

Parable of the Sower

Reapers Roadmap Deep Dive

By Carl Frederick II



Seek 1st His Kingdom & Righteousness

Prayer

Born Again

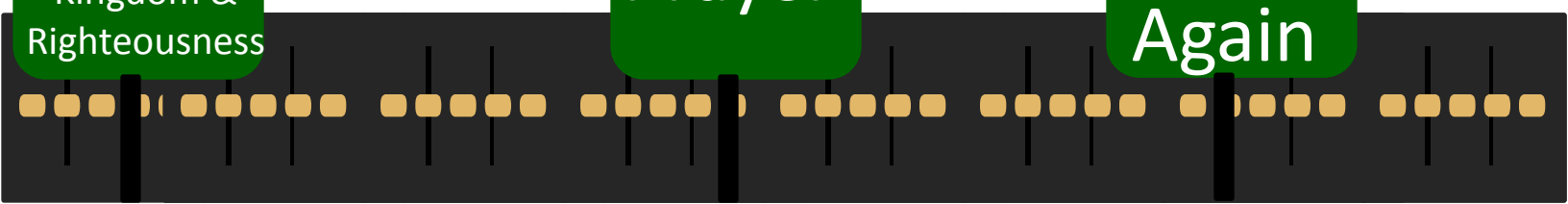


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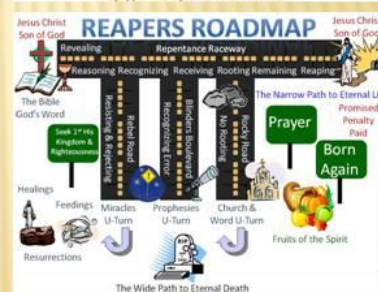
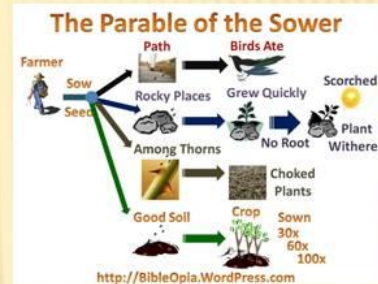
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Introduction:

1.1 Invitation to Delve Deeply into the Parable of the Sower

Invitation

*To Delve
Deeply into
the Parable
of the Sower*



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Jesus Christ the Son of God shares many parables with us to reveal numerous secrets hidden since creation time (**Matthew 13:35 (ESV): 35** This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.”). The **Parable of the Sower** is unique as it addresses both the reasons **why** some people fall away from God and **why** others prosper in God’s word. Knowing these reasons better informs productively applying these teachings to reach more people to follow Jesus and spread the Gospel worldwide, observing causes behind effective and ineffective results. Three Gospel accounts, the Gospel of Matthew (**Matthew 13**), Mark (**Mark 4**), and Luke (**Luke 8**) all share the **Parable of the Sower**, emphasizing the parables’ importance and centrality. Understanding the Parable of the Sower properly positions you to better interpret all the parables (**Mark 4:13** And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?). All these reasons provide us impetus to analyze and study Jesus’ **Parable of the Sower** in depth, and to share these findings everywhere (**Matthew 10:27 (ESV): 27** What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops)

The **Parable of the Sower** focuses upon **what** happens and **why** it happens. The scriptures must be searched and consulted to understand more fully **how** it happens in the context of **our responsibility**. Many scriptures discuss God revealing his word and asking people to choose between life and death and between right and wrong. History records and the **Parable of the Sower** explains that **what** happens are some people use their reasoning to decide to resist and reject the message, some receive happily the message with a surface level depth only, and others have difficulty understanding and recognizing the message. Several successfully receive God's message and come to understand it deeply, digging roots, and flourishing. They remain in the word, reaping the word's benefits.

