

FOREWORD BY T.L. OSBORN



GOD'S
VERY OWN
CHILD

DR. GENE LINGERFELT

GOD'S VERY OWN CHILD

Dr. Gene Lingerfelt

B.A., M.Div., D.Min.

Faith Christian Center
Arlington, Texas

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God's Very Own Child

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Faith Christian Center

6900 US HWY 287

Arlington, TX 76001

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FOREWORD

By Dr. T.L. Osborn

I have shared the good news about Jesus Christ with millions of people in over eighty nations. I have observed the religions of the world. They can be very confusing! Even the Christian religion is often made to seem abstract and bewildering.

My friend, the author of this powerful little book is practical. He believes that God wants to be your friend, that He cares about you and that He believes in you so much that He paid an enormous price to remove the barrier of sin that has separated you from Him.

That obstruction of your sins was eliminated when Jesus assumed your guilt and endured your judgment in His death on the cross. That is the big fact of your redemption. Your sins have been paid for. God holds nothing against you. Maybe you, like millions of others, haven't realized that.

This little book will show you the facts of this good news. When you believe these truths and decide in your heart that you will embrace Christ as your Savior and Friend, He will come to you while you read, and will begin to live IN YOU because the fact is that your sins have already been expunged through His death on the cross. When He died, he paid your penalty. Now, nothing stands between you and Him.

That is the message that Dr. Gene Lingerfelt has set forth for you in clear terms. Read these pages with a "Yes!" in your heart. ***Believe*** and ***embrace*** each simple truth, step by step, and you will discover ***peace with God through Jesus Christ***. (Romans 5:1)

You are created by LOVE. God is love. This little book will lead you right into the loving presence of our Lord. You will be confident in your new relationship with Him because you will understand how and why your salvation is a living reality right now—in your own life.

Friendship with God is not a matter of trying to be holy or churchy or super-spiritual. It is a matter of understanding how God regards you, why He loves you, how much He believes in you, the price He has already paid for you, and how He wants your friendship more than you ever desired His.

Read this beautiful little book now and welcome the presence, the life, the love, and the friendship of God as you discover the exhilarating fact that before you finish these brief chapters, YOU will have become ***God's Very Own Child.***

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Oswald Sanders", with a long horizontal line underneath.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to give you guidance as you begin your new life in Christ. So many times when people commit their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ, no one tells them about the reality of what Jesus did for them on Calvary's cross and about the reality of what Father God did for them in the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

When you gave your life to Jesus, you became ***“God’s very own child.”*** In our modern culture, too many people have no idea what it means to be a part of a good family and to have a good and generous father.

No matter what kind of background you have come from, it is necessary for you to get acquainted—through the Word of God—with your new “heavenly” Father, and also to acquaint yourself with all the benefits which are available to you now as an adopted son or daughter of God.

At our church in Arlington, Texas—***Faith Christian Center***—which my wife and I pioneered in 1984, we teach what we call the ***“overcoming lifestyle.”*** What we mean by that phrase is a lifestyle which incorporates ***all*** the benefits of the Gospel.

You see, it is possible to live your new life in Christ at a level below that which has been provided for you. But our goal at ***Faith Christian Center*** is to help you receive ***all*** that God has provided for you. Why? Because by making Jesus the Lord and Savior of your life, you have become ***“God’s very own child.”***

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”
(John 1:12 KJV)



CHAPTER ONE

YOUR COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

What does it mean to become “*God’s very own child*”? The only way I know to discover God’s plan for my life—and what is therefore available to me by faith in God—is to go to God’s Word.

In this chapter we’re going to review exactly how it was that you came to Christ. If you have not yet followed these simple steps, you may do so for yourself now as we go through this chapter.

We Enter Into The Family Of God By Faith In Jesus Christ.

Salvation is a gift of God and cannot be purchased by “good works.” In the Bible, the apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:8-10: *“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.”*

Salvation cannot be purchased through “good works.” Salvation can only come by faith in Jesus Christ as a gift from Father God. (“Grace” means a gift given without payment.)

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” (John 1:12 KJV)

Before we committed our lives to Christ, we were still in our sins. This is why there was guilt and remorse for the lifestyle we were living. But when we came to Jesus, we turned from that former way of life. We “repented,” and gave our lives to Jesus. We invited the grace and mercy of God to come into our lives by the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23 KJV)

We Enter Into The Family Of God By Our Confession Of Jesus Christ.

