

Growing Disciples – Witness To The World

Growing Disciples Series – Living In The Word. *What True Discipleship Requires*

Week 3: Concentric Circles 1-2: Self and Immediate Family (PG)

"The one who believes in Me ... will have streams of living water flow from deep within him."—
John 7:38

There are two basic types of relationships in life. One is the vertical relationship we have with God, which is our most important relationship. The only way we can come to the Father is on His conditions.

The other basic type of relationship is the horizontal relationships we have with other people. God has laid down the basis for all of our other relationships. Accepting His conditions for relationships means that we forfeit forever the right to choose whom we love. The kind of love we will express has nothing to do with looks, age, shape, size, color, sweetness, hostility, or personality. Our job is to love anyone Jesus chooses to bring into our lives. When you establish by faith the proper vertical relationship with God as your Heavenly Father, you can then have right horizontal relationships with others and deal with the basic problems of the world.

This week we will start by focusing on that first and most important relationship—your relationship with God. When your vertical relationship with God is right, He will begin helping you get a proper perspective of who you are in Christ. He will help you get to know the real you. From this foundation of a right relationship with God and a strong and proper view of self, God can begin to flow through your life to others.

OVERVIEW OF WEEK 3

Day 1: God's Design for You

Day 2: Circle 1: Get Right with Self

Day 3: The Need for Balance

Day 4: Circle 2: Immediate Family

Day 5: Meeting Needs at Home

DISCIPLESHIP HELPS FOR WEEK 3

Your Vertical Relationship with God (pp. 14-15)

Day 1: God's Design for You

God's Word for Today

"The one who believes in Me ... will have streams of living water flow from deep within him" ([John 7:38](#)).

↕ **Read and meditate on "God's Word for Today" (this week's verse to memorize) above and spend a moment in prayer as you begin today's lesson. Remove the Scripture-memory card from the back of your book and begin committing this verse to memory.**

The first and foremost barrier that would hinder you from reaching out in love to people in your concentric circles is that perhaps you have never met the One who is love. Have you met Jesus? The beginning point for preparing to share the good news with others is a right relationship with Jesus Christ. You must first get right with God.

We are designed for fellowship with the King—God Himself. As birds were made for the air and fish for the sea, people were created for fellowship with God. Nothing will satisfy the deepest needs of our beings until we have fellowship with Him. This right relationship with God, in turn, will result in the right kind of fellowship with others on God's conditions.

You receive God's grace when you come to Him under His conditions. As a believer, you have to continue accepting those conditions every day. [Colossians 2:6](#) says, "*As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him.*" What does that mean? It means that as you have accepted Jesus Christ by faith, you walk with Him each day by faith.

With our five senses we perceive the world. We lock into our minds as knowledge what our five senses tell us. We can know about God mentally, so many people only know about God. They can state many concepts about God, but they do not know God by experience.

My body makes me world-conscious, my mind makes me self-conscious, and my spirit makes me God-conscious. But if my spirit is dead in trespasses and sin (see [Ephesians 2:1](#) below), a holy God cannot be there. I still have a spirit, but it is dead toward God. In the new birth God breaks through and comes to dwell in me and makes me spiritually alive. I am then born from above.

The authority of the Christian life is no longer physical. When a Christian is born from above, the Spirit of God dwells in that person's spirit, flows through his mind, and moves through his body. Then we Christians "present [our] bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God" ([Romans 12:1](#)). Why? So that "the one who believes in Me ... will have streams of living water flow from deep within him" ([John 7:38](#)).

When you are born again, you are alive to God. You are now the channel through which the Holy Spirit wants to move and manifest Himself to the world.

Perhaps you have deep needs in your life and are hurting. Remember that because God loves you, He has already made provision for every need in your life. His greatest provision is that He can forgive your sins. You can join the church, lead a moral life, help people, and give money to the church. But these actions cannot take away your sin.