Despite the Gospel of John omitting parables, it articulates critical understandings about God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Key Parable of the Sower lessons are shared up-front at the beginning of the Gospel of John. God reveals his Word to people himself and through ambassadors, paralleling the Sower dropping seeds in the Parable of the Sower. (**John 1:6-9 (NET)**: A man came, sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify about the light, so that everyone might believe through him. 8 He himself was not the light, but he came to testify about the light. 9 The true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.) The errors in recognizing and receiving God's Word parallels dropping seed on the path in the Parable of the Sower. (**John 1:10-11 (NET)** He was in the world, and the world was created by him, but the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to what was his own, but his own people did not receive him.) Those who believe and receive have the right to be like the plant in good soil, provided they avoid traps like rocks and thorns in the Parable of the Sower. (**John 1:12-13 (ESV)** 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.)

God instructs us that it is our **responsibility** to have an open heart towards him, removing the stubborn obstacles within our control, so when we hear his word, it will be fruitful like the seed sown on good ground described in the Parable of the Sower. (**Jeremiah 4:3-4 (ESV)**: 3 For thus says the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. 4 Circumcise yourselves to the Lord; remove the foreskin of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.") People, who take that **responsibility** seriously and sincerely seek after God's own heart, benefit themselves, and become a blessing to others. As in the **Parable of the Sower**, those trusting the Lord are like deeply rooted plants in good soil. They are able to withstand scorching heated opposition, producing good fruit despite life's droughts that trouble others, because they are nourished by streams of God's Word. (**Jeremiah 17:7-8 (ESV)**: 7 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. 8 He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.")

1.2 Key Points: Introduction

1. Parables reveal _____ hidden since creation time.
2. The Parable of the Sower focuses on _____ happens and _____ it happens.
3. The Reapers Roadmap focuses on _____ it happens.
4. Our Responsibility is to _____ after God's own heart.
5. Understanding the Parable of the Sower positions you better to _____ all Parables.

1.3 Use of Visuals

Visuals are provided for each key topic, acknowledging they aid with understanding and recollection. Suitable for outreach opportunities spanning the globe, regardless of technology available, these visuals can be reconstructed on pieces of paper or napkins or ground. Several visual figures are based upon Mind Map's (TM) techniques developed by Tony Buzan <http://www.imindmap.com>

1.4 Key Points: Introduction: Answers

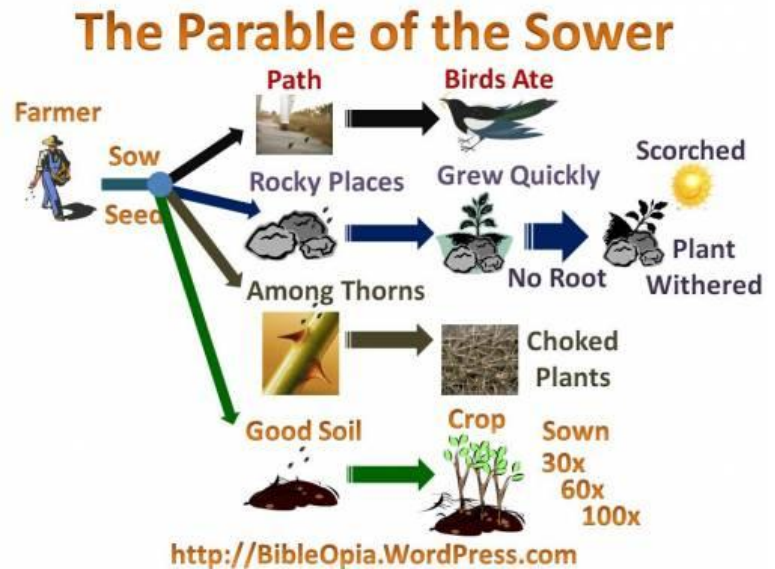
1. Parables reveal Secrets hidden since creation time.
2. The Parable of the Sower focuses on what happens and why it happens.
3. The Reapers Roadmap focuses on how it happens.
4. Our Responsibility is to seek after God's own heart.
5. Understanding the Parable of the Sower positions you better to interpret all Parables