Paul explains this “process” of faith to us in Romans 10:9, 10: ***“That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”***

This “believing” with the heart and “confessing” with the mouth is how we “opened the door” to salvation and invited the mercy, grace and forgiveness of God into our lives. Jesus said in Revelation 3:20 (KJV): ***“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will [fellowship] with him, and he with me.”***

By believing in our hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead and by confessing with our mouths that “Jesus is Lord,” we have “opened the door” for God to come into our lives through His Son—and now our Savior—Jesus. But this step of faith is not the end. It is simply the beginning of a new life in Christ. This step of faith is the beginning of a new lifestyle of victory by faith in God’s unchanging Word.

By This Faith In Jesus Christ We Become The Sons And Daughters Of God.

Paul wrote in Galatians 3:26: ***“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”***

By the word “sons,” Paul does not mean a relationship that is particular to men. “Sons” is a general term similar to the word “mankind.” “Mankind” likewise means “humankind,” including both men and women. And so this word “sons” in the Bible means both “sons” and “daughters.” Hence, we could translate Galatians 3:26 this way: ***“You are all sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”*** Or, it could be translated, ***“You are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”***

“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” (II Corinthians 6:18)

What this means is that by making Jesus Christ the Lord and Savior of your life, you have effectively been “adopted” into the family of God.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.”
(I John 3:1 KJV)

This adoption means that you are not just “forgiven” of your sins (which you most certainly are), but it also means that you have entered into a new relationship with God the Father through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus. This relationship is one of Father/son, or Father/daughter and is therefore a relationship that involves ***privilege***.

For example, what if you had been adopted as a child by a multimillionaire? Wouldn’t you have gone to the best schools? Wouldn’t you have had the opportunity to attend the college of your choice? Wouldn’t you have enjoyed some ***“benefits”***?

Too many people come to God through Jesus Christ and no one tells them about the “benefits.” There are many “benefits” to becoming a child of God! And since you have made Jesus Christ the Lord and Savior of your life, that is exactly what you are. You are ***“God’s very own child.”***

CHAPTER TWO

GOD'S VERY OWN CHILD

So what does it mean to be a son or daughter of God? To discover “who we are in Christ,” we must turn to the Word of God. It is only in God’s unchanging Word that we discover God’s original plan for our lives and how God intends for us to live.

**To Be A Child Of God Means That
We Now Follow A Different “Voice,”
The Voice Of The Holy Spirit.**

“...those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” (Romans 8:14)

To live without Christ means to “do your own thing.” It means to follow your own ideas and agenda. But to live without Christ also means to be led about by the ways of this world, and maybe even to be led into mistakes and sin by satan.

When a person commits their life to Christ—is “born again”—they commit to follow a different “voice.” That voice is the voice of the Holy Spirit.

For example, let’s say that before you committed your life to Christ you were bound by drugs. (You can substitute any point of failure here.) The “voice” of the world’s system, or the “voice” of satan will not let up just because you’re born again. No, those voices will attempt to keep you bound by

darkness and failure by encouraging you to continue in your old ways of living.

But now that you have committed your life to Christ, you will begin to hear another voice which you must discipline yourself to follow. That “new” voice is the “voice” of the Holy Spirit. His voice is a still, small voice. (1 Kings 19:12)

We’re not dealing here with a person’s natural human conscience. God put a natural human conscience in every person to give them guidance in right and wrong, whether or not they were committed to God. The problem is that without Christ, and over time, this natural human conscience is “seared” as with a hot iron—I Timothy 4:2—and over time its effectiveness becomes diminished without God. Now that you have committed your life to Christ, the Holy Spirit of God will begin to give you guidance similar to that which a natural human conscience would offer. The biggest difference is that the Holy Spirit is much more. He not only will convict you of sin, but He is also a Counselor. He is a Teacher. He will lead you and guide you into more and more truth as you continue in Christ. (John 16:13)

So now that you have committed your life to Christ, now that you have become ***“God’s Very Own Child,”*** you must begin to follow after the Spirit of God and no longer follow after the “sinful nature” or your old way of doing things.

