  - c. the last 6 months.
  - d. the last 12 months.
  - e. the last 24 months.
  - f. the last 3 years
  - g. the last 5 years.
  - h. the last 10 years.
  - i. the last 20 years.
  - j. the last 25 years or more.
5. I am familiar with
  - a. Chuck Solomon's concept of Spirituotherapy.
  - b. Pat Robertson's concept of Laws of the Kingdom of God.
  - c. neither of the above.

APPENDIX C

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Classification \_\_\_\_\_

James C. Crumbaugh, Ph.D.

Veterans Administration Hospital  
Gulfport, Mississippi**P I L**

Leonard T. Maholick, M.D.

Atlanta Psychiatric Clinic  
Atlanta, Georgia

A

For each of the following statements, circle the number that would be nearly true for you. Note that the numbers always extend from one extreme feeling to its opposite kind of feeling. "Neutral" implies no judgment either way; try to use this rating as little as possible.

I am usually:

|                     |   |   |           |   |   |                            |
|---------------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|----------------------------|
| 1                   | 2 | 3 | 4         | 5 | 6 | 7                          |
| completely<br>bored |   |   | (neutral) |   |   | exuberant,<br>enthusiastic |

Life to me seems:

|                    |   |   |           |   |   |                       |
|--------------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|-----------------------|
| 7                  | 6 | 5 | 4         | 3 | 2 | 1                     |
| always<br>exciting |   |   | (neutral) |   |   | completely<br>routine |

In life I have:

|                            |   |   |           |   |   |                              |
|----------------------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1                          | 2 | 3 | 4         | 5 | 6 | 7                            |
| no goals or<br>aims at all |   |   | (neutral) |   |   | Very clear goals<br>and aims |

My personal existence is:

|   |   |   |           |   |   |                                   |
|---|---|---|-----------|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1                                       | 2 | 3 | 4         | 5 | 6 | 7                                 |
| entirely meaningless<br>without purpose |   |   | (neutral) |   |   | very purposeful<br>and meaningful |

Every day is:

|                |   |   |           |   |   |                  |
|----------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|------------------|
| 7              | 6 | 5 | 4         | 3 | 2 | 1                |
| constantly new |   |   | (neutral) |   |   | exactly the same |

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**PSYCHOMETRIC AFFILIATES**

BOX 807  
MURFREESBORO, TN 37133  
(615) 898-2565  
890-6296

Test #168  
FORM A60

4. If I could choose, I would:  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
 prefer never to (neutral) Like nine more  
 have been born lives just like  
 this one
5. After retiring, I would:  
 7 6 5 4 3 2 1  
 do some of the exciting (neutral) loaf completely  
 things I have always wanted to the rest of my life
6. In achieving life goals I have:  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
 made no progress (neutral) progressed to com-  
 whatever plete fulfillment
7. My life is:  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
 empty, filled only (neutral) running over with  
 with despair exciting good things
10. If I should die today, I would feel that my life has been:  
 7 6 5 4 3 2 1  
 very worthwhile (neutral) completely  
 worthless
11. In thinking of my life, I:  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
 often wonder (neutral) always see a  
 why I exist reason for my  
 being here
12. As I view the world in relation to my life, the world:  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
 completely confuses me (neutral) fits meaningfully  
 with my life
13. I am a:  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
 very irresponsible (neutral) very responsible  
 person person



4. Concerning man's freedom to make his own choices, I believe man is

|                       |   |   |           |                         |   |   |
|-----------------------|---|---|-----------|-------------------------|---|---|
| 7                     | 6 | 5 | 4         | 3                       | 2 | 1 |
| absolutely free to    |   |   | (neutral) | completely bound by     |   |   |
| make all life choices |   |   |           | limitations of heredity |   |   |
|                       |   |   |           | and environment         |   |   |

5. With regard to death, I am:

|              |   |   |           |                |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|-----------|----------------|---|---|
| 7            | 6 | 5 | 4         | 3              | 2 | 1 |
| prepared and |   |   | (neutral) | unprepared and |   |   |
| unafraid     |   |   |           | frightened     |   |   |

6. With regard to suicide, I have:

|                         |   |   |           |                  |   |   |
|-------------------------|---|---|-----------|------------------|---|---|
| 1                       | 2 | 3 | 4         | 5                | 6 | 7 |
| thought of it seriously |   |   | (neutral) | never given it a |   |   |
| as a way out            |   |   |           | second thought   |   |   |

7. I regard my ability to find a meaning, purpose, or mission in life as:

|            |   |   |           |                  |   |   |
|------------|---|---|-----------|------------------|---|---|
| 7          | 6 | 5 | 4         | 3                | 2 | 1 |
| very great |   |   | (neutral) | practically none |   |   |

8. My life is:

|                     |   |   |           |                     |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|-----------|---------------------|---|---|
| 7                   | 6 | 5 | 4         | 3                   | 2 | 1 |
| in my hands and I   |   |   | (neutral) | out of my hands     |   |   |
| am in control of it |   |   |           | and controlled      |   |   |
|                     |   |   |           | by external factors |   |   |

9. Facing my daily tasks is:

|                      |   |   |           |                    |   |   |
|----------------------|---|---|-----------|--------------------|---|---|
| 7                    | 6 | 5 | 4         | 3                  | 2 | 1 |
| a source of pleasure |   |   | (neutral) | a painful and bor- |   |   |
| and satisfaction     |   |   |           | ing experience     |   |   |

10. I have discovered:

|                 |   |   |           |                  |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|-----------|------------------|---|---|
| 1               | 2 | 3 | 4         | 5                | 6 | 7 |
| no mission or   |   |   | (neutral) | clear-cut goals  |   |   |
| purpose in life |   |   |           | and a satisfying |   |   |
|                 |   |   |           | life purpose     |   |   |

APPENDIX D

INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT ON  
SPIRITUOTHERAPY

This therapy is taken from Charles R. Solomon's book, Handbook to Happiness.

The wheel illustration was developed to depict the interrelationships of body, soul, and spirit, so that we can better understand human behavior. As you will note on Diagram 1, the "soul" might be called our self-consciousness or the vehicle through which we relate to others, actually our psychological makeup. The "spirit" is our God-consciousness or the facet of our makeup by which we relate to God. The "body", of course, is the means by which we relate to the world or our environment through our five senses. In summary, we relate to others through our soul, to God through our Spirit, and to our environment through our body. The soul is composed of mind or intellect, the emotions or affections, and the will or volition. Similarly, the spirit has the functions of intuition, conscience, and communion.

As depicted by the arrow between body and soul, there can be physical problems such as an endocrine imbalance or other ailments which can have an adverse effect on our emotional state. Likewise, we can suffer from long-standing psychological symptoms which affect our spiritual life and hamper our walk with God. Being spiritually maladjusted will produce or amplify existing psychological symptoms. So, we