Chapter 1: The Parable of the Sower

1.1 Look at Parable

Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): ¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. ² Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. ³ Then he told them many things in parables, saying:

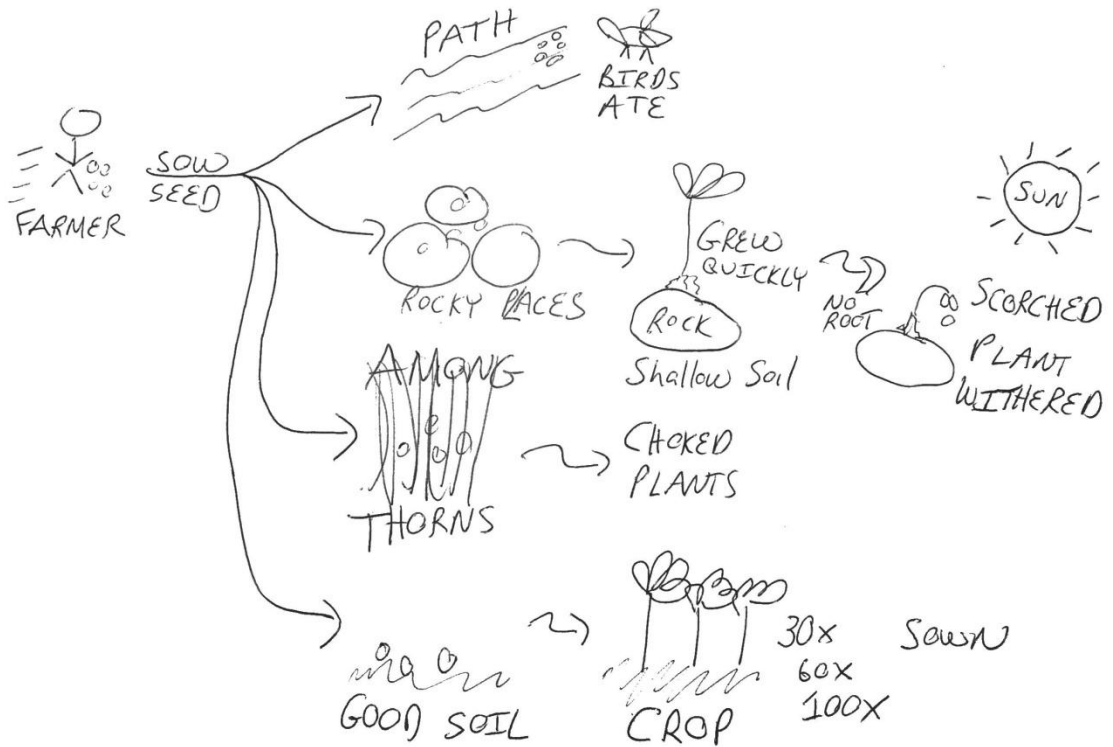
“A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹ He who has ears, let him hear.



1.2 Parable of the Sower Hand Drawn

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

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1.3 Why Parables

Matthew 13:10-17 (NIV):

