



# 1

*IMPROVING YOUR  
BEHAVIOR WILL NOT  
GIVE YOU VICTORY IN  
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE*

For the next eight weeks we're going to take a journey together. It will be a spiritual journey. We are going to explore some scriptural truths that will transform your life. I know, because that's what happened to me when God began to teach me these things.

For thirty years I tried to live a consistent Christian life. I'm not proud to admit that for seventeen of those years I was a local church pastor. I never felt like I was consistent in the way that I wanted to be. My problem wasn't a lack of sincerity. Nobody could have been more serious about their Christian life than I was. Yet I couldn't seem to experience the "abundant life" Jesus talked about in John 10:10. I believed in grace completely, but experiencing it in my own life was often illusive and hard to nail down. I felt frustrated a lot of the time because I knew there had to be more to the Christian life than I was experiencing.

Can you relate to the kind of frustration I'm describing? What would you say are the biggest frustrations you have in trying to live a Christian life? List three of them below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. \_\_\_\_\_

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In 1990, God began to teach me truth that completely revolutionized my life. I'm not exaggerating when I say that when I look back on the person I was before then, it's like I'm looking at somebody

Day One

John 10:10

else. I certainly don't make any claims to perfection. My family and friends will attest to that. If you knew me well, you'd soon see my shortcomings. But I can honestly say that since coming to learn the truths that you'll study in this workbook, my life has never been the same. My family and friends will attest to that too.

In the space below, write a short description of what your Christian life would look like if God miraculously answered your prayers about living a victorious life:

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Consider what Jesus said in John 10:10.

“I have come so that you might have life and have it more abundantly.” What kind of life did Jesus promise to give us?

What other words would you use as synonyms for “abundant?”

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John 10:10

Before we actually begin to look at the eight truths that will enable you to experience the grace walk, it is important for you to understand a vital aspect of your study for these weeks. The biblical truths that will be presented in this study aren't something you can learn. They have to be revealed to you by the Holy Spirit. Let me explain:

*"I have come so that  
you might have life  
and have it more  
abundantly."  
— John 10:10*

There are at least two ways that people receive knowledge. Each one has a different effect on us. The first way comes by receiving information. Acquiring content is the goal in this type learning process. When we learn this way, we come to know something that we didn't previously understand.

As we move through these eight weeks together, you will receive content from the Word of God. At the end of this journey, you may find that you possess knowledge of certain scriptural truths that you haven't considered until now.

Gaining information can certainly be a good thing. But if that is all that happens in this study, you'll miss the heart of the truths this book communicates. Information will educate you. It will give you knowledge about the subject at hand.

However, there is a deeper level of knowledge for those who are Christians. This kind of learning is called revelation. It is a higher, more meaningful level of learning because it comes through supernatural means.

Divine revelation occurs when the Holy Spirit takes a truth from the Word of God and causes it to come alive to us so that we see it and understand it in a way that we have never seen or understood it

before. This illumination is one role of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised that Christians have the supernatural capacity to learn spiritual truths. Those who aren't believers don't know anything about this type learning because spiritual truths can only be seen by those who are made spiritually alive.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:14 and answer the following question: What difference exists between the way believers and unbelievers comprehend spiritual truth?

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In John 16:13, Jesus said that “when He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth . . .” As you begin this journey toward a transformed life, it is important that you approach God’s Word with an attitude of dependence on the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, you will miss the deeper element of Bible study.

While an education will inform you, revelation from the Word of God will do much more than that. It will transform you. It won't just cause you to know more. It will enable you to be more as you learn who you are in Christ and how to walk in the power of His indwelling life. That's where the “experience” aspect of the grace walk comes into focus.

That is what I pray takes place for you. Will you pause and pray, asking the Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth as you walk through this study? Ask Him to reveal truth to you that will cause you to be transformed by the supernatural understanding of these eight keys that unlock the door to victory in the Christian life.

1 Corinthians 2:14

*“Divine revelation occurs when the Holy Spirit takes a truth from the Word of God and causes it to come alive to us . . .”*

John 16:13

Before you pray, pause for a moment and consider the following questions: What do you hope to gain for your life from a study of grace?

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How would you briefly describe your concept of grace at this point?

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What are the questions for which you would like to find answers from this study?

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We'll begin to look at the truths that will cause you to experience the grace walk tomorrow. First, it's important to lay the right foundation in your heart. Don't you agree? Would you agree with me in the following prayer? If so, just sign your name to it and date it. You and I are in agreement right now that God will answer this prayer in your life.

*Father, give me a revelation of Your grace and transform my life by the full truth of the Gospel. I don't want to finish this study with nothing more than a better education of the Bible. I want real transformation in my life. I commit myself to You and look to Your Spirit to guide me into all truth.*

*Signed:*

*Date:*

Are you ready to start your journey toward experiencing the grace walk? Good!

Let's begin by thinking about how you have lived your Christian life until now. The fact that you are reading a book like this one probably indicates that you have a sincere hunger to live as a victorious Christian. But, if you are like many other Christians, you may feel that your level of spiritual victory has been mediocre at best.

That is the place that many of us have lived our Christian lives for years. Many know what it is to rededicate themselves to live for God and then to sincerely try hard, only to ultimately discover that they just can't live it like they want to.

For some of us, this is all we know of the Christian life. Mediocrity in the Christian life leaves us with a gnawing sense that there must be more to being a Christian than this. Surely, we think, this isn't how God means for the Christian life to be!

The Bible describes the Christian life as joyful and victorious. Maybe, like many others, when you look at the level at which you live as a Christian, it leaves you yearning for something more.

On a scale of one to ten, how well do you experience the following verse in your own life? "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ" (2 Cor. 2:14). Pause and think about this question. What numerical value would you assign to your level of victory right now? (circle)[1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10]

It is important to know where you are before you can discover how to reach where you want to go.

Day Two

[2 Corinthians 2:14](#)

How would you define your Christian walk as you see it at this moment?

- Victorious always*
- Occasional victories, occasional defeats*
- More defeats than victories*
- Not as good as I could be,  
but not as bad as some others*
- Defeated*

Do you truly believe it is possible to live a victorious Christian life? Or do you believe that you will always be defeated? Be honest about your answer.

For the remainder of this week, we are going to examine the first biblical truth that can facilitate you experiencing this grace walk. Read it slowly and meditate on this first truth. If you struggle with the idea that it is true, that's okay. As you move through this week of study, I will offer biblical evidence to persuade you.

TRUTH #1: IMPROVING YOUR BEHAVIOR WILL NOT GIVE YOU  
VICTORY IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

At first glance, this statement may sound untrue to you. After all, most of us have even heard at church that we should rededicate ourselves to God to do better. On the surface, it sounds right, but I want to ask you a question about your own experience: Has trying