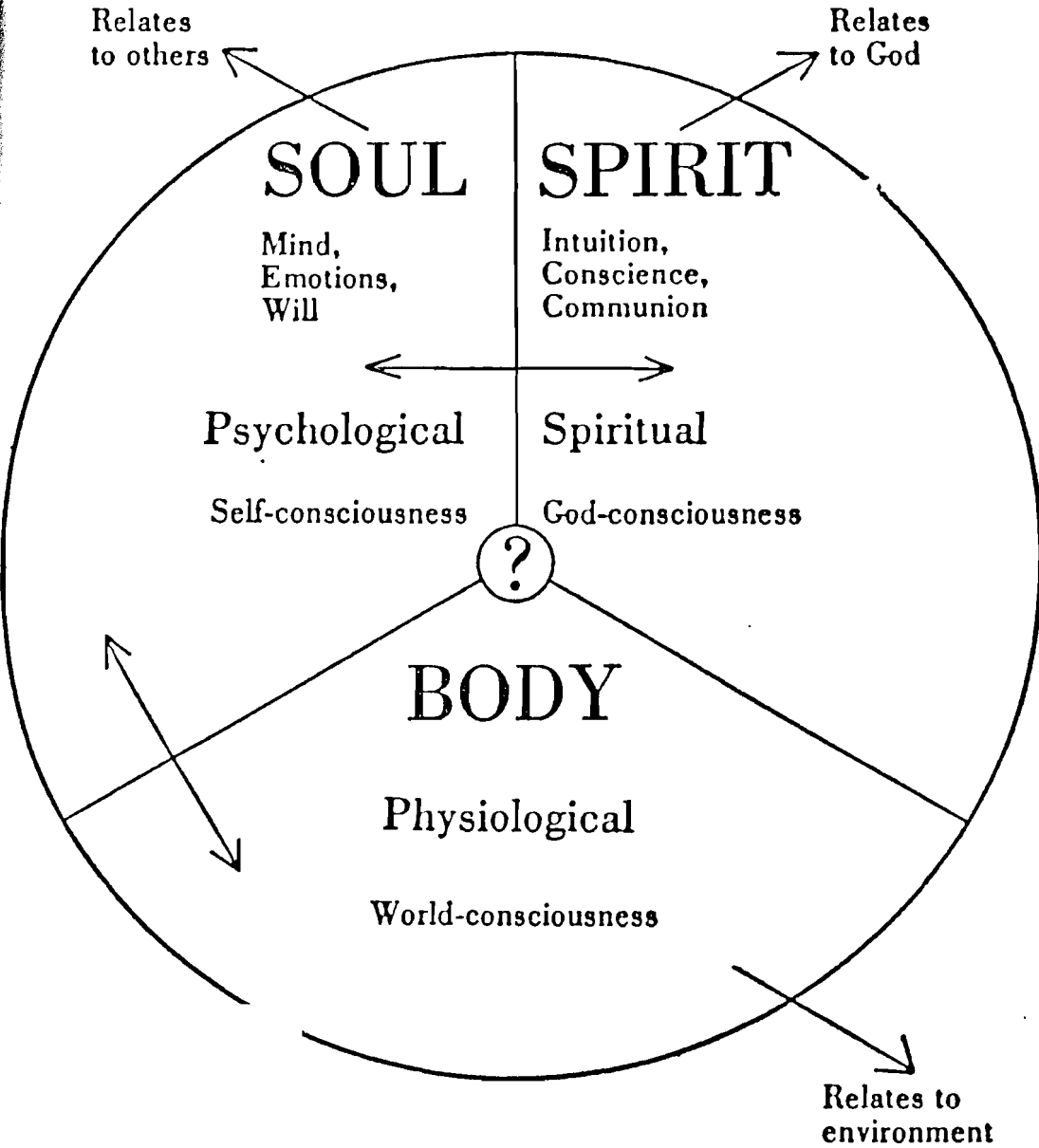


DIAGRAM I

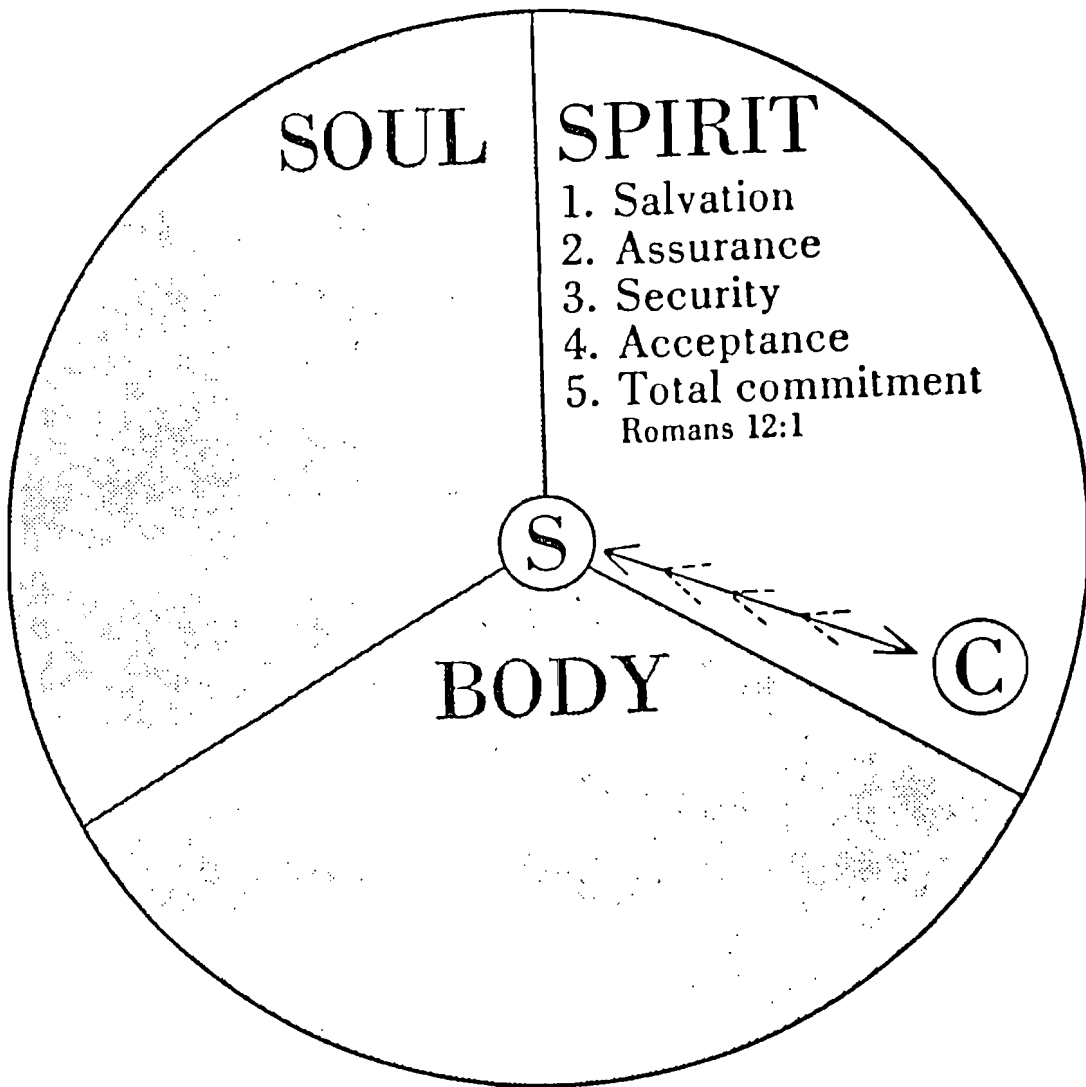
Man—a tri-unity

can have difficulties in any of the three areas which may in turn have an adverse effect on another area.

The first and prime consideration is our relationship with God. To have the best relationship with God we must understand what God says about the items listed under Spirit (see Diagram 2).

Salvation is defined in many different ways, one of which is asking Jesus into your heart. However salvation is defined, the truth is unless the Lord Jesus Christ is in our life he cannot make the necessary changes in us. Before we trusted the Lord Jesus for salvation, the Holy Spirit convinced us that we were sinners; separated from God. Since we were born with a sinful nature, we naturally committed sins. According to Romans 3:23, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The penalty for the sin is death; "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). The death penalty must be paid, and it has been paid: "in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

When we admitted that we were ungodly and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, then we were justified or counted righteous in God's sight. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4: 5). The method was very simple: we merely believed what the Bible says about us (we were ungodly sinners), and we also believed what the

*DIAGRAM 2*

Bible says about the Lord Jesus (that He was and is God, that He died for our sins, and that He rose from the dead).

After we heard and believed we called upon God in prayer because the Bible says: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). And so we said a prayer telling God that we were sinners and that we wanted His forgiveness, and that we believed that Jesus was His son, who died for us, so that we could have eternal life.

Upon the basis of His infallible Word He saved us when we believed and called upon Him.

After we have settled the question of salvation in our lives, it's time to receive further benefits of God. Now these benefits are just as real and just as available as salvation but sometimes we fail to accept them. One of these benefits is assurance.

It is possible to be saved but not be assured of that salvation. Our assurance must be based on the facts of scripture rather than on feelings which sometimes fluctuate. Some Christians have assumed they were not saved because they didn't feel saved. They wanted to feel something rather than believe God's word. But feelings will be untrustworthy in this matter of salvation, we must rely upon the facts of scripture.

Some Christians have assumed they were not saved because of the defeated lives they had been living. Their feelings did not witness to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ was an

abiding reality in their lives. Many persons proceed in the order of feelings, faith, fact. They should instead proceed according to the facts as God has revealed them in his Word, then faith in these facts, and finally, allow their feelings to be guided by faith in God's facts. The Bible (1 John 5: 11-13) tells us that we are to know that we have eternal life. It is not at all presumptuous to take God at his Word and simply rest in it. We can establish our assurance of salvation only by accepting God's Word for what it is--God's word--and therefore--the truth.

Then we must go on to realize that we have the benefit of security. Our relationship with God is unbreakable--eternal. We are secure in that relationship, and we cannot have assurance if we are not secure and confident that this relationship is lasting. Colossians 3:3 tells us that our "life is hid with Christ in God." If we do not believe this, our assurance can not be solid because we are afraid we will lose our salvation. And if we are afraid we will lose it, we will struggle to do something in order to maintain it, such as good works. As a result, we cease to live by grace and begin to live again by the law. This is falling from grace into a legalistic condition (Galatians 5: 4). This is the condition of many evangelical Christians; they are saved by grace but bound by the law. At least this is the practical outworking of their insufficient knowledge. Unless a person is sure that he can not and will not lose his salvation, he will not mature in his relationship with Jesus Christ. Of



course, assurance and security really go hand in hand.

Knowing that we are saved and that we are going to stay saved are vital to Christian growth.

Let us go on to discuss the fourth benefit--acceptance. Some accept the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord and then spend the rest of their lives trying to get him to accept them. Of course, this is self-defeating, because Ephesians 6:6 assures us that "we are accepted in the beloved." Our acceptance doesn't depend on our good works, or how much we read the Bible or how much we go to church, or any other effort we may expend. Salvation is grace from start to finish. Acceptance is by grace, too. God accepts His Son; and since we are in His Son he accepts us as well.

Many today have difficulty believing that their parents accept them, or that their peers accept them. In fact, many individuals feel that no one really accepts them. As a result, they come to feel that God does not accept them either; if they are not fit for other people to accept, why should God accept them? Of course, this isn't the case. But if a person feels that way, to him this sense of rejection is real. He must come to the place where he realizes he is accepted. He is acceptable, not because of anything he has done, but because of the great things the Lord Jesus Christ has done. When the individual was saved--when he trusted the Lord Jesus as his personal Savior--he was put into Christ (I Corinthians 1:30). Having been put into Christ, he is accepted by God in Christ as a part of Christ. In this, as

In the initial salvation experience, we must take God at His Word and believe what He says about our acceptance regardless of how we feel about it. As we begin to take God at His Word, our feelings start to line up with the facts.

The fifth benefit which we must accept as a reality for us is total commitment. Total commitment does not mean that we must become missionaries to Mexico. It is necessary to define the term as we will be using it. Romans 12:1 tells us, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Total commitment according to this verse is something we can do; it is our "reasonable service." It is an act of the will, where we tell our Father that we want more than anything else in this world to have His will accomplished in our lives, whatever that means. We don't know His specific purpose for us until after we have wholly committed our lives to Him, then He begins to bring it to pass (Psalm 37:5).

Total surrender is essential to total usefulness. Occasionally a person accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and makes him Lord of his life at the beginning. This is what should happen in all conversions! One should not accept Jesus Christ as Savior and then wait ten or fifteen years to yield completely to Him. This should all happen the day a person accepts Christ. When it doesn't, a person has to see the futility of running his own life (or ruining it, as is frequently the case) and come to the place where he is ready

to say, "Lord, I want to take my hands off my life; I want You to run it."

After we have surrendered our will for God's will, as a usual rule we are not immediately miraculously transformed, although some persons are. A few are at the point where there is no way out. When they come through in a complete surrender, God consummates the transformation in the life immediately or in a very short time. But in most cases, once this surrender is made, with or without emotion, there is little observable change. However, from that point, the responsibility is turned over to God and He begins to bring about a consummation of His purpose and plan in that life.

Now, in our salvation experience, when we invited Christ into our lives, He came into our spirit. This is represented by the "C" down in the lower part of the diagram. Christ is in the life, but He can be in the life without being the center of the life. Tragically, this is true of most Christians. In fact, usually a person is so busy with life, and the wheel of life, so to speak, is spinning so rapidly, that Christ is forced to the periphery of the life by a process similar to centrifugal force. It may be, too, that a person is so busy working for the Lord that he doesn't have time to spend with Him. As a result, Christ is not central in the life. Now we can choose to make Christ the center of our life or God can allow trials and adversities to slow this wheel of life down. Many times God permits it to come to a halt. Then Christ can begin to move toward the center

of the life (see arrow). But if Christ is not the center of our lives, something else is. The thing or person that is so important that it becomes the motivating force of our lives is referred to as the center of the life.

The S in the center of the circle might, for instance, represent "some thing" such as a home, or a car, or some other thing that we feel would really make us happy. Usually, we strive and struggle to get these things, and once the newness wears off, we find we have won a hollow victory. Or, instead of some thing, it might be "some person" at the center of our life. This person might be a father, a mother, a husband, a wife, a child, a boyfriend, or a girlfriend-- some person in our lives we seek to please or satisfy because their opinion of us is the determining factor which enables us to feel good about ourselves. In effect, our life is oriented around them.