10 The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

11 He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. 12 Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

14 In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

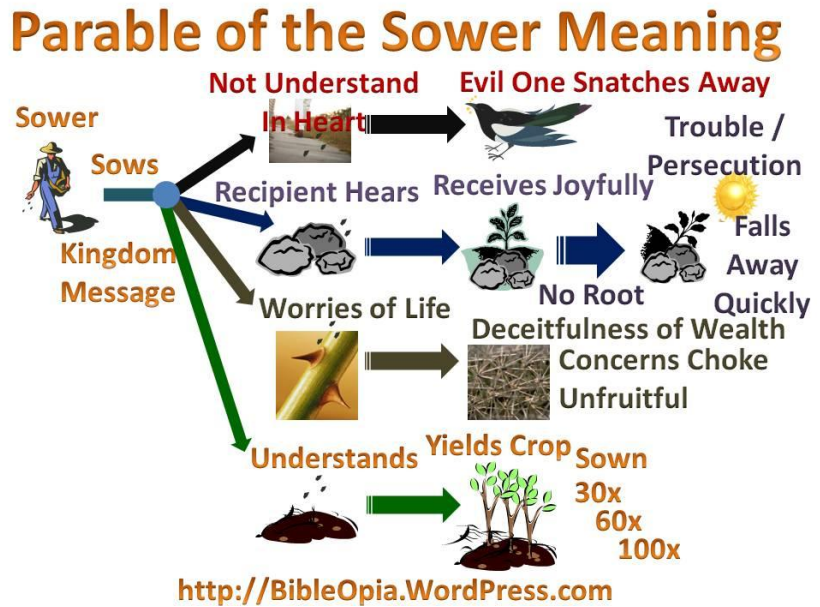
" 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. 15 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.'