So, back to the example: if you were bound by drugs before you committed your life to Christ, satan will continue to encourage you to see the same old friends, to crave the high, to call your old dealer. He will do everything he can to pull you right back into that old way of living.

At the same time satan is “talking,” so is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will “say” the opposite. He will encourage you to seek out new friends, friends committed to Christ. The Holy Spirit will encourage you to pray, to read the Word of

God, to get more and more involved in a new way of life at church.

And in this we have two voices, two pathways, and two destinies. And it's going to be up to you to choose which way you'll go.

“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” (Galatians 6:7-9)

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (“the world’s system of money”) (Matthew 6:24 KJV)

To Be A Child Of God Means That You Are Now An Heir—An Heir Of God And A Joint-Heir With Christ.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” (Romans 8:14-17 KJV)

That's good news! We have been adopted into the family of God! And the same Spirit we spoke of earlier “bears witness” with us that we are indeed God's children, His very own sons and daughters.

And as if that weren't enough, Paul goes on to say, ***“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ...”***

Now here's the part of the Gospel that so many people simply don't know about. They have never been told by their church or denomination that there are many, many "benefits" to becoming a Christian—a child of God. But right here is a great big "benefit."

By making Jesus Christ the Lord of your life, you have been adopted into the family of God. You have now become ***"God's very own child."*** As such, God is now watching over your life. He has qualified you to receive all that He has promised in His Word.

"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."
(II Peter 1:3, 4)

Notice that it's through the promises of God's Word that we ***"may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."*** That's why in the coming chapters we're going to look at some specific promises that now belong to you since you've committed your life to Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

FORGIVENESS OF SINS BELONGS TO YOU

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”
(Isaiah 53:4, 5 KJV)

Notice there are two words for “sin” here: “transgressions” and “iniquities.” “Transgressions” are when you willfully violate a law. An example would be when you violate the speed limit. You see the sign, you know what it says, but you’re in a hurry, so you violate the law. That’s a “transgression.”

“Iniquity” is a “propensity” or a “leaning toward” a particular sin. For example, perhaps your natural father was an alcoholic. You may have a propensity for that sin. You may have a “leaning toward” that sin which you will have to resist.

Or, perhaps you were sexually abused as a child. You have to see this for what it is and then fight, so you will not repeat this sin and carry it forward to the next generation.

But thank God, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ covers all kinds of sin!

And once you’ve committed your life to Christ, you now have a “high priest” to go before your “heavenly” Father to plead your case.

“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Here again, satan will “speak” to you and lie to you for the purpose of discouraging you and leading you astray. When you sin—and you will—satan will tell you that that’s it. He will tell you that your salvation is over, that it’s finished. But satan is a liar.

The Holy Spirit on the other hand, will “speak” to you to go to God in prayer and to confess your sins to Him through, or by the name of, Jesus.

And that is exactly how we remain in fellowship with God. When we sin—and we will—we must immediately go to Father God in prayer in the name of Jesus because He is our “High Priest.”

And in that place of prayer, we confess our sins to God. Not to a man and not to a priest. No, we confess our sins to God the Father and ask His forgiveness in the name of Jesus.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
(I John 1:9)

Not only will your “heavenly” Father forgive you, but He will also “cleanse” you and “purify” you from all unrighteousness. And if God takes the unrighteousness out of your life, then all that’s left is the righteous part!

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN CHRIST BELONGS TO YOU

The righteousness of God comes by faith and not by works. The word “righteous” simply means “right standing.” Many people today are trying to “earn” their “right standing” with God by their good works.

Many people also believe that they can live any way they want, so long as they don’t commit any “big” sins, like murder or kidnapping. But this is not the case. First of all, Jesus said, “You must be born again.” (John 3:7) But on top of that, the New Testament has a lot to say about “righteousness,” or “right standing” with God.

