

# Re-Dedication

**Matthew 5:13-16** [NIV] *“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

**Are people going to be convinced about God’s “Way of Life” by what they see in our lives?**

**John 13:34-35** [NIV] *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

We have **something fantastic to give**, the ability to show others how Christ would live if He were a human being today.

**The future of these people looking at us will depend greatly on how much God can serve them through us.**

**And our ability to serve these people will depend totally on how much we are living God’s way of life RIGHT NOW.**

Was our **best Christian attitude** at the time of our **baptism** and ever since then, has it been a gradual downhill path?

The specific purpose of this article is to **remind us** all of the great **responsibility** we all have and to **show you “keys” to re-dedicate** ourselves to the job we have PERSONALLY been called by our Creator God to do ... right NOW ...

## First A Warning

**Luke 13:6-9** [NIV] *“Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’” “Sir,” the man replied, “leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.”*

**We are all subject to the “law of Inertia” (resistance to change).**

Sometimes the only way to tackle a stubborn problem is an *“inspired blitz”* ... with a dash of *“stick-to-it-ness”*.

## Our Part In God’s Witness

**Romans 10:17** [King James] *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*

**When read in context it is *not* about our faith but others** who are being witnessed to.

**Faith** ... Greek word *“Pistis”* [pis-tis] persuasion, **credence (credibility)**, conviction.

**Hearing** ... Greek word “*Akoe*” [ak-o-ay]. **TWO distinct meanings** (when the word is repeated indicates that BOTH meanings should be considered).

a) **What has come to the ear** ... preaching, reporting, **fame** of the messenger (translated “*fame*” in **Matthew 4:24; Matthew 14:1** and **Mark 1:28** ... of Christ).

**No message is accepted or believed unless you have respect for the messenger.**

We are the ones who have to **give** the **credibility** to the message God is giving to the world through His Church Universal.

b) **What is heard being UNDERSTOOD ... this “by the Word of God”**. The “Word of God” IS the basis of the message we give. “*Don’t believe me, believe what you read in the Bible*”

**Romans 10:17** [King James] “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”

“*So then*” ... Greek word “*Ara*” [Ar-ah] ... you see, as a result of, the conclusion drawn.

**Now we can understand more clearly why God** is so insistent on our bearing much fruit (character).

**John 15:1-2, 8** [NIV] “*I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.*” ... “*This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*”

**I repeat my earlier statement ...**

**“The future of many people will depend greatly on how much God can serve them through us.”**

**Romans 5:5** [NIV] “*And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*”

The Greek word translated “*into*” can also be translated “*through*”, **we** being the vehicle of God’s Love.

It is a very **true saying ... “We cannot give it until we live it”**.

If you don’t remember anything else of this presentation remember this statement, “***We cannot give it until we live it.***”

**Matthew 5:48** [NIV] “*Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*”

“Be perfect” ... Greek word “*Teleios*” [Tel-i-os] **completeness** – maturity or the obtaining of the **goal aimed for** (in labour, growth, mental or moral character) ...

**Don’t let our misunderstanding of this word perfect deceive us into inaction ...** saying “*Oh I will never be perfect*” ... **You can and you will.**

**Matthew 5:1-12** [NIV] “*Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*”

This same chapter “**spells out**” **God’s way of life** to make it our goal, for this is **how to become perfect**.

**Don’t aim for less**, this **world** is full of **people** and products that **accept lower than best possible standards**. Most have never experienced real quality, we are surrounded by wood veneers, hollow doors, paper and plastic shoes, synthetic foods, plastic organs in our body.

## **What does the Bible say a Christian life should be like?**

**John 10:10** “... *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly...*”

**John 14:27** “*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you...*”

**John 15:11** “... *and that your joy might be full.*”

**Can we read these scriptures and say “*that’s me*”** – that describes my life perfectly?

**Ephesians 3:20** “*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding and abundantly above all that we ask or think.*”

Is this the experience of our prayers? If not, why not?

**There is a way of living that will actually cause these effects in our lives.**

**Matthew 11:28-30** [NIV] “*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*”

God is here offering a life that will give us fulfilment and rest ...

**Is our “yoke” in life easy (Well Fitting) or** do we find it more like a “**daily grind?**”

**The only way to make it “well fitting” is to allow God to work in us.**

The picture that would come to the minds of those who heard this first, who were part of an agrarian society, would be two working animals being linked by a well fitting yoke. One animal, the lead animal, who was well experienced and stronger, guiding the younger, less experienced animal linking to him. Both animals working in harmony, both giving their best to the job in hand.

Christ was offering a place at His side in a job of work that needed to be done. We have to be willing to be led and guided by Him and yield our strength to Him for such a combined work team.

**When we learn HOW to be Christians then these scriptures WILL be describing our lives.**

**Two keys or attitudes that are essential to fulfilling these scriptures in our lives:-**

**KEY 1:**

**Psalm 37:4** [NIV] “*Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.*”

“*Delight*” ... Greek word “*Anag*” [aw-nag] (**awe rather than nag**) to be soft and pliable in a **feminine way** (as a woman can be but not all wives are).

**Ladies if it works with God it’s sure to work with your husbands, it’s worth a try?**

**Psalm 37:5** [NIV] *“Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:”*

“Commit” Greek word “Galal” [Gaw-lal] to transmit, to turn over to.