The center of the circle might be "success" (however we define that in our own lives). To a businessman it might be struggling to get to the top, to become the president of the company. A minister may seek success by struggling to get to a place where he can have a more influential ministry or a bigger church. For a student, success might be making straight "A's." Whatever the way, the motivating force in life is achieving success.

For a sex deviate, it might be that sex is the most important thing in his life. To an addict, another high might be his all-consuming passion. Or, it could be money

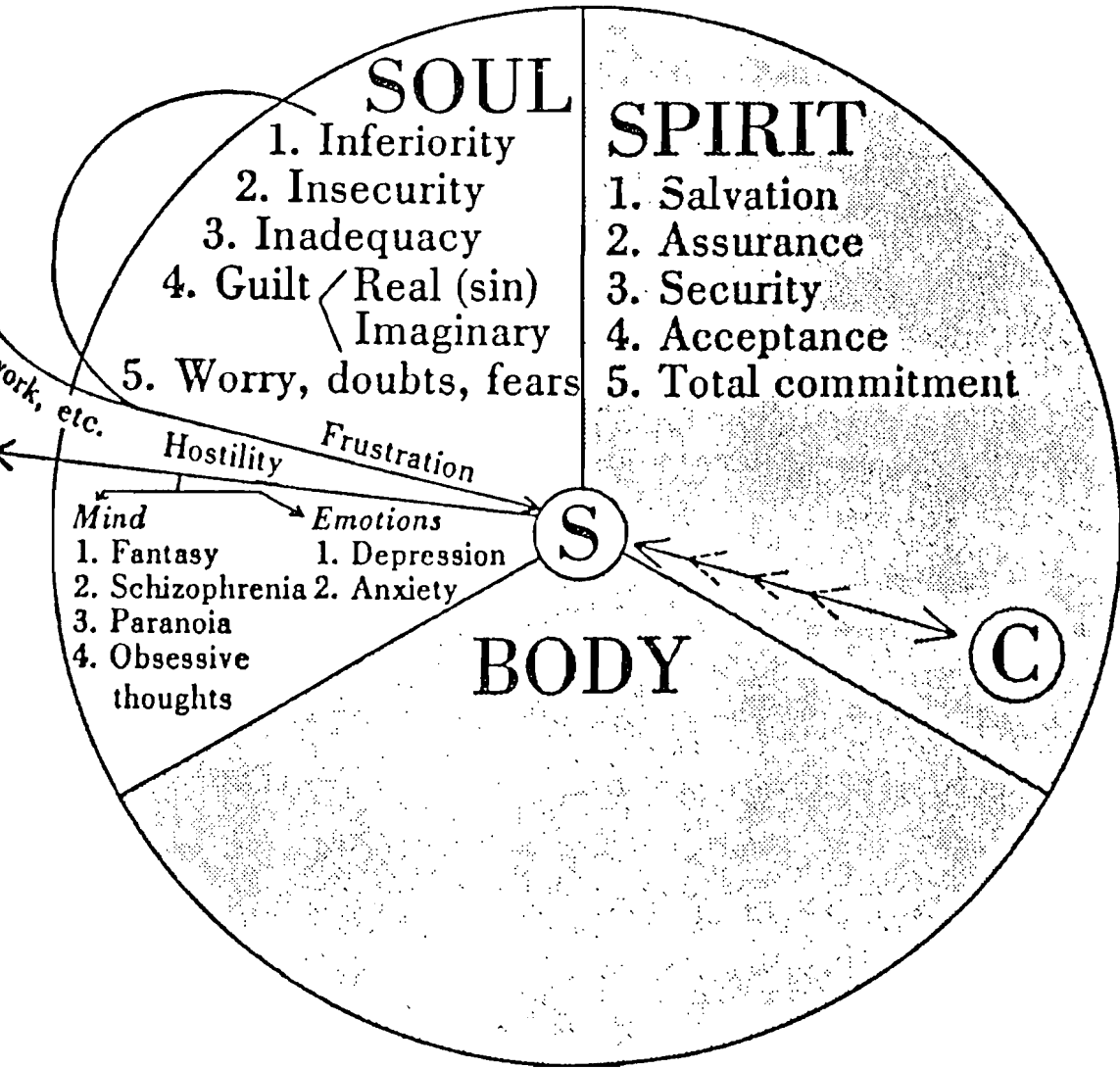
and the things dollars buy; material things are all important to many. But all of these manifestations represent things "we" want or something that "we" think will give us great satisfaction. All of these S's may be summed up in the term self (or flesh).

This is not to be confused with the psychological self or soul--the mind, emotions, and will--which causes us each to be unique individuals. The soul, in and of itself, is neutral. It is the driving force which empowers the soul, whether flesh or Christ, that determines the attitudes and actions and their ultimate worth. Self at the center of the life means we are in control or at least trying to be. Of course, no one is able by himself to control his life. We were designed so that if we willingly consent, God will control our spirit, our spirit will control our soul, and our soul will control our body. This is God's plan, and for it to work, Christ must be at the control center. We should be Christ-centered rather than self-centered. But the majority of Christians, even those in full-time Christian service, find that they are still doing it for Him.

God does not want us to work for Him, to witness for Him, to live for Him. He wants us to get self out of the way so He can work through us. This is the lesson that most Christians never learn. Usually it is only learned through hardship, trial, affliction, and suffering to the point that God slows down the circle of life and Christ moves to the center of the life. However, we can decide to make Christ

the center of our life and avoid much hardship. Our mind and emotions are controlled by the indwelling Christ as we willingly count upon our resources in Him. But until this process is completed, self is in control and we use our own will and mind to run our lives instead of only using them in the doing role. As a result, we are less effective in living. If God is running our lives, then our mind, emotions and will are free to serve his purposes unhampered by the additional duties of trying to decide how we should live our life.

Looking now at Diagram 3, the psychological (or "Soul") functions, we will consider some problems a person may face. First of all, let's consider the item called "inferiority." This plagues many if not most people to some extent. With some persons, feelings of inferiority are so intense that their relationships with other people are hampered. It can hinder their work to the point that when assignments are given to them, they have to fight to get to the place where they can begin the task. Once they get started, they usually do an exceptional job; but they still feel they cannot achieve. Their minds tell them one thing, and their feelings tell them another. Usually, they know intellectually that they are not inferior; but they feel that they are. This causes some serious emotional problems, because a person must compensate for it in some way, usually coping in a maladaptive manner.



Another psychological problem which may develop is "insecurity." This is being filled with fears and doubts about what is going to happen, or always contending with the feeling that something terrible is bound to come up. We cannot relax and have that good feeling inside because of the apprehension. Insecurity (these fears and doubts), when in the marriage relationship, gives rise to jealousy, and jealousy to accusations; and the cycle often goes on until divorce results. Insecurity in the work relationship causes persons to be afraid they will lose their job or be demoted, and this causes them to be ineffective.

The third problem which sometimes develops is "inadequacy". This can take two forms. In the first form, inadequacy is experienced in almost any situation. The person feels totally inadequate to cope with life. In the second form, inadequacy is experienced only in certain situations. For instance, a person might feel inadequate in his home, in a family role; but he might feel totally adequate on the job. In his work he might be held in esteem and admired. He feels wonderful and stays overtime, since he is comfortable in that situation. In the home relationship though, he cannot get along with his wife or his children, so he stays at work and becomes a loyal company man. It's not because he likes the work so much, but because he cannot make it at home. The converse could be true, a person could feel protected and safe at home; but afraid to go on the job because he is really not making a success of it.



The fourth problem is guilt. Two kinds of guilt need to be considered. The first is "real guilt," and we must face it as such. We must not try to explain it away or cover it and call it "guilt feelings." It is the result of sin just as the Word of God proclaims. The only cure for real guilt and its cause, sin, is the blood of Jesus Christ. First John 1:9 promises, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This is the only way real guilt can be put away. Of course, all sin and guilt is dealt with when we are saved, but afterward the sin that crops up in our lives must be acknowledged to God and forsaken. If we do this, he forgives and cleanses.

In addition to the real guilt which all of us have, many also have "imaginary guilt," which feels like real guilt. We can confess, and confess, and confess, and still be plagued with the problem. Many persons think that because of this feeling of guilt, they have committed the unpardonable sin, or that there is some sin that they just cannot uncover. They do not know what it is. They feel that if they could find it and confess it, they would be free. Imaginary guilt may spring from a lack of love and acceptance. As a child, a person may feel unwanted or that they just do not fit in. Sometimes he is told that he is unwanted and sometimes he merely senses it. As a result, he becomes conscience-smitten for being there; he feels he is causing all the problems. If he were out of the picture, everything would be fine. He

feels guilty for being there and grows up feeling guilty for even being a person. This imagined guilt persists throughout life. Understanding imaginary guilt is the first step in turning it over to the Lord; experiencing God's acceptance is the antidote to rejection.

The last problem we will consider is the general category of "worry, doubts," and "fears." When we have inner turmoil caused by inferiority, insecurity, inadequacy, or guilt, we are prone to worry. God's Word admonishes us to be anxious for nothing (Philippians 4: 6). But most people ignore that and worry about everything. When we do, we have various doubts--doubts that other people love us or doubts that God is real. We may doubt that he will meet our needs, and so we begin to fret. Nagging doubts cause fears and fear is all-pervasive. It can really wreck us and our testimony. The underlying cause of every fear is a faulty faith. In fact, the five preceding problems are indicative of a failure to trust in and depend fully upon the Lord though we may have known him as Savior and even as Lord for years.

When we have these things going on inside and acting upon each other, inner turmoil or frustration results. You will note (on Diagram 3) that we have encircled all five items and labeled the result as frustration. The frustration is compounded by external stresses from family, work, and situations. If the self is very much alive and the frustration comes in, then the automatic result is hostility.

The problem is, how are we going to handle the hostility? One of the prime goals of the psychotherapist is to teach a person how to handle hostility. This is futile because as soon as you learn how to handle it, it is going to pop up in another form. The problem is not how to handle it, but how to prevent it!

Psychotherapy advocates getting out feelings, emotional catharsis, as a means of venting hostility. This is workable in the therapeutic climate, but not all persons have a safe situation in which to dump their hostility. Society at large does not accept negative feelings with tender loving care. Many persons are filled with hostility who have no acceptable means of dealing with it. They do not know how to verbalize it and they can not exercise violence toward other people to get it out. So they keep either all or some of it inside. When hostility is kept inside, the conflict can travel in either of two directions as shown on Diagram 3. It can affect our mind or our emotions. If it influences the mind, there are several things that can happen.

One of the mental effects of hostility is fantasy. A person can be consumed by television, fiction, or daydreams. He can spend his time thinking how he would like things to be. A little of this is acceptable because sometimes we do make our daydreams come true. But, if we live in a fantasy world, then we are not effective in the real world. A person who is prone to this, and some who are not, might have a psychotic break and live in an unreal world.