For example, Paul wrote in Romans 4:3 (KJV), “*...Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*” Notice that Abraham’s righteousness came by his believing, or by his faith. Verse 5 in the NIV says of the believer: “*...his faith is credited as righteousness.*” You know what a “credit” is. Perhaps you have a dispute with a department store, so they “credit” your account to settle the dispute. It doesn’t mean you made a payment. No, they simply “counted it” as though you had made a payment. Romans 4:9 specifically says, “*...Abraham’s faith was credited to him as righteousness.*”

What God honors is faith. And that’s why the devil fights faith “tooth and nail” in every religious church and denomination around the world. If all you have is religion,

you'll always be bound. But once you begin to live by faith, you'll begin to please God! And that's why Paul calls Abraham the "father of our faith." Romans 4:11 says, ***"...he is the father of all who believe...in order that righteousness might be credited to them."*** You can't even live a life pleasing to God unless it's a life of faith! Hebrews 11:6 (KJV) says, ***"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."***

How can you know for sure that this righteousness is for you as well? Look at Romans 4:23, 24: ***"The words 'it was credited to him' were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead."***

This is a work of God already provided for you, which must be received by faith. Why? Because you cannot earn right standing with God. You can only "achieve" right standing with God by "tapping into" what Jesus has already done for you at Calvary's cross. This is why Paul wrote in Romans 5:19, ***"For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."*** Many will be what? ***"Made righteous."***

So our righteousness—our "right standing" with God—comes by faith in the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

My favorite verse in this regard is II Corinthians 5:21 (KJV): ***"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."*** I love that phrase: ***"...that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."*** So that's what you are (right NOW) since you have given your life to Jesus. You are (right NOW) the ***"righteousness of God in Christ."***

This great gift from God also makes provision for us to maintain our right standing with God. Why is that necessary?

Because every one of us will fail God and ourselves at times. Forgiveness is something we're going to need again in the future. That's why John wrote in I John 1:9 (KJV), ***“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”***

Now, if you go to God today and confess—in Jesus' name—some sin you have committed and ask God to forgive you—again in Jesus' name—what's God going to do? He is going to (1) forgive you of your sins; and He is going to (2) cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

If God takes all the unrighteousness out of your life and heart, what will be left? Only righteousness. In this way God has already made provision for you to live in right relationship with Him every day of your life.

So when you sin—and you will—don't let a day or even an hour go by living your life out of fellowship with God. Learn to go immediately to Father God in Jesus' name and ask His forgiveness. God loves you and He wants to forgive and restore you. All you have to do is ask in Jesus' name.

Why the name of Jesus? Because He has now become your “High Priest” in the heavenlies, making intercession for you!

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”
(Hebrews 4:14-16 KJV)

CHAPTER FIVE

HEALING BELONGS TO YOU

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:4, 5 KJV)

Here in Isaiah 53:4, 5 we have an overview of exactly what Jesus did for you on Calvary’s cross. In effect, we have a list of the “benefits” that now belong to you as *“God’s very own child.”* Make no mistake, all these “benefits” are now yours. These “benefits” are your “personal property” as a child of God so long as you don’t allow satan to talk you out of what is rightfully yours.

Notice Isaiah says that *“with his stripes we are healed.”* We see the same “benefit” recorded in the New Testament as well: *“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”* (I Peter 2:24 KJV)

Notice here in the New Testament, Peter says, *“by whose stripes ye were healed.”* This means that so far as God is concerned, you are already healed. How can this be? Because God thinks differently than you and I do. When God says something is done, in His mind it is done. So if God says

you're healed, in His mind, "That's it, you're healed!" Then all that remains is for you to get into agreement with God.

Remember II Peter 1:3, 4: ***"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."***

So God has already given to you all that you need to ***"participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."*** Healing then works just like salvation. How were you saved? You heard the Word. You believed the Word. You received the Word. And then, you acted upon the Word.

Healing works exactly the same way. You hear the Word. You believe the Word. You receive the Word. And then, you act upon the Word. You act and speak like God does, as though by the stripes of Jesus you have already been healed. To receive what rightfully belongs to you, you must act like God's Word is true in your life!

CHAPTER SIX

THE PEACE OF GOD BELONGS TO YOU

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:4, 5 KJV)

So many people today are bound. Many are bound by nicotine. Others are bound by alcohol. Some are bound by drugs. Others by food or depression. But the point is that as *“God’s very own child”* you no longer have to be bound by any of satan’s devices. Part of what Jesus paid for in your life is freedom.

John 8:36 says, *“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”* Freedom is one of the “benefits” of your new walk in Christ. Jesus said in Luke 4:18 that a part of His anointing and ministry was *“to proclaim freedom for the prisoners...to release the oppressed...”*

II Corinthians 3:17 says, *“...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”* Freedom is one of the “benefits” of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus paid for your freedom, your liberty.