**Paul** suggested a similar attitude **to the Roman Church**.

**Romans 6:13** [NIV] *“Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.”*

“Offer” Greek word “Paristano” [Par-is-tan-o] to stand beside, to be at hand (ready) to aid – **just like a servant or wife** is intended to be.

“Parts” Greek word “Melos” [mel-os] limbs or parts of the body, **includes faculties** our mind and talents.

**Ephesians 2:8-10** [King James] *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

**Ephesians 2:19-22** [NIV] *“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”*

God's dwelling place. A place cleansed by Christ's Blood and made Holy by His Righteousness being credited to us. Fit then for the Holy Spirit to make His abode.

**Allow God to use us. Be pliable to His commands – Wife-like.**

**Romans 12:1** [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

“Offer” same Greek word translated “yield” in **Romans 6:13**.

**Romans 12:2** [NIV] *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-- his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

“Conform” Greek word “suschematizo” [soos-khay-mat-id-zo] to fashion alike.

To conform to the same pattern, as a Chameleon changes its colour to its surroundings.

“Transformed” Greek word “metamorphoo” [met-am-or-fo-o] change, transfigure, metamorphosis – chrysalis into a butterfly.

**Romans 12:3-21** [NIV] *“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep*

*your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."*

A practical list of things we can apply to day-to-day living – relationships with others.

**Isaiah 6:5-8** [NIV] *"Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"*

A beautiful attitude. We need to look for such opportunities to respond to God in this way and by that response showing how thankful we are for what He has done for us through Christ's sacrifice.

## **KEY 2:**

### **Obey the first and great commandment**

**Matthew 22:36-38** [NIV] *"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment."*

### **Put God first in our lives, physically and mentally, if you would become perfect.**

Have we allowed God's place in our lives to slip since Baptism?

We may claim we are putting God first but are "kidding" ourselves?

**Matthew 6:33** [NIV] *"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*

"Seek" Greek word "Zeteo" [dzay-teh-o] to strive after, to the extent of COVETING for ourselves; ongoing verb (present continuous tense); something that **NEVER ENDS**.

**God demands (for our own good) First place.**

## **Personal checks we can make to see if we do put God first?**

### **Practical preparation for putting God first in our lives.**

**1 Corinthians 3:9-15** [NIV] *"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built*

*survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.”*

Life represents a building; a building is constructed “*one brick at a time*”.

Life equals time; each day represents a building brick of life, God’s building.

**Matthew 6:11** [NIV] “*Give us today our daily bread.*”

**Ephesians 3:16** [NIV] “*I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,*”

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

**We need to renew the special presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives each day by confessing our sins and seeking forgiveness and a cleansing by Christ’s blood sacrifice.**

## **Physical Preparation**

**Genesis 1:5** [NIV] “*God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning-- the first day.*”

God begins His day the previous evening. Most of us use the night to recover from the toil of day; God looks on sleep as a preparation for the day ahead.

Note: **Evening and morning ... NOT** morning and evening. We need to get to bed on time. It is scientifically proven that 7½ - 8 hours sleep are needed for good health. Count back and that’s when we go to bed.

## **Spiritual Preparation**

**Psalms 119:147** [NIV] “*I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word.*”

Prayer and study.

**Psalms 5:3** [NIV] “*In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.*”

**Not** bleary eyed time.

**Proverbs 8:17** [NIV] “*I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.*”

If you want to find God here is how ...

**Job 7:17-18** [King James] “*What is man that you make so much of him, that you give him so much attention, that you examine him every morning and test him every moment?*”

**If God is going to try me every moment of the day I want to be there when He visits me every morning!**

**Mark 1:35** [NIV] “*Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.*”

**Christ’s example that we are to follow.**

**Remember the “jingle” ... “You cannot give it until you live it”.**

A suggested schedule –

- a) Time you start work ...
- b) Count back 2 hours ... time to get up ...
- c) Count back another 7-8 hours ... time you go to bed ... (NO FAIL) ...

**Satan will put as many things as he can to stop you doing this** but this is the key to success.

**How much time for prayer and study? For our physical food** each day we spend to eat and prepare 1 - 1½ hours?

**STUDY FIRST** Remember when **before Royalty** we allow them to speak first.

I only offer a brief **“dedication”** prayer before I study.

**Psalm 119:18** *“open my eyes that I may see the wonders of your Law” ...*

**Bible study prepares our mind for prayer.**

## **Middle of Day**

Here we have a big problem for most of us, our lifestyle just doesn't allow time in the middle of a busy day, yet we find time to have a snack. Remember, prayer is a spiritual act that can be in our mind and human spirit without speaking words.

**Daniel 6:10** [NIV] *“Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.”*

Daniel put his life *“on the line”* to pray 3 times a day!

David prayed **morning (Psalm 5:3) night (Psalm 22:2) noon (Psalm 55:17).**

We reach a **“spiritual low”** around midday.

**Time can be found if we have the attitude of putting God first.**

**This is the *only* path to that abundant life God wants for all of His children.**

## **RE-CAP**

We are about to start living in a **“fishbowl”**. **No place to hide our way of life.**

- a) **Time of preparation** is almost gone.
- b) **Our part** of the witness is our lifestyle testimony.
- c) **The future of many people** depend on the way we live our lives NOW.
- d) **Become perfect** ... attain the goal God sets for us.

e) **Allow God to use us ...** become pliable in His hands.

f) **Put God first in our lives. We show this by the way we schedule our (God's) time.**