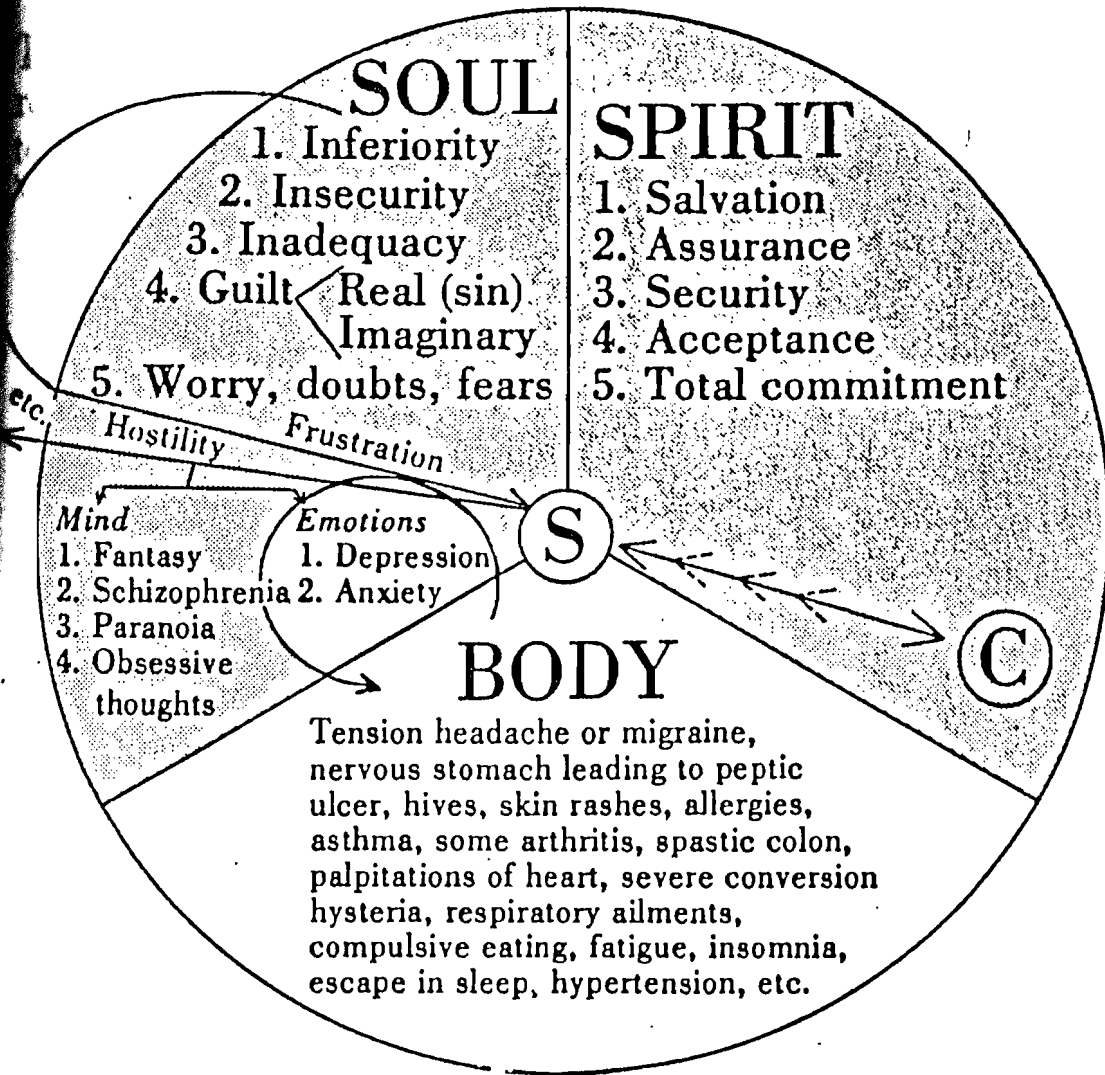
Hostility kept inside might also result in paranoia, especially if the individual feels inadequate or guilty. A person who feels inadequate may blame his failures on someone else. If this becomes a pattern he eventually becomes certain that a person or group is really out to get him. He is not completely out of touch with reality. He usually has well structured delusions in this one area of his life; whereas in other areas of life, he is pretty well adjusted. These odd ways of thinking are mental symptoms of a deeper problem--self at the center of the life. Treating symptoms rarely effects a permanent cure. Persons can go to psychiatrists all of their lives for treatment of such symptoms.

In addition to these symptoms in the mind, the frustration can affect the emotions, (another area of the soul) or, both the mind and emotions may be affected. A common effect on the emotions is depression; hostility kept inward becomes depression. We push against ourselves. We take it out on ourselves instead of taking it out on someone else. We beat ourselves, which causes us to be depressed, anxious, and tied up in knots. This can be simple depression or it can become more severe and be termed reactive depression or manic depression. Repressed hostility also results in anxiety. Still, these problems indicate a deeper problem; a life that is not Christ centered. The problem is usually treated by attempting to get the afflicted person to

express the anxiety and depression which has been bottled up inside.

This anxiety and depression is usually contained until it is no longer possible to keep it inside. Then it manifests itself in the body as a psychosomatic or psychophysiological symptom, as seen in Diagram 4. Some of these psychosomatic ills are tension headache which can become migraine, or it can be a nervous stomach or a peptic ulcer. Some other common ailments stemming from psychological conflict are hives, some forms of arthritis, asthma, skin rashes, spastic colon, palpitations of the heart, respiratory ailments, and conversion hysteria, where emotional conflict is converted into physical symptoms. Some medical doctors estimate that 60 to 80 percent of their patients have ailments caused by emotional and psychological conflict. If a person has "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4: 7) in his life, he can not have emotional conflict. The two do not coexist. Ultimately then, these psychophysical or psychosomatic symptoms are spiritual problems.

To summarize, it is because self is at the center of the life that all this conflict has developed and continues to grow (see Diagram 5). The problems may have been there since childhood, but the fact that they continue means that self is running the life. It may be good self, it may be bad self, it may be in-between self; but it is still self, and self in control of the life is repugnant to God.



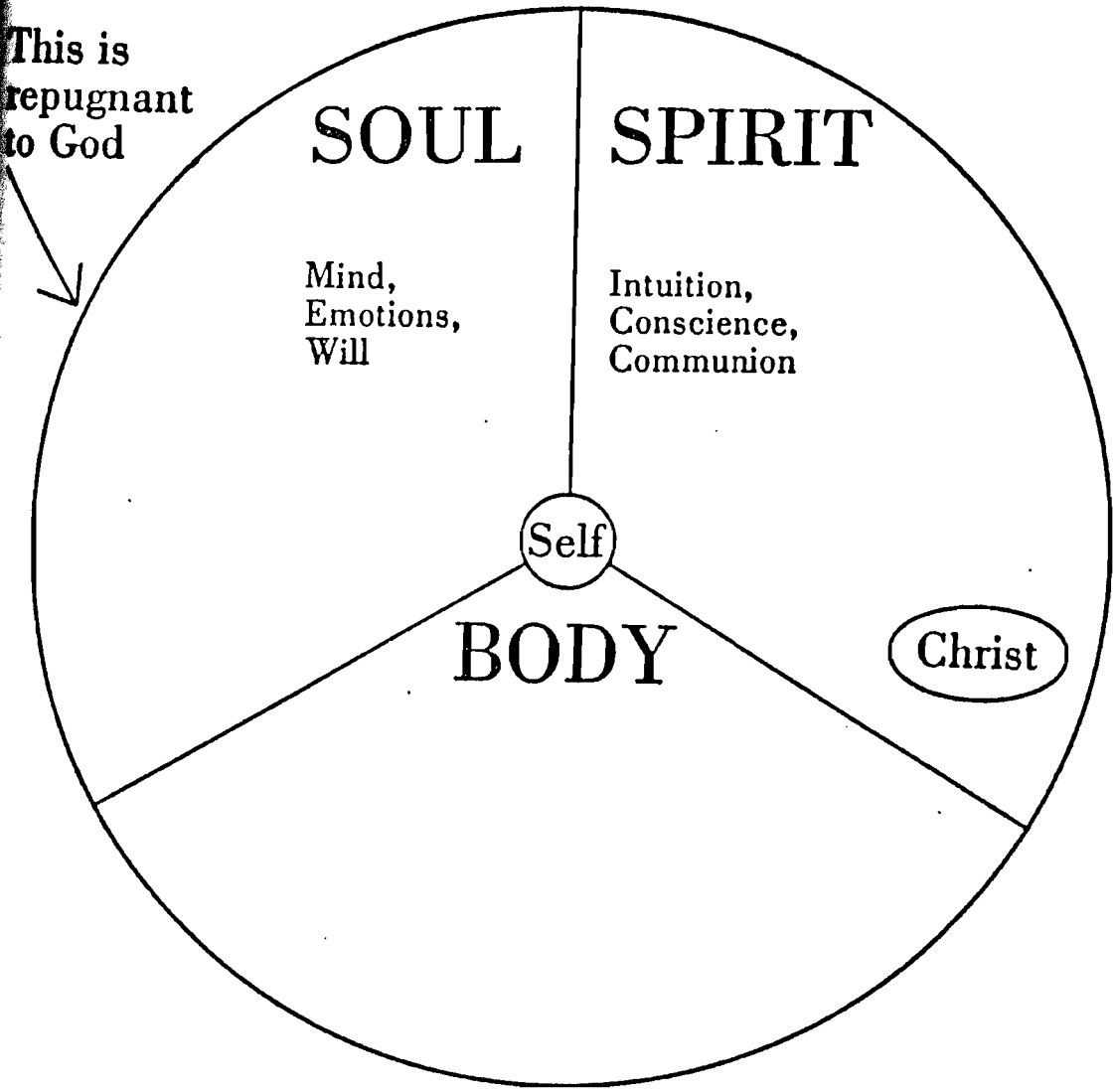


DIAGRAM 5

With psychotherapy many physical, mental and emotional symptoms respond so that a person becomes better adjusted, with the symptoms either diminishing or leaving. But in order to cope with them, better defense mechanisms are built and self becomes stronger. Thus, when symptoms improve as a result of psychotherapy the problem, self-centeredness, always gets worse! This is diametrically opposed to what God does, because God's way of dealing with self is that it must become weaker and weaker until its control is finally phased out. Self is reduced to nothing so that Christ can be everything. This is the process by which Christ becomes the center of the life.