Paul exhorts us, though, that since satan wants us bound again—as in our former way of life—that we have to “stand

firm” in the faith in order to maintain the liberty and freedom that Jesus paid for.

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” (Galatians 5:1)

To be bound by sin is bondage. But Jesus paid for your freedom. Freedom from depression. Freedom from sin. Freedom from drugs, alcohol and any and every other form of bondage satan has to offer.

You have been called to liberty. Jesus has paid for your freedom. So walk in and enjoy your freedom from every device of satan.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ABUNDANCE BELONGS TO YOU

In John 10:10 (KJV) we find what I like to call the “dividing line” of the Bible: ***“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”*** What this means is that if there is anything going on in your life that has to do with stealing, killing or destruction, it is not of God, it is of satan.

Religion teaches that God is somehow glorified by your poverty and lack. But this is just not the case. Actually, the opposite is the truth. You see, you have become ***“God’s very own child.”*** But consider the “flip side” of that statement: ***“God has become your very own Father.”***

That’s the truth I discovered many years ago. I grew up in a home where there was a reluctance to share and be generous. But I discovered that God was willing to share. I “saw” it from His Word. I accepted His generosity toward me. I have allowed Him to lead me into abundance, and God will do the same for you.

King David discovered the same thing about God. You too can have that David-kind of relationship with God. God as Father. God as the Good Shepherd.

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths

of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
(Psalm 23:1-6 KJV)

David discovered what will also work for you. God is good. God has more than He needs. And He is willing to share with you, because you have become ***“God’s very own child.”***

Years ago, I “latched onto” two particular verses in the New Testament. These same two verses will work for you as well. Hear them. Receive them. And then, just go out and act like and talk like these two verses are true in your life.

Concerning all my needs being met, I discovered Philippians 4:19 (KJV): ***“...my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”***

Concerning God giving me more than enough, more than I even needed, I discovered II Corinthians 9:11: ***“You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”***

Now, religious folks will protest and say that even though God may meet our needs, He never promised to meet our “wants.” Those same folks have never read about all the benefits of God in Psalm 103. Here in Psalm 103 we have another list of “benefits.”

“Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you

with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."
(Psalm 103:1-5)

So what all does David say God provided to him as "benefits"? (1) His Father God forgave all his sins. This same God will also forgive all your sins. (2) His Father healed all his diseases. This same God will also heal all your diseases. (3) David's Father redeemed David's life from the pit. This same God will deliver you from the pit of depression, drug addiction or any other form of bondage. (4) David found a Father God who satisfied his every desire with good things. And this same God has now become your Father God, ***"your very own Father."*** And this Father God will likewise satisfy your every godly desire and thereby renew your youth like the eagle's.

"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:26-29)

Notice also that the "sons" of God includes both male and female. And as children of God, you have been made heirs—heirs according to the promises given to Abraham. That means not only are you entitled to every promise you find in the New Testament, but you are now also qualified to receive any promise you find in the Old Testament as well!

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE HOLY SPIRIT BELONGS TO YOU

Romans 8:14 is a verse I gave you at the beginning of chapter two of this book: “...*those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.*” Notice that a part of being a son or a daughter of God is being “*led by the Spirit.*”

This is why so much of what is called “Christianity” today is dead. Without the life of the Spirit, “Christianity” becomes just another religion, whether in a denomination, a local church or an individual life. So we need the Spirit of God in our daily lives.

The Spirit of God plays a role in our growing process as Christians.

“For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ...” (Romans 8:13-17)

Notice how Paul phrases it: “...*but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.*”

The Spirit of God then becomes our partner in successfully living the “*overcoming lifestyle*.” We also see this in Galatians:

“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.” (Galatians 4:4-7)

Because you have become “*God’s very own child*,” He wants you to walk “in the Spirit,” or live a life “led by the Spirit.” That means you need to be “baptized” in the Holy Spirit! This is a subsequent gift of God that is available to us after we give our lives to God through Jesus Christ. Jesus told His disciples that they needed this gift: ***“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*** (Acts 1:8)

In fact, this gift was so important, Jesus told His disciples to not even leave the city of Jerusalem until they had received this gift—this “baptism in the Holy Spirit.”