Jesus Christ entered history and died to save us from our sins. He paid the price of death for our sins so that we can be forgiven. Jesus' death is God's provision for our need. Because of Him, we have eternal life. Everything has been done that is required for you to get right with God. You have to come to God on His conditions. If you have never done that, you will not be able to witness about the good news that Jesus saves.

"You were dead in your trespasses and sins."—Ephesians 2:1

↕ **Pray and ask God about the true nature of your relationship with Him. How would you evaluate it?**

- I don't have a relationship with Jesus Christ.
 - I don't have the kind of faith relationship with Jesus Christ that you described, but I would like to know Him that way.
 - I have a faith relationship with Jesus Christ, but I've strayed from closeness with Him. I need to repent of sin and return to Him.
 - I have a faith relationship with Jesus Christ and seek daily to walk in a right relationship with Him.
-

If you don't have a relationship with Jesus Christ, follow the steps below to establish that relationship.

Establishing a Relationship with Jesus Christ

- Agree with God about your sin and your failure to measure up to His standards.
- Ask Him to forgive you, and to release you from the guilt of your past.
- Place your trust in what Jesus did for you by paying your penalty for sin on the cross.
- Invite Him to come into your life and become your Lord. Pledge to follow Him.
- If you need more help, talk to a Christian friend or a pastor.

If you have a relationship with Jesus, evaluate your fellowship with Him. Are you in agreement with Him in your daily walk? Are you obeying Him? Are you trusting Him daily to give you victory over sin? After doing this evaluation, if you recognize that the Holy Spirit is leading you to make changes, do it now. Repent of and turn away from any known sin. Choose afresh to make Christ Lord of your life daily.

① For guidance in identifying specific ways you might need to repent, turn to pages 106-7 and complete the inventory in "Your Vertical Relationship with God."

↕ Praying for My Circles Today

Thank God for any commitments He has led you to make today. Ask for His help in walking in close fellowship with Him. Repent of any other sins He brings to your attention.

Day 2: Circle 1: Get Right with Self

God's Word for Today

"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

↕ Read and meditate on "God's Word for Today" above and spend a moment in prayer as you begin today's lesson.

Let's discuss self and what keeps the divine flow of God's love moving through it. No matter what methodology we use, if self is not right, we have problems. Self is your biggest problem and my biggest problem. In the natural economy of the self, we say, "I love me, and I want you to make me happy." Isn't that nice? As long as you meet my conditions, everything is going to be all right. The only problem with that is that it will not work!

All of us, you see, were born with the first Adam's nature. Its allegiance has three words, all personal pronouns: me, my, and mine.

① Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 in your Bible. In verse 11 how did the writer describe his achievements?

"When I considered all that I had accomplished and what I had labored to achieve, I found everything to be futile and a pursuit of the wind. There was nothing to be gained under the sun."—Ecclesiastes 2:11

This guy had "I" trouble. I, me, my, mine. He had a blank check, no limit, carte blanche. You say, "Wouldn't that be great?" Not necessarily.

You may ask, "What does all this have to do with evangelism?" Everything. There is a flow of life in every person. The flow is either through you or to you. Jesus told us that someone who believes in Him "will have streams of living water flow from deep within him" (John 7:38). But you see, life cannot flow through you when you always want it to flow to you. We cannot win the world around us when we are not sure about our own private world.

In relationships we learn to wear masks with people. We play games in our relationships by always changing our masks. With one person we are a certain way, with another person we are a different way, and in business we are a different way. We feel we have to act a certain way if we want to elicit a certain response from a client, an employer, or an employee, or people we want to impress. After a while we forget which mask we have worn with which person. Suddenly we switch masks and surprise or confuse them. How can others develop a meaningful relationship with an unreal person? You must allow God to help you become the real person He intends for you to be.

② What masks have you worn in the past and for what purpose?

God wants you to feel good about you. He doesn't want you to try and cover up the real you. The Scriptures say, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 19:19). You cannot love others without first loving yourself. You have to feel good about you.