When Christ is in control, self (also known as flesh), no longer holds sway (see Diagram 6). Flesh is not permanently dethroned but the power of sin decreases as flesh is repeatedly reckoned deposed. We are still a unique self or individual, but now empowered by the life of Christ within. When Christ is in the center of the life--when Christ is in control of the life we can have His mind or attitudes (see Diagram 7). As Philippians 2:5 says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

When Christ is at the center of the life, he can meet all the needs as he has free rein to do the living. Of course, Christ does not feel insecure, inadequate, guilty, have worries, doubts, fears; so those things are expelled from the life. If they are gone from the life, then we are no longer frustrated. If we are not frustrated, then we are



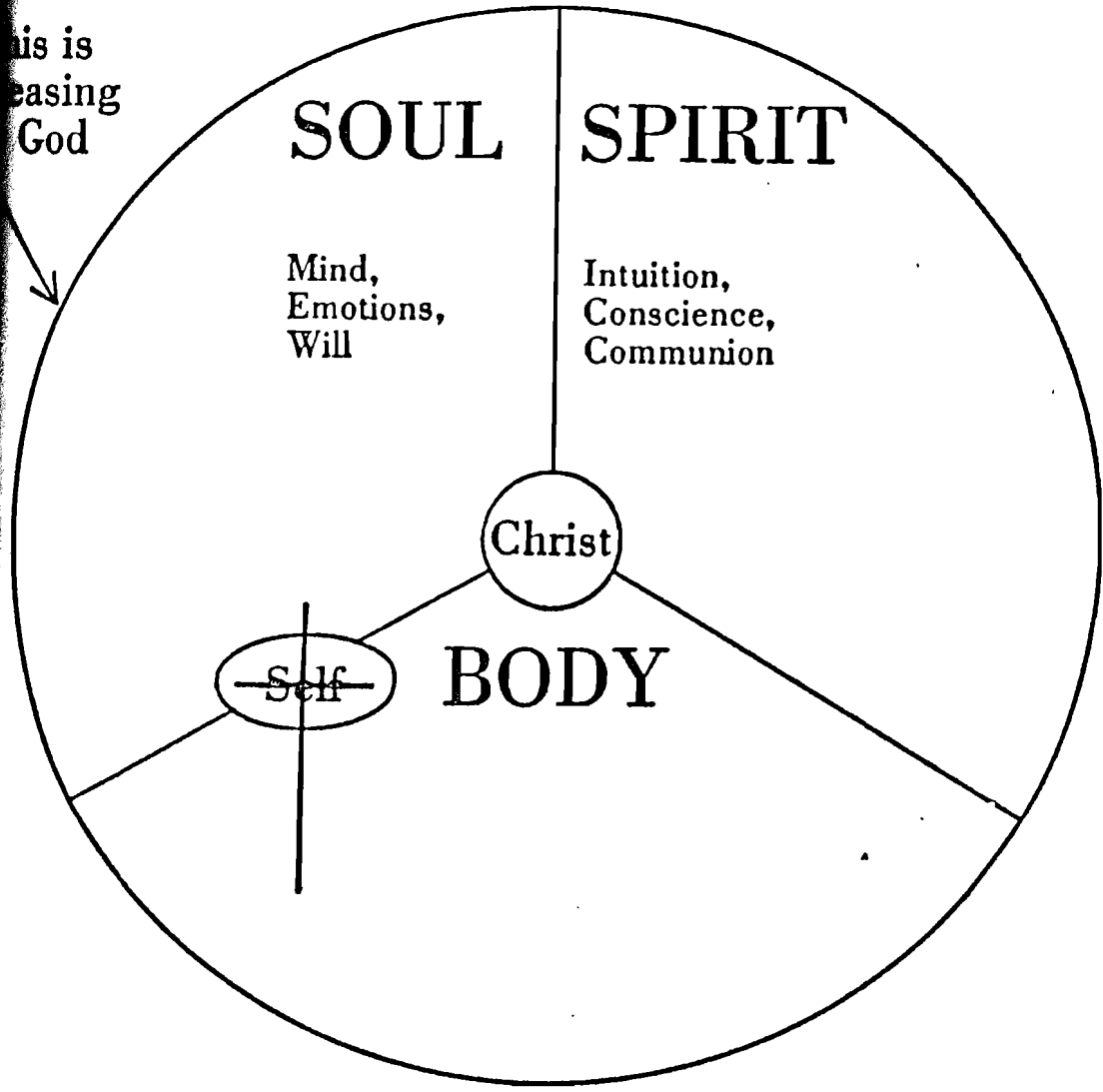


DIAGRAM 6

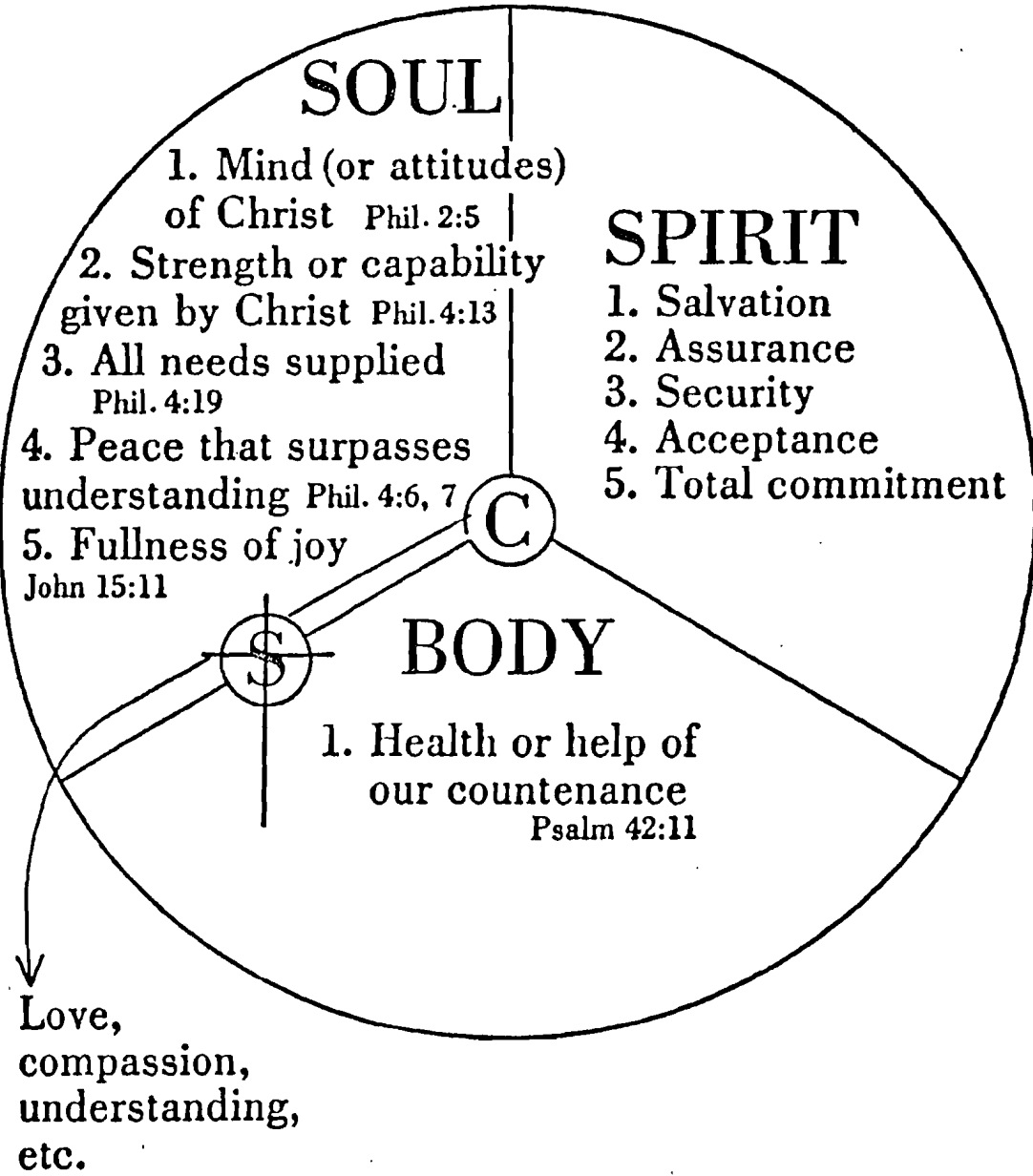


DIAGRAM 7

not hostile. If there is no hostility to be kept bottled up inside the life, there is nothing to adversely affect the mind and emotions and we can experience the fullness of joy spoken of in John 15:11. The mental and emotional symptoms are purged from the life; when the outer stresses occur with Christ at the center, then we do not react with hostility but with just the opposite--love, understanding, and compassion. Furthermore, if all that has caused the conflict inside is gone, the resulting psychosomatic symptoms leave also.

Naturally, if the body has organic damage such as a duodenal ulcer, it takes time for that to heal. But many times, deliverance from such things as tension headaches, nervous stomach and other pain caused by tension occurs instantly. When the peace of God which passes all understanding becomes the rule of the life then these psychophysical disorders must go, either gradually or dramatically.

Now, the important question is, how does Christ become the center of the life? What truth in God's Word explains this to us? In order to grasp this, it is necessary to think through another illustration which exemplifies identification with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection (see Diagram 8).

The horizontal line with an arrowhead at both ends represents eternal life; and, of course, eternal life has no beginning and no end. Only the Godhead has eternal life so, really, eternal life is Christ's life. At a point in time,

“...Reconciled to God by the death of his Son...” Romans 5:10a

|         |       |
|---------|-------|
| Hebrews | 9:22b |
| Romans  | 5:8   |
| 1 Peter | 2:24  |

John 1:14



1:1, 2

ssians 1:15-17

rews 1:2, 3

**ETERNAL LIFE (CHRIST'S LIFE)**

Hebrews 13:8

“...So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Romans 5:19b

and at an appointed time, Jesus came to earth and took on a human body as a baby being Virgin-born in Bethlehem. But the life that He lived in that body is the same life that he has always lived as God. He lived in a human body for about thirty-three years, and then He ended His earthly existence at the cross where He bore our sins. He died, was buried, and rose again; so His life continued.

At a later point in time each of us entered into a physical existence by a physical birth; but, when we are born, we are not in eternal life (see Diagram 9). Instead we are in another existence represented by the line going through our parents, our grandparents and their ancestors all the way back to Adam. That is where our existence really began--in Adam! We were in him positionally when he sinned. This is what made us sinners from birth. Romans 5:12 explains, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Therefore, being in Adam, when he sinned--we sinned; when he died (spiritually)--we died, so we are all born spiritually dead! Ephesians 2:1 says, "You were dead in your transgressions and sins."

When we were born, it was only natural that we would commit sin--we were born with a sinful nature. Romans 3:23 emphasizes, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." We sinned--consistent with our nature--and our natural progress was downwards and away from God. The diagram showing the life "in Adam" indicates this downward

PHYSICAL BIRTH

‘FOR AS BY ONE MAN’S DISOBEDIENCE  
MANY WERE MADE SINNERS...’