16 But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. 17 For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

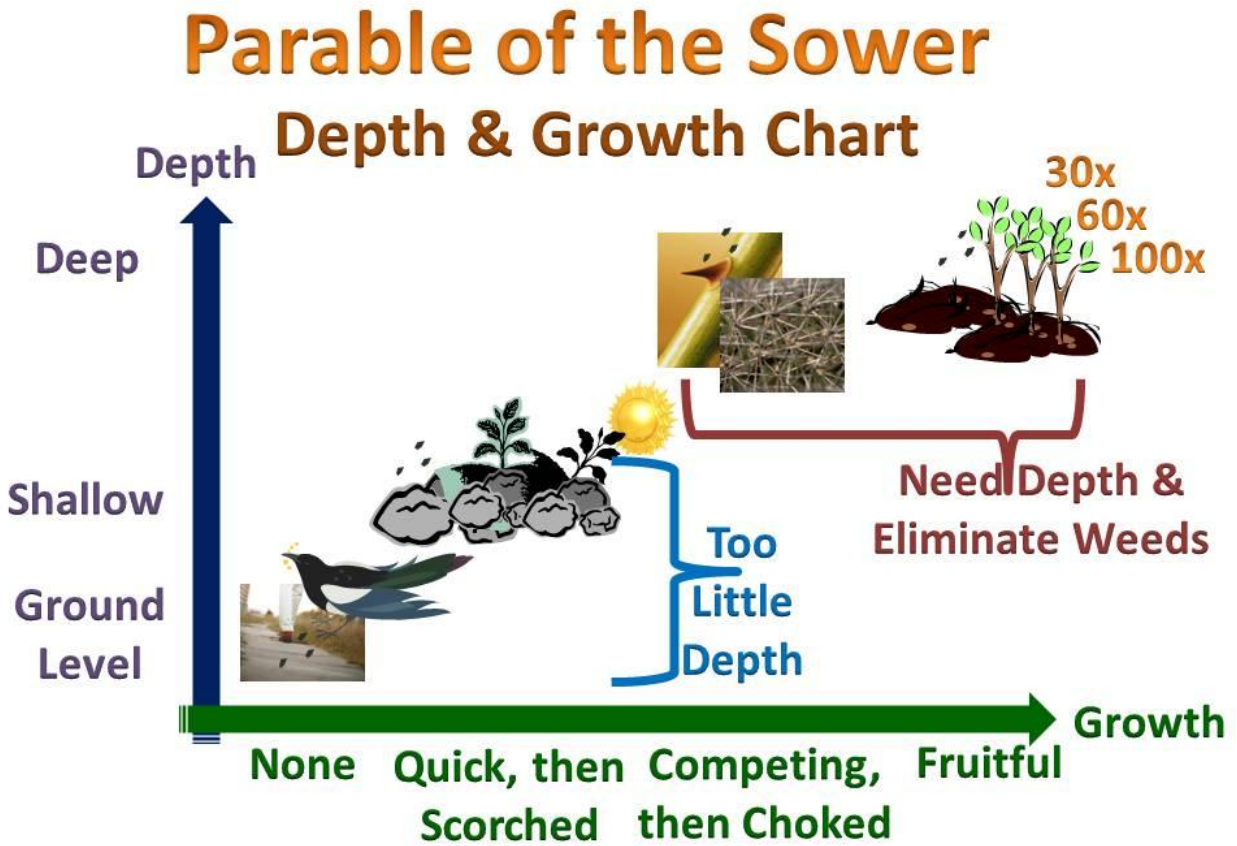
1.4 Look at Parable Explained

Matthew 13:18-23 (NIV): 18 "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means:

19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. 20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. 22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. 23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."



1.5 Depth and Growth Chart



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The Parable of the Sower Depth and Growth Chart shows key dimensions of each soil type. One dimension is **depth** and the other is **growth** achieved. The Parable explains too little depth is insufficient. To increase our own depth requires learning & following & giving ourselves to Jesus Christ more fully, and eventually completely. (**Deuteronomy 6:5 (ESV):** *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*) Despite depth enough to grow, those who receive the message who fail to eliminate weeds present in their own life as scriptures require, later find the world's demands detrimentally competing with their spiritual growth and impeding their fruitfulness. (**Matthew 6:24 (ESV):** *"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."*)

1.6 The Rich Young Ruler

The Parable of the Sower provides a way to understand the interaction between Jesus and the rich young ruler.

Matthew 19:16-22 (ESV): 16 And behold, a man came up to him, saying, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” 17 And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” 18 He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, 19 Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 20 The young man said to him, “All these I have kept. What do I still lack?” 21 Jesus said to him, “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” 22 When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

The rich young ruler correctly addressed Jesus as Good Teacher, because Jesus teaches us authoritatively about God the Father’s character, since Jesus is God. The rich young ruler’s formal address to Jesus was technically correct, although he did not understand fully who Jesus was, so Jesus clarified that only God was good. As the rich young ruler lacked sufficient understanding about Jesus’ true identity, his condition parallels a shallow root depth like in the Parable of the Sower. When he asked Jesus what to do to inherit eternal life, Jesus graciously iterates the commandments the rich young ruler confidently felt he followed closely. When the rich young ruler sought to more deeply know what was lacking, Jesus’ answer revealed an idol in his life, which was his great possessions. The Parable of the Sower shows us this idol was a figurative weed, competing for first place in his life. Like the rich young ruler having shallow roots and weeds at the same time, we too can suffer from multiple simultaneous conditions adversely affecting our growing properly in God’s Kingdom.

1.7 The Rich Young Ruler and Hope

Like the rich young ruler, you too might assess that Jesus’ expectations of you are beyond your ability to fulfill alone. (Matthew 19:22 (ESV): 22 When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.)