③ What do you think it means to feel good about yourself?

God wants you to feel good about you. He wants you to love you. That sounds strange, doesn't it? What do you do when you love you? The Bible tells husbands to love their wives as they love their own bodies (Ephesians 5:28). Do you stand in front of the mirror and say, "Oh, I just love me"? No! When you love yourself, you meet your own needs. You feed yourself, cleanse yourself, brush yourself, shine yourself, paint yourself, clothe yourself, warm yourself, and cool yourself. Is there anything wrong with any of those things? Of course not. That is loving yourself. God wants us to take care of ourselves. Love is meeting needs.

"Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself."—Ephesians 5:28

④ What evidence suggests that you love yourself?

- I take care of my physical needs.
- I seek to grow spiritually.
- I seek to grow mentally.
- I take care of my physical health by exercising and eating right.
- Other:

What do you need to do to better meet your own needs?

↕ **Praying for My Circles Today**

Ask God to reveal any masks you are wearing before Him and others. Take off the masks in His presence and ask Him to mold you into the new creation He wants you to be.

Day 3: The Need for Balance

God's Word for Today

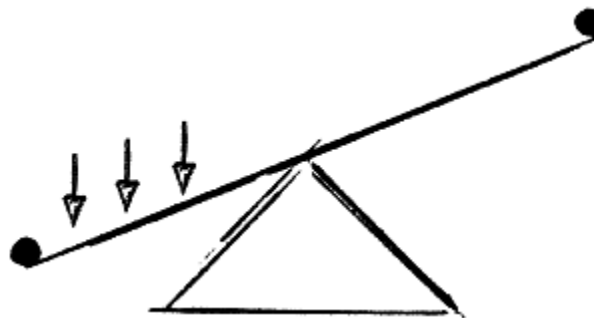
"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

↕ **Read and meditate on "God's Word for Today" above and spend a moment in prayer as you begin today's lesson.**

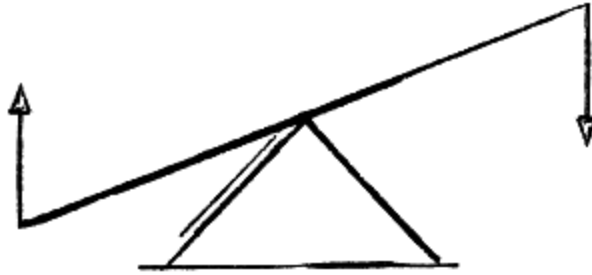
The self seeks balance. Our lives are much like a seesaw. The problems of life come, and pressure pushes us down to make us think less of ourselves. We feel guilty, and this pushes us further down. That selfish sin nature wants to get back up.

All this begins to happen at an early age. All we want is to be balanced, but someone else gets on our little seesaw and begins to criticize us, to push us back down. Any kind of criticism causes immediate reaction. What do we do? If you hit me, I am going to hit you back! You criticize me, and I say that you are not so hot either. This is the natural, normal result of self-compensation: I am going to take care of me.

When someone tries to help us, we are sensitive and insecure. We think others are pushing us down, so we work to push ourselves back up again. When we begin to react toward other people, we begin to sense a feeling of control. If we have natural abilities, we use that control for our own selfish interests.



Pressures and problems push down on us



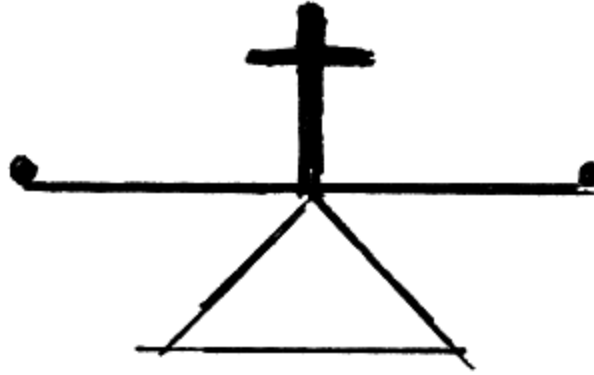
The old nature uses wrong ways to get back up.