Romans 5:19a

Romans 3:23

Romans 6:23  
Separation from  
God or Hell

ETERNAL LIFE

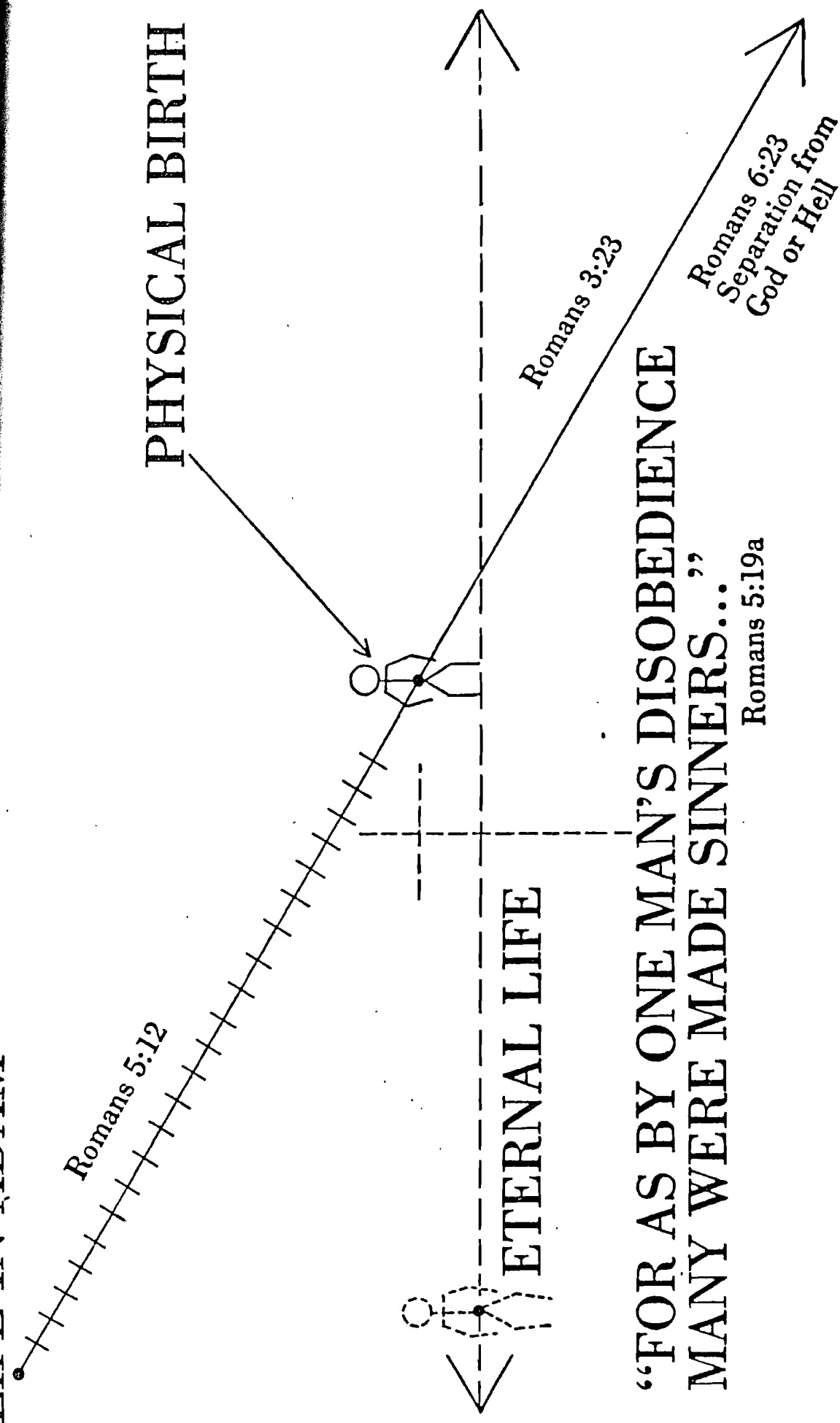


DIAGRAM 9

trend. This is verified by Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death [spiritually and eternally, as well as physically] but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord." Since we are born spiritually dead, our greatest need is spiritual life. We received physical life by physical birth and we likewise receive spiritual life by spiritual birth (John 3:3); we were "born again" (see Diagram 10).

The transition line depicts the truth propounded in I Corinthians 1:30; "But of Him [God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." We can be taken out of the old Adam life and put into Christ, by the Spirit of God. Once we are in Christ, we are in an eternal existence--a life that is not based on time.

If I asked you "What is eternal life?" your first reaction would probably be, "Well, it's life that never ends." Of course, this is true; but this is only half of the truth. The other half of the truth is that eternal life has no beginning. Once we have entered into Jesus Christ, we have an eternal life that spans the past as well as the future.

This new life is traced back--not through our ancestors to Adam now--but back through Christ to (and beyond) the cross. Calvary is an event in eternity. Being in Christ means being in Him eternally--eternally future and eternally past. Our life in Christ is an eternal relationship. We are

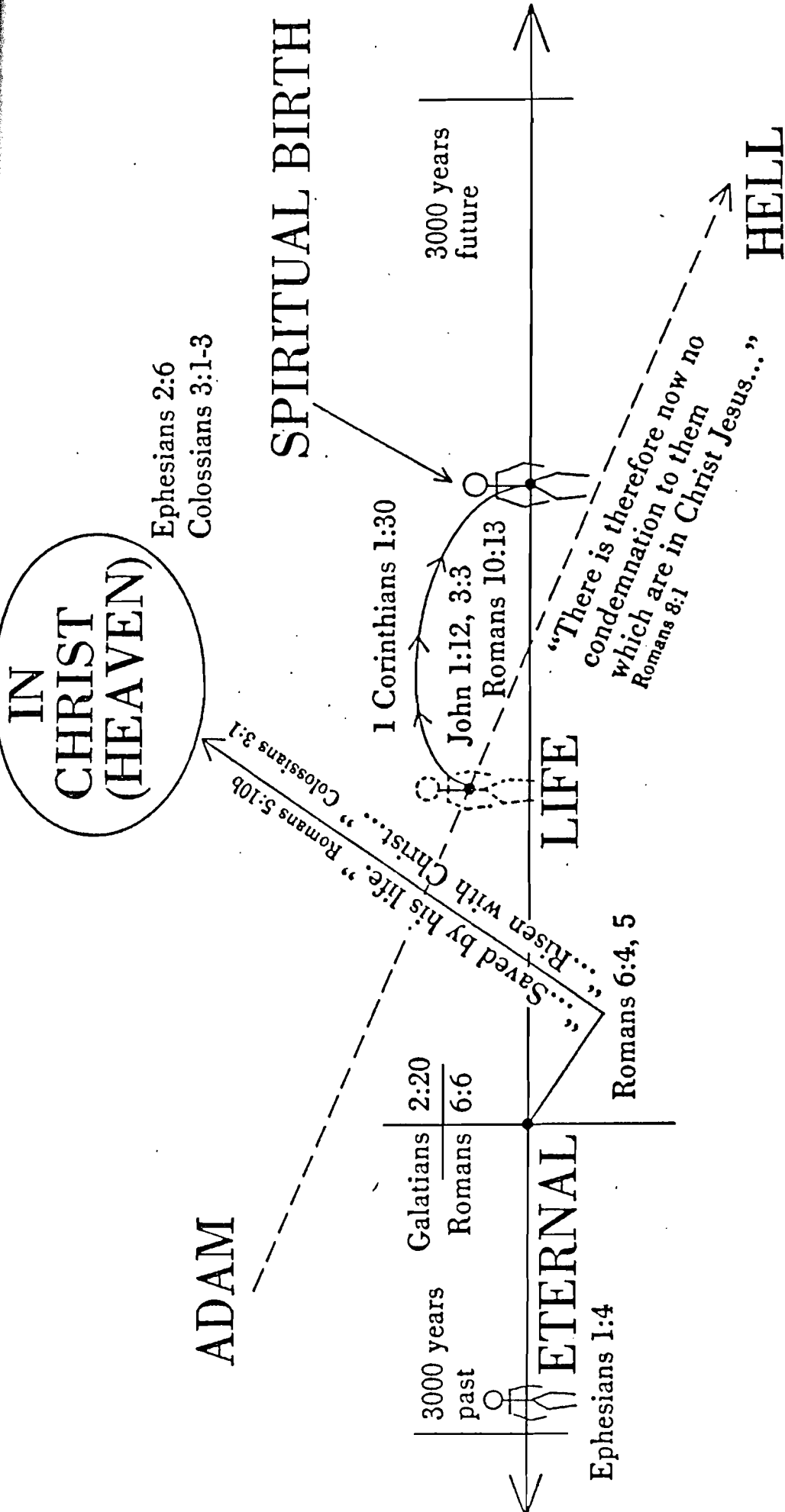


DIAGRAM 10



in Him presently; we are in Him 3000 years in the future; and we are in Him 3000 years in the past. Eternity is always present tense since it is not based on time. That means, then, we were in Him at the cross. We were in Him not only when He was crucified, but when He was buried and when He was raised from the dead and ascended into Heaven.

This truth is further stated in Galatians 2:20 where Paul asserts, "I am crucified with Christ. . . ." We could not be crucified with Christ until we were in Christ. Romans 6:5 reveals that we are not only planted or buried with Him but raised from the dead with Him. Accepting Christ means that we are raised to the heavens in Christ. Ephesians 2:6 states that we are seated right now at the right hand of God in Christ. Think about this--to be crucified with Jesus, live in Heaven, and be on the way to Heaven, all at the same time, because we are in him, right there, right now!

Ephesians 1:4 turns our perspective back: ". . . He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world . . . ." Like most spiritual truths, this may be difficult for our finite minds to grasp, but this eternal relationship is just as much true in the past as it is in the future. We are in Jesus eternally in the past, even before the foundation of the world.

This, then, is the manner in which Christ becomes the center of our lives. We understand that we are in Jesus eternally and that when He was crucified and died our flesh was crucified too and we died to the power of sin and now we

are in Christ and alive and respondent to Christ. We not only are to understand this truth intellectually and theologically, but actually to enter into the experience of it by an act of faith. We are not referring to some experience where self or the flesh is removed and we obtain sinless perfection; are talking about entering into something, experiencing something much like we entered into and experienced salvation, experiencing something that is already ours positionally--the life of Christ. Though His life is a blessing received the day we are saved, we need to enter into the fullness of Christ, into the Spirit-filled life, into the abundant life or the abiding life, as the Bible variously terms it.

The difference the spirit-controlled life makes is that we cease trying to live for Him and to work for Him and to witness for Him in the energy of the flesh. Instead, discovering by revelation that we have been crucified and raised to new life, we can now reckon this to be so and let Him live and labor through us. But this demands that we come to the end of ourselves and all of our resources. "Not I, but Christ" is the way Paul expressed it in Galatians 2:20.