“I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49)

Jesus foretold that this “baptism in the Holy Spirit” would be one of the “signs” that would accompany the faith of believers: ***“And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues.”*** (Mark 16:17)

These “tongues” are not a language learned in school, but a “heavenly” language given as a gift by the Holy Spirit of God when He comes into your life in His fullness.

So the disciples stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had instructed them, waiting for this “gift of the Holy Spirit.”

“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” (Acts 2:1-4)

This gift of the Holy Spirit is a part of God’s blessing for His sons and daughters in “the last days”: ***“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”*** (Acts 2:17, 18)

This “baptism in the Holy Spirit” was so central to the preaching of the Gospel in the Book of Acts that they simply made this a part of their Gospel message. In Peter’s sermon in Acts 2 he said: ***“...Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”*** (Acts 2:38, 39)

And notice who the gift is for—it is for all those “far off.” So the time for this gift has not died out. Don’t let anyone tell you that a promise in God’s Word is not for you! Everything that God has, He has for you. And everything Jesus did on Calvary’s cross, He did for you. It’s all for you!

So look again at what Peter said, and you too can receive this gift, this “baptism” of the Holy Spirit in your life.

He said (1) Repent. You’ve already done that, haven’t you? He said (2) be baptized.” This is water baptism and we

cover the importance of this later in the book. Then Peter said (3) ***“And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”***

And that's what you do, you ***receive*** what God's Word promises you, what God's Word says about your life.

This baptism in the Holy Spirit is for those who are “thirsty” for God. This baptism in the Holy Spirit is for you!

“On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.” (John 7:37-39)

Just take this attitude and stance in prayer: “Father God, if you have it and it's for me, then I want it. I see this gift of the Holy Spirit in your Word. Peter said it was for all who were even ‘far off.’ That's me. This gift is for me, and I want it. Thank you, Father God, for giving me this gift of the Holy Spirit in my life.”

CHAPTER NINE

THE OVERCOMING LIFESTYLE BELONGS TO YOU

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” (I John 4:4 KJV)

Jesus paid the price for you to live the *“overcoming lifestyle.”* This is something that belongs to you, unless you allow the devil or religious folks to talk you out of it. By *“overcoming lifestyle”* I mean a lifestyle without bondage. When you made Jesus Christ the Lord of your life, you actually answered a call to freedom.

You Have Been Called To Liberty.

Paul wrote in Galatians 5:13 (KJV), *“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”* Notice that your salvation calling was actually a calling to liberty. Why liberty? Because that was actually one of the anointings that was upon the Lord Jesus Christ and His ministry. Setting men free is one reason Jesus came.

Jesus Was Anointed To Set Men And Women Free.

At the very outset of His ministry, Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1, 2 in reference to Himself and His ministry:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” (Luke 4:18, 19 KJV)

Why did Jesus come? He came (1) to preach the Gospel to the poor; (2) to heal the brokenhearted; (3) to preach DELIVERANCE to the captives; (4) to set at LIBERTY them that are bruised; and (5) to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, that is, the year of the Lord's good favor.

So the ministry and anointing of Jesus had at least partly to do with deliverance and setting men and women at liberty.

You have been called to freedom and liberty in Christ! And Jesus has paid for your liberty and freedom in every area of your life.

If Jesus Sets You Free, Then You're Free!

Jesus said in John 8:36 (KJV), ***“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”*** This is not a “hope so” proposition. No, this thing is real! The liberty and freedom of the Gospel is real. What Jesus did for you is real.

Provision has already been made for you to walk in this life totally free. Free from nicotine. Free from alcohol. Free from drug addiction. Free from emotional distress. And free from debt. You have been called to freedom. And provision has already been made for your freedom.

If Jesus sets you free, then you are “free indeed”!

The Atmosphere Of God's Church Is An Atmosphere Of Liberty.

The Church Is A Place Of Liberty In The Spirit.

Religious men always try to turn Christianity into nothing more than a bunch of laws. Now laws are good and necessary. In fact, the Bible has plenty of laws that are still in effect. (For example, “Thou shalt not murder” is a good law and is still in effect.) But religious folks like to make up more and more laws as they go along.

But the apostle Paul said that the church should be a place of liberty: “...*where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*” (II Corinthians 3:17 KJV)

**God Obviously Wants You To Be Free,
Because The New Testament Encourages You
To Maintain Your Freedom In Christ.**

Paul exhorted us in Galatians 5:1 (KJV), “*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*” The phrase “stand fast” implies that I have a part to play. You likewise have a part to play.