Here are some of the things people become when they react and respond to being pushed down.

- The mask who hides the real person
 - The intimidator with an inferiority complex
 - The self-centered achiever
 - The topped-out achiever
 - The bottomed-out underachiever
 - The neurotic daydreamer
 - The psychotic who has escaped reality
 - The person who has created an alternate lifestyle looking for meaning
 - The alcoholic or drug addict who flees reality
- ① Reread the previous list and check ways you have acted in the past because you were hurting and feeling bad about yourself.**

If you are still living in one of these ways, decide to turn away from that false self and turn to the Lord. Ask Him to heal the brokenness or fill the emptiness. Ask Him to help you experience His love, forgiveness, and acceptance in such a way that your inferiority complex disappears. Ask Him to help you accept the person He created you to be. Ask Him to bring balance into your life.

How do we achieve balance? This is an oversimplification, but here it is: go to the cross. There we are clear and clean and balanced and do not have a running battle with anyone or ruptured relationships anywhere. If we are going to achieve the balance Jesus offers, we must come to the cross; die to self; die to me, my, and mine; and let Him be Lord. Jesus Christ brings balance to your life.



Life is balanced by Jesus Christ.

If someone blames us even though we are not guilty, we take that to the cross too. We do not let bitterness build up. You might say, "But he criticizes me all the time." So what? If you know who you are in Christ, who cares? If your Heavenly Father—the Creator of the universe—loves you, cares for you, and accepts you, that is enough! The person who is balanced is not devastated by criticism. He knows who he is in his relationship with God. He can rest in his relationship with Jesus Christ.

When you start living a holy life and God begins to love through you, some people will be upset. Because your lifestyle will rise higher than their lifestyles, they will feel bad about their lifestyles. Your lifestyle condemns theirs. Their inferiority complex gets irritated, and they try to put you down to start feeling better about themselves. They will start throwing rocks. You could get upset, but you just love them anyway.

Why do you want to achieve? God made you to be the best you can be, so don't feel guilty. Don't compare yourself to anyone else. You are like a snowflake. You are like a fingerprint. You are you. You are one of a kind. God made you to be you. And when Jesus fills you, you can accept you. You can be balanced.

God has a ministry for you, and He has a plan for you. Be faithful in the things you can do. You are not to judge yourself by your peer group. Do not be condemned by anybody else's standards. You are you.

Do not worry about your achievement level either. You achieve for the glory of God. As you achieve, you lay your successes at His feet. Do all you do for the glory of God (Col 3:23).

If we can achieve that balance, we will achieve it at the cross. That is why I glory in the cross. That is why Jesus died for me. That is where I can find forgiveness of sin. That is where I do not have to blame anyone else. That is where God's goodness and love flow to me. That is where I find achievement. I do not have to be frustrated, comparing myself to other people. I am who I am.

↕ Praying for My Circles Today

Determine whether any of the following apply to you. Ask God to show you the truth of who He is for your situation.

- Someone blames, accuses, or corrects you for something for which you are guilty.
- Someone blames, accuses, or corrects you for something for which you are not guilty.
- You are so wounded or hurt that you want to run away or escape.
- Your inferiority complex attacks, and you feel worthless, unloved, inadequate, or inferior.
- You are driven to achieve.
- You despise who you are and envy someone else.

Day 4: Circle 2: Immediate Family

God's Word for Today

"Go back to your home, and tell all that God has done for you.' And off he went, proclaiming throughout the town all that Jesus had done for him" ([Luke 8:39](#)).

↕ **Read and meditate on "God's Word for Today" above and spend a moment in prayer as you begin today's lesson.**

As we move beyond self and circle 1, we make a survey of circle 2 and list the members in our immediate family. Here I list Leslee, my wife, and my daughter Ashley and her family although she is married and Elicia who is not married. Because my parents are alive and are older than 70 and I am the oldest son I also list them in circle 2. I am in constant contact with them. These seven I consider to be a part of my immediate family responsibility.