How can this no-longer-I-but-Christ awareness take place? It happens differently in every life. But in point of time it has to become as much a reality as salvation and like salvation it is obtained by faith. According to Romans 6:11 we have to "reckon" or believe this to be so. "Likewise

reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Reckoning, or counting upon the fact of co-crucifixion and co-resurrection with Jesus is an act of willing choice or deciding to accept that which God's Word states to be true of us in Christ. This is an act or decision of faith identical in all respects to that of trusting Jesus for salvation. God's Word states that we are sinners and that the Lord Jesus Christ fully finished the work for our salvation at the cross; we claimed this by faith in repentance and surrender and were born again. In the same way, God's Word (the same source) indicates that we are controlled by the flesh and that we participated in Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, thus freeing us from slavery to sin's power. Again, by choice we accept Christ as our life just as we accepted Christ as our Savior. In response to our act of faith in accepting Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit regenerated us in our spirit; in response to our accepting of Christ as our life, the Holy Spirit renews us in our minds (Romans 12:2). The will is the vital function here, since the emotions may be at variance with the facts of God's word. As we choose to ignore and count ourselves as dead to sin and the voices of the world, flesh, and the Devil; and choose to heed the voice of the Holy Spirit our minds and emotions will be renewed such that we are able to "walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Romans 8:4b).

To reiterate, we must realize that this identification awareness is an event that actually takes place at a point in time and experience. Self is dethroned and Christ takes control. This, then, is the way we enter into the Spirit-filled or Spirit-controlled life; we enter in by the way of the cross. We come to experientially know, I was crucified with Christ, never-the-less I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me and the life that I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God. We come to experientially know that we are no longer automatically controlled by the flesh, no longer slaves to sin but we now can choose to believe God's word that we are dead to sin and alive to Christ. When sin calls our name we are no longer compelled to respond. Sin has no power over us because we are in Christ. We are in Christ Jesus, seated at the right hand of God. And in Jesus we have overcome the world, sin and death.

The reality of this does not have to take years and years after conversion. We may realize at the new birth that not only was he crucified for us, we were crucified with him. It is all true, as far as God is concerned, the day we trust Jesus Christ as our Saviour.

It is His goal, His purpose, that we should be conformed to His image (Romans 8:29). If we are going to know this conformity, we have to experience His cross. This is the only way that Christ can become our life initially as well as perpetually. We must let Him do the living, so that He can work unhindered through our lives. If you are ready to let

Christ control your life, just close your eyes, bow your head and agree with me in this prayer:

Dear God,

I'm sorry I've been trying to live my life as I thought best. Lord, I surrender now and purpose to allow you to live through me. I acknowledge, Lord, that you have begun a good work in me, and I trust you, Lord, to complete the work you've begun. I give you permission, Lord, to take over and do whatever You want through my life. I purpose, Lord, to present myself to You as a living sacrifice--which is my reasonable service. Lord make even more real to me the truth that I have been crucified with Christ, I died with Christ, I was buried with Christ and I have risen in Christ. Help me to remember that because I am in Christ, I am no longer overcome by sin but have power over sin. I have the mind of Christ and the attributes of Christ because He lives through me. Thank you, Lord, for saving me from myself. In Jesus name. Amen

**APPENDIX E**

INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT ON  
LAWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

This lesson is taken from Pat Robertson's book  
The Secret Kingdom.

God presented the Jewish people with laws which were to be their wisdom. It was an external expression of His will. If they followed those rules and principles, then later people would look back and say they had acted wisely. Unfortunately, they were inconsistent and often improperly motivated, and God's wisdom was not fully realized in their lives.

Through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, the wisdom of God took on an internal expression in us. Obviously, like the Israelites, we have not been consistent or sincere in our efforts to manifest God's wisdom.

But this wisdom from God is still available. We can approach God with pure hearts and say: "Show me how to run my life. Show me how the world works. Show me Your ways, Your purpose, Your plan." At that point we are seeking wisdom, and God will grant it, for His entire purpose is to have us conform to truth.

The principles of the kingdom of God should be our priority if we want to experience the power and blessings of life in God's kingdom. Those principles are riddled with paradox--and so confound the world and often us too. For instance, the world says hate your enemies. The kingdom

says love your enemies. The world says hit back. The kingdom says do good to those who mistreat you. The world says hold onto your life at any cost. The kingdom says lose your life and you will find it. The world says a young and beautiful body is essential. The kingdom says even a grain of wheat must die if it is to have life. The world says push yourself to the top. The kingdom says serve if you want to lead. The world says you are number one. The kingdom says many who are first will be last and the last first. The world says acquire gold and silver. The kingdom says store up treasure in heaven if you would be rich. The world says exploit the masses. The kingdom says do good to the poor.

The temptations of worldly thinking are great, but we must resist them even at the cost of appearing foolish. We are in the kingdom of God and we must live by the laws of that kingdom. Let's go over some of those laws now.

Jesus revealed the law of reciprocity when He said, "Give, and it will be given to you." These eight words form a spiritual principle that touches every relationship, every condition of man, whether spiritual or physical. Jesus expanded upon this theme throughout His ministry. His point was so encompassing that it demanded many illustrations. One expansion is found in these words: "just as you want people to treat you, treat them in the same way" (Luke 6:31).



Another time Jesus emphasized his point in this manner:

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. And do not judge and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return" (Luke 6:36-38).

What words for those who are suffering economically, threatened with unemployment or foreclosure! They, need money and the law of reciprocity is the solution. The world sees such thinking as foolishness, but the Lord says it is wisdom--because it is founded on truth. As we hear Christ's words, "Give and it will be given to you," they take us immediately to "seek ye first His kingdom . . . and all these things shall be added to you." "All these things" comprise what one needs to live.

Giving is foundational. You have to give of yourself. You have to give of your money. You have to give of your time. And this foundational truth works in both the invisible and the visible worlds. It is not complicated. If you want a higher salary in your job, you have to give more. Those with good salaries are not people who sit back and scheme and spend all their time thinking of ways to promote themselves. The people who are recognized in an

organization as those who work harder, think more creatively; and act more forcefully in behalf of the enterprise. They give and they are rewarded.

We tend to justify our shortcomings in comparison with these people by hinting at "lucky breaks" or "knowing the right people." But we're wrong. Invariably, they are the ones who give who give concepts, extra time, and personal concern. That's why they are the receivers. They are giving to an organization--and, indirectly, to individuals in that organization--and they are bound to benefit. The one who makes his department look good, including his boss, is the one who will get the salary increases he needs. "By your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return" (Luke 6:38). That's a law.

We cannot talk about a need for money without discussing the matter of giving to the Lord. Since everything is His--the cattle on a thousand hills, silver, gold, governments--He obviously is the one we should be turning to in our need. Jesus said, "Give, and it shall be given to you." And that includes our dealing with God. The prophet Malachi said that we had broken God's laws in this matter. Speaking for God, he said (Malachi 3:7-10),

"From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes, and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you." "But you say 'How shall we return?' Will a man rob God? Yet you are

robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed Thee?' In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."

The passage shows how seriously God takes the matter of giving. Obviously, if He owns everything, He doesn't really need our tithes and offerings, but He has gone to great lengths to teach us how things work. If we want to release the superabundance of the kingdom of heaven, we must first give. This is a beautiful promise for those facing economic trouble today. "Test me," says the Lord. "Prove me."

The following parable reveals another law of the kingdom, the law of use:

It is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves, and entrusted his possessions to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey." (Matthew 25: 14-15)

Servant number one received five talents. The parable says he went out and "traded with them" and eventually doubled them. The man with two talents did the same. Eventually he had doubled the amount left with him. The

third slave acted differently, however. The parable says he took the single talent, dug a hole, and buried it because he was afraid.

After a long time, the lord returned and called the slaves to him asking how they had done with his money. The first servant replied that he had taken the five talents and doubled them. The master was pleased and said: "Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master."

The next servant also reported that he had taken two talents and doubled them. And the Lord replied in the same way he had to the man with five talents.

Then it was the third man's turn. But he said, "Lord, I knew you were a hard man." "You reap where you don't sow. You gather where you don't even plant. So I was afraid. I figured the best thing to do was play it safe, so I wrapped the talent up nicely and hid it. Here it is; I didn't lose anything."

Most of us today can sympathize with this fellow. After all, if you're a trustee over somebody else's property, you have to be careful. But what did the master do in this illustration to help prepare us for the kingdom? He said,

You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I scattered no seed.

Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest. . . . cast out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 25:26-27, 30)

The man was considered wicked and sinful, because he refused to take what his lord had given him and put it to work, improving upon it. However, the startling point of the parable is the conclusion: ". . . 'to everyone who has shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away'" (Matthew 25:29). "'To everyone who has shall more be given.'" It's not fair. We have a poor man with only one talent and another who has improved his lot, and we take the one away from the former and give it to the one who already has ten. It goes against the grain. But that is because we have failed to see how important God views our use of what He has given us.

Despite our preconceived attitudes toward social justice, God's law of use controls the ultimate distribution of wealth. The Bible says to everyone who has, and who uses what he has, more shall be given. This principle holds true in the development of our bodies, in the development of our minds and in the development of our spiritual lives too. If we exercise our bodies will get stronger. If we exercise our minds, our knowledge will increase. If we pray, read

the Bible and exercise the understanding we already have, we will grow. Conversely, if we fail to exercise our bodies, our strength will wither. If we fail to use our knowledge, we will forget what we know. And if we fail to use the spiritual understanding we have, we will revert to ungodliness.

God's way is the way of gradual, sure growth and maturity, moving toward perfection. The sad fact is though not everyone--not even those committed to God--will enter in to this growth toward maturity. We are too much like the servant who took his talent and buried it. The problem is that we will look at someone successful in a field we would like to be in and say, "I wish I were like him." We want to have the success without having successively applied the law of use and waited for the growth. We want to go from obscurity and poverty to fame and riches in one quick jump. First we have to take what He has given and multiply it. We must steadily and patiently repeat the process again and again and then success will come.

Let's look at another law of God's kingdom, the law of perseverance is demonstrated in the story of the chick and the egg. The baby chick, approaching full life, finds himself in a nice, safe egg. Soon, however, he becomes aware that the shell keeping him so comfortable and safe is also limiting his life. So the little chick begins pecking at the shell, gaining strength from that God-ordained

struggle. Before long, he has attained the strength and the endurance to cope with a new environment, and he breaks through the shell ready for a new level of life.

People have tried to help little chicks by cracking the shell and opening it for them. But, short-circuiting God's process kills the chicks. They are stillborn and unable to handle the rigors of a new environment for even a few minutes.

The law of perseverance is critical to success in life and especially to life in the kingdom. Certain risks go with new life and growth in Christ--the risks of freedom, we might say--but God prepares us for those risks, through perseverance and struggle, building our muscles, as it were.

Jesus taught the law of perseverance in this passage.