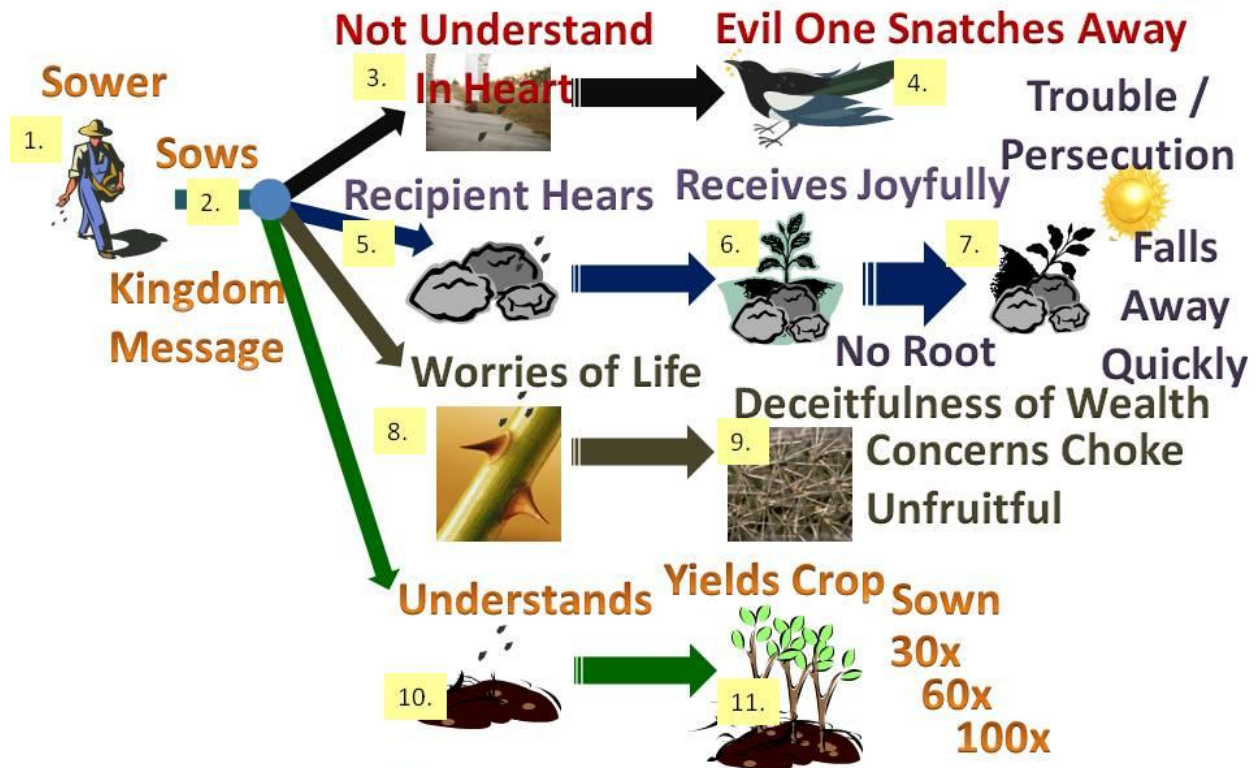
Matthew 19:23-26 (ESV): ²³ And Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” ²⁵ When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” ²⁶ But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

Unlike the rich young ruler, rather than walk away in despair, you can enroll divine assistance to conquer obstacles you alone find impossible to overcome. These otherwise impossible obstacles can be overcome when following Jesus to team up together with God.

1.8 Exercise: Parable of the Sower Self-Assessment

Reflecting on your own journey, identify where you see yourself and those you know in The Parable of the Sower Meaning visual.

Parable of the Sower Meaning



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The Parable of the Sower Self-Assessment Exercise has numbers on the mind map above, which maps to a position in the visual described in the following table.

Position	Definition	Here Now? Were Here?
1. Pre-Sower	Going to learn God's Word	
2. Sown	Just Recently Heard God's Word	
3. Not Understand in Heart	Ignore lessons from God's Word to continue as were	
4. Evil One Snatches Away	Focus quickly shifted from God's Word to other things	
5. Recipient Hears	Recently Heard God's Word	
6. Receives	Initial inner excitement	

Joyfully	hearing God's Word is basis of confidence	
7. Falls Away Quickly	Inclined to discontinue to follow God's Word when face opposition / trouble / persecution	
8. Worries of Life	Concerns in life cause focus to shift from God's Word to worldly things like food, clothing, friends, etc.	
9. Deceitfulness of Wealth	Obsessive desire to be wealthy shifts focus from God's Word to career and business for money	
10. Understands	Understanding that what learned is really God's Word brings you closer to God	
11. Yields Crop	Reaping Spiritual Fruits due to following God's Word	