Rightfully aligned your immediate family are those who live under your roof. If you are away from home and not married, your survey for circle 2 will include your mother and father. If you are married, your immediate family will be your spouse and children. The rest of your family will go in circle 3, relatives. We will discuss your survey of relatives in week 4.

Let me tell you how I try to meet my family's needs every day. First I ask myself, *What is my daily responsibility to my wife, Leslee?* God has put me into her life, and I accept His conditions for my relationship with her. I am there to meet her needs with the Lord's help, whatever those needs may be. A Christian marriage means I commit myself first to Jesus Christ and then to my wife. Because my commitment is first to Christ, I accept my wife on His conditions with all the immeasurable love He has. My attitude toward her is like Jesus' attitude toward the church. He loved it, and He poured out His life for it (see [Ephesians 5:25](#)).

My Gem of a wife Leslee serves with me and other than the Lord, she is my chief supporter in ministry. Quite honestly, I admit more readily now days that God has given me the exact helper that I need for the way He has wired me in personality and ministry mindset. She is truly team “God’s will be done in our lives.”

I also have a daughter, Elicia. She is a single adult female. Elicia has learned a lot from hearing me speak, so when she understands that until she is married and has a husband she is still under my spiritual covering. If she calls me or if I call her, I normally ask how she is doing and I try to ascertain what her needs are. Who knows? She may say something like, “Dad my service engine light in my car is on.” I may ask “when is the last time your car had an oil change,” or she may say dad I need a few dollars, and depending on the mood that dad is in she normally hits the jackpot.

Although my daughter Ashley is married to my son in law Chris, I also include them in my circle. From a distance I try to lightly coach and lead my son in law to grow into the role that God has allowed him to enter as the Priest of his home and concentric family circles, modeling for him how to serve as the spiritual covering as a Priest, protector, provider of his immediate family.

Then there is my dear 70 plus year old treasure of a mother. She tries not to ask me for much and usually prefaces any request with “I know how busy you are.” What a precious blessing she is. She has a heart for ministry, running a faith based non-profit until health would not allow her to any longer. of writing. I suppose if she could, she would still be going strong in that ministry of service. My Stepdad serves as a deacon in his home church and serves as health permits. They uplift you and encourage the recipient.

These are my immediate family, my circle 2. "But," you may say, "your second circle does not have any lost people in it." That's right. But if you are not loving those in your second circle, you are surely not going to love those in circle 7 very well. You see, this lifestyle is loving the saved and the lost. My circle 2 is a place for me to practice loving others by meeting their needs. It's a place for me to help my family learn to show love by meeting needs in their concentric circles too.

If you are not the channel of God's love to meet the needs of those in your immediate family, who will be?

① In week 1 you listed your immediate-family members on page 14. Now complete a separate survey form for each person in your immediate family (the form may be duplicated as needed). Include as much information as you have available. Add to this survey as you discover more information that may be helpful to you.

② Ask yourself, *Have I knowingly omitted anyone from this circle because of a broken relationship?* If so, go back and add that information.

↕ Give that relationship to the Lord and ask Him what you need to do next.

↕ Praying for My Circles Today

Pray for each person in your immediate family. Ask the Lord to reveal their needs. Record these on your survey forms. Ask Him to teach you how to pray for and show love to each one. As you pray for each one, record on your survey forms any insights the Lord may give you.

Day 5: Meeting Needs at Home

God's Word for Today

"Love is patient; love is kind. Love does not envy; is not boastful; is not conceited; does not act improperly; is not selfish; is not provoked; does not keep a record of wrongs; finds no joy in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, Love never ends" (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

↕ **Read and meditate on "God's Word for Today" above and spend a moment in prayer as you begin today's lesson.**

Love is meeting needs. If I am not allowing God to use me to meet my family's needs, my evangelism becomes hypocrisy. No wonder we don't want to share the gospel with the whole world. If it is not real at home, it is not going to be real out there either. God has given the home as the context in which we learn to build relationships.