He said:

Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened. (Matthew 7: 7-11).

We grasp His meaning more fully when we understand that the verbs "asks," "seeks," and "knocks" were written in the Greek present imperative and are to be understood as: "Keep asking, and it shall be given to you; keep seeking, and you shall find; keep knocking, and it shall be opened to you." The Father gives what is good to those who keep asking Him.

Jesus also said, "' . . . the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force'" (Matthew 11: 12). It does not come easily. The little chick we spoke of was violent; he had to be. Most of the secrets of God come forth with effort; the blessings of God are the same way.

Some Christians have been taught that all one has to do to get things from God is to speak the word of faith, believe, and receive. That comes close to the truth, but it neglects the law of perseverance. God slowly yields the good things of the kingdom and the world to those who struggle. This does not negate the necessity for asking in faith, believing, and receiving. But many times those steps are only the beginning of the process. The fulfillment may take years. Jesus gave this illustration of perseverance: He said:

"Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him;' and from inside he shall answer and say, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs." (Luke 11:5-8)



Jesus said, keep on asking, keep on seeking, and keep on knocking. Don't even be afraid to make a ruckus. God prefers that to laziness. He wants people who will work and maybe stumble a little, but keep on going forward.

We are to remember too, that we have an adversary, Satan. One of his favorite ways to trip the people of God is to foster discouragement and depression. That is why the Bible says repeatedly that Christians are to be patient, to hold on, to persist. We are to stay alert against discouragement and depression. We are to be aware of what our enemy is trying to do. We are to reject him and he will flee. God will not let trial and temptation overcome us if we will stand, but rather will make a way of victory for us. He wants us to persevere and will make if possible for us to do so.

Now to the miraculous. There is a law of miracles. It governs the question of God's willingness to disrupt His natural order to accomplish His purpose. When He does disrupt that natural order, the result is a miracle, a suspension of the natural laws through which He usually works. He overrides the way in which things normally operate.

Since God is almighty, He is not bound even by His own creation, He is perfectly able at any time to change the way things are done. He can heal a body instantly; He can still a storm, and He can move a mountain. Those are miracles.

Even then, however, He works with principles, and they frame the law of miracles.

We need miracles today and that means we need to understand the law of miracles and act on it. Jesus expected His followers to do even greater things that He did. During His time on earth He rebuked them for failing to do miracles like walking on water and casting out demons.

Through the process of salvation we are to see and enter into the kingdom of heaven, where the miraculous power resides. It is all ours, if we know the rules of miracles. The first principle is that we are to take our eyes off the circumstances and the impossibilities and to look to God and the possibilities. For miracles to happen through us, we must discern God's will rather than the circumstances.

We have a good example of this in Joshua and Caleb. Representing the twelve tribes of Israel, they and ten others were sent as spies to determine if the people should enter into the promised land. "They are too strong for us," ten of the spies said. But Caleb and Joshua were enthusiastic and eager to move ahead. They said, "It doesn't matter how many giants there are. The Lord is with us." They looked at God and not at the circumstances, which is what God expects His people to do.

The second principle is that we are not to doubt in our hearts. The inmost center of our beings--which the Bible

terms the "heart"--must be focused on our objective. Our hearts must be fully persuaded, without any doubt. We must be like Abraham, who against all hope believed God would grant him a son by his wife Sarah. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Romans 4:20-21).

In fact, the persuasion in our spirit must be so strong that it seems to us the desired result has already taken place. As Jesus put it, "believe that you have received" and you will have what you say.

The half-hearted, and the half-persuaded will never know miracle power. They will never experience success or victory in the visible or the invisible worlds. The goals they seek will always elude them, until they understand that their divided minds and spirits are actually projecting the seeds of failure into every situation.

When Mark told in his gospel of the cursing of the fig tree, he was careful to include the voice. Jesus spoke to the fig tree, and He told the disciples to command the mountain, which would do what they said if they didn't doubt in their hearts.

Scripture tells us further that Jesus stilled a storm by speaking to it, raised three dead people by speaking to them, cast out demons by speaking to them, cleansed a leper

by speaking to him, and healed a Roman officer's servant by speaking a word from a remote location.

Prayer for Jesus was communing with the Father, listening to the Father, watching the Father. Then, taking the authority that was His, Jesus spoke the word of the Father and the miracle happened.

So we see that miracles begin with certainty that God is present and that He has a purpose. Then we translate that purpose into the physical world by invoking His power, by single mindedly speaking the word of God to the mountain, the disease, the storm, the demons, or the finances. We do not pray further, unless the situation specifically calls for prayer. In one instance, Jesus said, "This kind [of unclean spirit] cannot come out by anything but prayer" (Mark 9:29). That means we pray in those cases.

Prayer is extremely important, and we are never to neglect it. Jesus gave us example after example, going off by Himself to pray for hours. And Paul went so far as to tell us to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

But once God's will is disclosed, then is the time to shift to speaking. Having faith, seeing, refusing to doubt, speaking--all are critically important parts of the law of miracles. But Jesus made one other point in the episode with the fig tree. He said:

Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who

is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions. (Mark 11: 25-26).

With those few words, He set forth the major hindrance to the working of miracles in the visible world--the lack of forgiveness. Many carry grudges and the power of God within them is eaten up by resentment.

Without forgiveness, we will see no miracles. If we want to experience the miraculous power of moving mountains, it is imperative that we live in a condition of forgiveness. Unforgiveness is not a characteristic acceptable in the kingdom of God. It contradicts the very doctrine of forgiveness. It reveals the horrible sin of pride. For only the humble can forgive--those who surrender anger, feelings, and reputation to the will of God.

Let's look at one more law of God's Kingdom--the law of dominion. Pat Robertson tells of a time when he heard God ask in an audible voice, "What do I desire for man?" Pat didn't know and God directed him to look in Genesis for the answer. Pat opened the Bible read the following:

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 1:26-27)

"Let them have dominion." He said, "Let them have dominion." God wants man to have dominion. He wanted it in the Garden of Eden and He wants it now.

The word dominion has two Greek translations. With the first word, radah, God gives man the authority to govern all that is willing to be governed. With the second, kabash, He grants man authority over the untamed and the rebellious. With these two words, God gave man sweeping and total dominion over this planet and everything in it.

But stewardship requires responsibility. God's intention was that His world be governed and subdued by those who were governed by God. But man did not want to remain under God's authority. He wanted to be like God without having anyone to tell him what to do.

Let's look at man's "fall" in the Garden of Eden. First, note that God, gave man dominion over the fish, the fowl, the cattle, and all the earth, even "every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." So man specifically had dominion over serpents.

But Eve faltered and allowed the serpent to convince her that God was being unreasonable. Consequently, Eve refused to exercise her authority; the serpent took authority over her and manipulated her. And with that first erosion, mankind allowed virtually all of his dominion to slip away. Since that time, Satan has been exercising a

type of dominion over human beings, deceiving them, destroying them.

We need to understand that God did not actually take the dominion away from man. He simply took away man's access to Him because of sin. Man still had dominion, but he lost the relationship and understanding necessary to exercise it properly.

You see, when man broke free of God's authority, he lost control of himself. Without a clear relationship with God, he became unable to see where he was going; and he soon became captive of what the Bible calls "the world, the flesh, and the devil" and the devil played upon man's base desires to seduce and entrap him.

However, the writer of the letter to the Hebrews, said that Jesus died ". . . that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives" (Hebrews 2:14-15).

When man accepts God's dominion over him, then he is capable of reasserting his God-given dominion over everything else. That is the way everything on earth will be freed from the cycle of despair, cruelty, bondage, and death.

The concept of man's dominion over the created order is too much for us to comprehend unless we understand that the Lord thinks of us as fellow workers with Him in the

development and operation of His kingdom. The Bible says that God, in a mystery too great for us to fathom, has chosen to use men to carry the truth around the world. To accomplish this, He had to give us authority.

In addition, the Bible speaks of that time when God's kingdom and His Christ will visibly rule on earth. "If we endure," Paul wrote, "we shall also reign with Him" (Timothy 2:12). That will involve exceptional authority. God wants us to prepare for it.

We see this exemplified in the accounts of the Lord sending His disciples out to minister: "And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to heal diseases. And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God, and to perform healing" (Luke 9:1-2).

Obviously, in the Lord's mind authority went hand in hand with the proclamation of the kingdom. Jesus gave his disciples power to perform miracles and authority to use that power over the devil and all creation.

At another time, speaking to seventy people who had gone out to minister, Jesus said: "'Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy'" (Luke 10:19). In giving His followers such authority, Jesus was saying, "I reestablish your authority over the one who robbed you of it in the garden. You can reassert your dominion."



Satan, although defeated, is alive today and is just as dangerous as we allow him to be. His primary weapon is deceit, and he uses it to prevent Christians from exercising the authority that is truly theirs in this world.

Too many times, people fall into the devil's trap of believing that we can somehow earn or grow into our dominion. If we fall for that, we will never feel worthy, and we will never use the dominion given us. And we will never overcome the crises in our lives and in the world. If Satan can keep us in a state of timidity, discouragement, or embarrassment, we will not take advantage of our authority and Satan will delay the manifestation of the kingdom of God on earth.

In practical terms, the law of dominion works much like the law of miracles. It depends on the spoken word. We are to take authority by voicing it, whether it involves the devil or any part of the creation. We should not argue with Satan. We merely tell him that he has to go, that he has no authority, that he must release this person or that situation. We say, "In the name of Jesus, I command you to get out of here, Satan!" Or something like that.

Also, once we discern the mind of the Lord, we tell the storm to quiet, the crops to flourish, the floodwater to recede, and the attacking dog to stop. We simply speak the word aloud. We simply are to speak forth our God-restored authority, preparing for an even more amazing era.

These are some of the laws of God's kingdom--the laws of reciprocity, use, perseverance, miracles, and dominion. Apply these laws to your life and your life will be conformed to the will of God. You will be successful. And the future will confirm that you are wise to adopt and conform to God's laws.

APPENDIX F

## EXIT QUESTIONNAIRE

For each question, please circle one response.

1. I was taught concepts of
  - a. Spirituotherapy.
  - b. Secret Kingdom.
  - c. I don't remember.
  
2. I
  - a. was familiar with this information.
  - b. knew this information but had never heard it presented in quite this way.
  - c. had heard some of this information before but some of it was new to me.
  - d. had never heard this information before.
  
3. I
  - a. agreed with everything taught.
  - b. agreed with most but not everything that was taught.
  - c. disagreed with much of what was said.
  - d. never thought much about what was said.
  
4. I found this information to be
  - a. life changing.
  - b. interesting.
  - c. less than interesting.
  
5. I would like to read a book or receive further instruction about the concept.
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

## APPENDIX G

**SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please rate the therapy you received as a negative or a positive experience, on a 10-point scale, with 1 being very negative and 10 being very positive.