Having a part to play is what the apostle James called being a “doer” of the Word.

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”
(James 1:22-25 KJV)

Notice also that James calls the Word of God the “perfect law of liberty.” By following the Word, by being “doers” of the Word, we are not led into religious bondage, but into freedom, liberty and the “*overcoming lifestyle*” Jesus came to provide for you.

You can do it! You can successfully overcome in every area of life. How do I know that? Because you've got "the Greater One" living in you now!

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (I John 4:4 KJV)

CHAPTER TEN

HOW TO ACT LIKE GOD'S VERY OWN CHILD

“So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.” (I Corinthians 3:21-23)

Everything Jesus did on Calvary's cross, He did for you! And everything God has, He has for you. Every promise you find in the Word of God is yours and all of God's promises belong to you.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.” (Ephesians 1:3-8)

I have been preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ since 1973. I have been pastoring *Faith Christian Center* in Arlington, Texas since my wife and I pioneered the church in 1984. What I am going to share with you now—very briefly—

is in no way meant to be “bossy.” It is not my intention to give you a bunch of rules to live by.

However, with my training and experience, I am qualified to share with you the steps that will make a positive impact in your life. I believe if you will take the following steps, you will move from the initial phase of your new life in Christ into what I call the **“overcoming lifestyle”** God intended for you.

Why should you believe me? Why should you follow my guidance? In II Chronicles 20:20 (KJV) the Word says, ***“...Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.”***

I believe that if you do these things, you will succeed and prosper in your new walk with God.

You Need To Reorder Your Schedule.

Get in Faith Christian Center—or a similar Gospel preaching, altar call giving church—no less than two times per week!

People don't think a thing at all about going to the movies twice a week or going to the bar twice a week. But now that you're a Christian you need to reorganize your weekly schedule. The Bible says that ***“...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*** (Romans 10:17 KJV). So going to a good, Gospel preaching, altar call giving church is like eating. And the more of the Word you eat, the stronger you'll become.

You Need To Be Baptized In Water.

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark 16:16 KJV)

Here Jesus tells us that whoever believes and is baptized shall be saved. Enough said! Now that you have been born

again, it's time for you to take the next step. You need to be baptized in water. Water baptism is the next step of obedience after salvation!

**You Need To Reorder
Your Finances And Begin Tithing.**

**Tithing Means Giving 10%
Of All The Money
That Crosses Your Hands.**

**The Tithe Is Holy
and It Belongs To God.**

One sign of sin is selfishness. An unsaved man or woman thinks only of themselves and tends to only spend their money on what they want. Now that you're born again, God wants you to become less like satan and more like your new "heavenly" Father. And by that I mean generous. If the church you are attending does not teach tithing, leave. Because if they are not teaching tithing, they are not committed to your success and your prosperity.

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,’ says the Lord Almighty.” (Malachi 3:10-12)

In your new walk with God, you want to overcome, to prevail and to succeed. In order to do this you need the blessing of God upon your life. And in order to have the blessing of God upon your life, you will need to tithe 10% of all the money that crosses your hands.

You Need To Reorder Your Fellowship.

If you are going to “go on with God” and begin to live the ***“overcoming lifestyle”*** that God intended for you to live, you will need to reorder your fellowship. You will need to get all the “toxic” people out of your life. The only exception to this instruction would be if you are married to a “toxic” person. In that case, you’ll have to stand in faith for your spouse to be born again and to submit his or her life to God’s Word.

The power of faith is the power of agreement. The Bible says, ***“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”*** (Amos 3:3 KJV) Therefore, I have no toxic people in my life. I do not have any strife or drama in my life.

satan will do everything he can to pull you back into your old lifestyle, and to do that he will use any means, including your old “friends.” He will use your boss, your family, your old habits or anything else, because satan wants you to loose out with God and go to hell with him. So you’ll have to reorder your life—including your fellowship—in order to defeat satan in your life.

You Need To Be Filled —And Stay Filled— With The Holy Spirit Of God.