I've heard the stories of many believers who didn't do very well in high school or in college and after some time they want to go into ministry. Although this is admirable and God is the source of all ministry success for those who desire to serve Him in ministry, tragically, many students have to overcome a weaker backgrounds in the school of learning and knowledge or make major adjustments in later years with spouses or families in tow. Education is a discipline, an opportunity to acquire tools you will use for the rest of your life. You can start building that foundation later in life. However, once precious years are gone, making up for lost time becomes more and more complicated the later you wait. The same principle applies to relationships. If we do not use the home as the basis for building relationships, we do not have the relational tools we will need later.

Dr. Thompson shared this principle in his class one day. Several days later, one of his students came to his office and said, "I really blew it. We have just started seminary, and my wife has been homesick. This is the first time she has ever lived a long distance from her family. Our house here is much smaller than the one we left. Yesterday she was just miserable. She said she didn't know what to do. I know God wants us here. The student began to lecture her. He said, "Honey, you know God has called us here. You know this is our calling."

The next morning in class God captured that student. The man said, "I did not meet my wife's needs." He went to her and asked, "Honey, will you forgive me? I am so blind that I do not even know what your needs are."

She said, "I was just lonely, afraid, and insecure in a new city, in a new life. I love you. All I wanted was for you to put your arms around me and hold me and say, 'Baby, it's all right!'"

Are there times when you need to take your child in your arms and just listen? Are there times when you need to turn the computer or television off and listen to your family? Learn their needs and then meet their needs.

Once Oscar was teaching a night session for seminary students' wives. They were talking about concentric circles. After the second meeting one of the wives asked to talk with him. She said, "My husband has been discouraged with one of his classes. I work all day long. I arrive at home after a hard day's work and rush to make dinner. Then I walk to our session. But after the evening session last week as I got to the door of our house, I had that ringing in my ears, "Love is meeting needs! Love is meeting needs!"

She continued, "The first thing I saw when I walked through the door was my husband sitting in his easy chair watching the football game."

He said, "Honey, will you bathe the kids and put them to bed?"

She said, "There were dirty dishes from dinner. The house was a wreck. He had done nothing all day long." She sighed and continued, "I took a deep breath. I did not feel very loving, but I decided to trust the Lord to love through me. What are his needs? Well, the first is for me not to create a scene." So she said to her husband, "I have wanted to see the children all day. This will give me an opportunity to be with them."

By the time she had changed clothes and went to get the children, she heard the bath water running. He had already begun bathing the children. He said, "If you will towel off this one, I will take care of the other one."

She continued, "You know, God began to do something in my heart toward my husband. There has been so much pressure between us lately, but now it all seems to be gone. I have come to realize that my own responsibility before God is to be His channel for meeting needs."

① Have you been hurting silently because a family member seems to be overlooking your needs? Ask God how you can begin the flow of reciprocal love by loving him or her first. Ask the Lord for wisdom to know what to say, if anything, to let your family know of your need.

What about children? Parents are to meet children's needs. We need to listen to our teens and hear from them what their needs are. We can't presume to know what those needs are; we must listen. Teens are crying out for love, for mothers and fathers to understand what they are going through.

We need to pray for our children. We need to pray for the Holy Spirit to speak to them, to convict them. But most importantly, we need to pray for the Holy Spirit to make us the kind of mothers and fathers our children need. We must pray that we will listen, that we will hear, and that we will meet their needs. There is no better success story in the world than that of a mother and father who can look at their baby who has developed into a man or woman and who radiates the character of Jesus Christ, who knows and cares about the needs of others. That is success!

↕ **Praying for My Circles Today**

What are some ways God wants you to love your immediate family? Take time now to pray for each family member. Ask the Lord what his or her needs are and what He would like to do through you even today to meet their needs. Check any of the following actions He is leading you to take.

- Show grace and mercy by forgiving and restoring a broken relationship.
- Show love by meeting a need or needs.
- Ask the family member how you can pray for him or her.
- Cultivate a closer relationship by building a relational bridge.

Take notes on your survey forms. As God reveals things He wants you to do, describe the project, need, opportunity, or action planned. Start meeting needs for God's pleasure.

Your Vertical Relationship with God

Prayerfully read the following list of sins and areas of sin. Ask the Lord to reveal to you any area in which you have not turned away from sin and experienced His cleansing. Ask Him to show you any sin that hinders your fellowship with Him. You may want to check any God identifies so that you can seriously deal with your sin. You may prefer to write these on a separate sheet of paper that can be disposed of later.

- Unbelief—not believing God will keep His word
- Rebellion—disobedience, not letting Christ be Lord of all, living my own way
- Pride/arrogance—thinking more highly of myself than I ought
- Bitterness, unforgiveness, holding a grudge
- Sins of the tongue—gossip, slander, murmuring, lying, cursing, filthy speech, vain talk, obscenity
- Dishonesty, deceit
- Mental impurity
- Addiction to harmful or illegal substances
- Addiction to pornography (either visual or written)
- Sexual immorality
- Stealing, cheating, embezzlement
- Anger, hatred, malice, rage, uncontrolled temper
- Idolatry—worshiping another god or loving something or someone more than I love God
- Poor stewardship of my time and resources
- Prayerlessness
- Taking unfair advantage of others, oppressing others
- Disobedience to the Lord's clear commands
- Injustice, failing to defend the oppressed
- Murder, hating others without a cause
- Causing strife, conflict, and dissension in the church
- Worshiping with my lips when my heart is far away from loving the Lord
- Leaving my first love for Christ by loving other people, things, or activities more than the Lord
- Others: _____

This is certainly not a complete list of sins. You can miss God's standards in many ways through your thoughts, actions, and words. Develop a heart that is ready to confess and repent at the slightest whisper of conviction from the Holy Spirit. If God has convicted you of sin, take these actions now to get right with Him.

1. Confess: agree with God that you have sinned.
2. Repent: turn away from your sin and turn to God to live His way.
3. Seek the Lord's forgiveness and cleansing.
4. Show your repentance by a changed life/deeds.

Now ask the Lord to reveal any idols of the heart that may have led you away from your wholehearted love for the Lord. Idols can be things, relationships, or activities. They may not be evil in themselves, but perhaps they have captured too much of your love. One way to test something is to ask yourself, *If God asked me to give this up, would I resist Him or struggle to obey?* If you are holding on too tightly, the item may be an idol of the heart. Only the Lord can reveal to you whether something has captured your love, but He will if you ask Him. Examples could include—

- hobbies or collections;
- a material object you treasure too dearly;
- material things that consume far too much of your time using them or maintaining them;
- things that you own to impress others or that cause you to feel arrogant or condescending toward others;
- things you have purchased for yourself that you know God didn't want you to have;
- activities you love that consume too much of your time and may keep you from your time with God or from obediently serving Him (like television, sports, work/career, or recreation);
- relationships that keep you from your first love for Christ.

List things or activities God brings to your mind. Use extra paper if you need more space.

If you have questions about whether an item has become an idol in your heart, talk to the Lord about it until you have peace about the way God sees it. If something comes to mind and you are still not sure about whether it is an idol of your heart, write it down with a question mark. Continue praying about the matter until you have some clear direction from the Lord.

If you have identified idols of your heart, pray through the following steps and check each one when you finish.

1. Confess to the Lord that you have given your love and attention to these items or activities. Agree with Him that you have sinned.
2. Ask Him to forgive and cleanse you.
3. Ask Him to set you free from your love for these things. Remember the height from which you have fallen. Return to your first love.
4. Pledge to Him your love and desire to please and obey Him.