Paul gave these instructions to the new converts of the church he had pioneered in Ephesus: ***“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;”*** (Ephesians 5:18-20 KJV)

Once you’re filled with the Spirit of God, you have to “stay filled.” You have to be in fellowship with the right people, be

in the right church and spend time with your new “heavenly” Father. By doing these things you can stay full of the power, love and wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 4:31, the disciples were “refilled” with the Holy Spirit subsequent to their initial “baptism” in the Holy Spirit: ***“And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.”*** (Acts 4:31 KJV)

That tells me that I can do the same thing and so can you. Notice it says ***“and when they had prayed.”*** We can’t be filled with the Holy Spirit hanging out at the bar or by renting pornographic videos. No, we have to reorder our lives and do the things good, godly and spiritual people do to get in touch and stay in touch with God.

CONCLUSION

“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. 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.” (Romans 12:1, 2)

You can do it! You can build a new life for yourself in God. I believe you can do it! In fact, I believe in you, and that’s why I’ve written this book.

You have now become *“God’s very own child,”* and it is His will that you succeed and prosper in this, your new life in Christ. You can do it! You can “take hold” of the Word of God and you can enter into the *“overcoming lifestyle”* Jesus paid for you to have.

Write to me and let me know how you’re doing.

Dr. Gene Lingerfelt, Senior Pastor
Faith Christian Center
6900 US HWY 287
Arlington, Texas 76001

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

(Pray Out Loud)

Dear Heavenly Father, I come to you in the Name of Jesus. I come to you confessing that Jesus is Lord. I believe in my heart that You raised Jesus from the dead. Your Word says in Romans 10:9-10, "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

I confess that in times past I have gone my own way and I have paid the price for my sin and willfulness. I turn from my past, from my old way of life, and I ask that the Lord Jesus come into my life as my Lord and Savior. Take charge of my life, Lord Jesus. Take away my past, and give me a new future, for your Word says in II Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"

I commit myself, Lord Jesus, to hear Your Word, to read Your Word and to be a doer of your Word. In this, I know my life will change for the better!

Father, I thank you that I am now saved, for Your Word says in Romans 10:13, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Father, thank you for receiving me. Thank you for forgiving me. And thank you for adopting me into your family, the family of God.

Signed _____

Date _____

ABOUT DR. GENE LINGERFELT

FOUNDING AND SENIOR PASTOR
FAITH CHRISTIAN CENTER
ARLINGTON, TEXAS

Dr. Gene Lingerfelt is the founding and senior pastor of **Faith Christian Center** in Arlington, Texas. As a successful pastor and author, Dr. Gene Lingerfelt has a reputation for practical, faith-filled teaching. His many books include *The God Touch*, *10 Words That Can Change Your Life* and *80-10-10*. Dr. Lingerfelt has also authored many discipleship workbooks including *Mighty Men of God*, *The Successful Lifestyle Pattern*, and *Bridges of Faith*.

Dr. Lingerfelt answered God's call for ministry at the age of seventeen. He and his wife Sue were married in 1976. Each earned degrees from Texas Christian University. In 1984, Gene earned his doctorate from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. Their ministry journey has since taken them around the world.

Faith Christian Center was pioneered in a hotel ballroom on Sunday, January 1, 1984. Since then, the church has grown as Dr. Gene and Sue Lingerfelt have taught people how to practically apply God's Word to their every day lives.

Today, the church's campus is located on 73 beautiful acres in the heart of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. Over the course of 35 years, through its various missions efforts, Faith Christian Center has pioneered more than 68 churches and more than 250,000 people have come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

GOD'S VERY OWN CHILD

God set his first man—Adam—and His first woman—Eve—in the middle of their very own garden. It was, truly, a “Garden of Eden.” But this first couple allowed Satan to deceive them and to talk them out of their rightful place of power, dominion and fruitfulness in God’s creation. And that’s where the story of man would have ended if it had not been for the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ upon Calvary’s Cross!

Because of that work of substitution, you and I are no longer estranged from God. He has bought us; purchased us with the blood of His very own Son. Not only that, He has made us His very own sons and daughters! We have been adopted into God’s very own family! And because of this, God loves you so very much, He will go to any length to see your dream and your vision come to pass!

This is what we call “the reality of Christ’s life in us TODAY as believers.” As you read this book, and build these facts of faith into your thought life, your life will be forever changed as you realize—and begin to walk in—what Christ has done for you!



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Arlington, Texas 76001

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