1.9 Further Study: Parable of the Sower

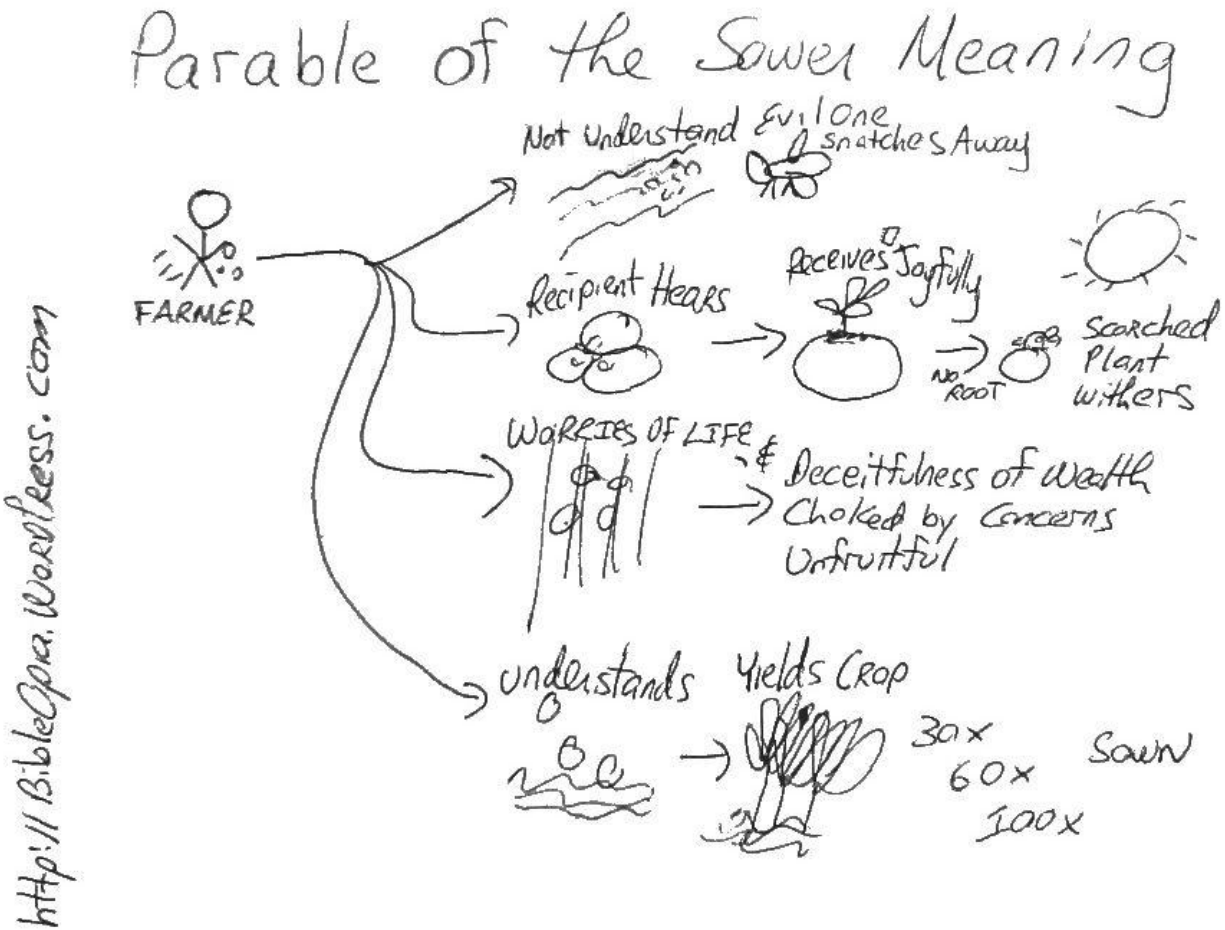
Numerous websites, books, and blogs on the Parable of the Sower each offer insights and perspectives on how to understand and apply it. The Reformer Martin Luther offers many insights, several of which apply for those who religious at

<http://homepage.mac.com/shanerosenthal/reformationink/mlsower.htm> . Insights from the well-

respected preacher and teacher Charles H. Spurgeon are available at

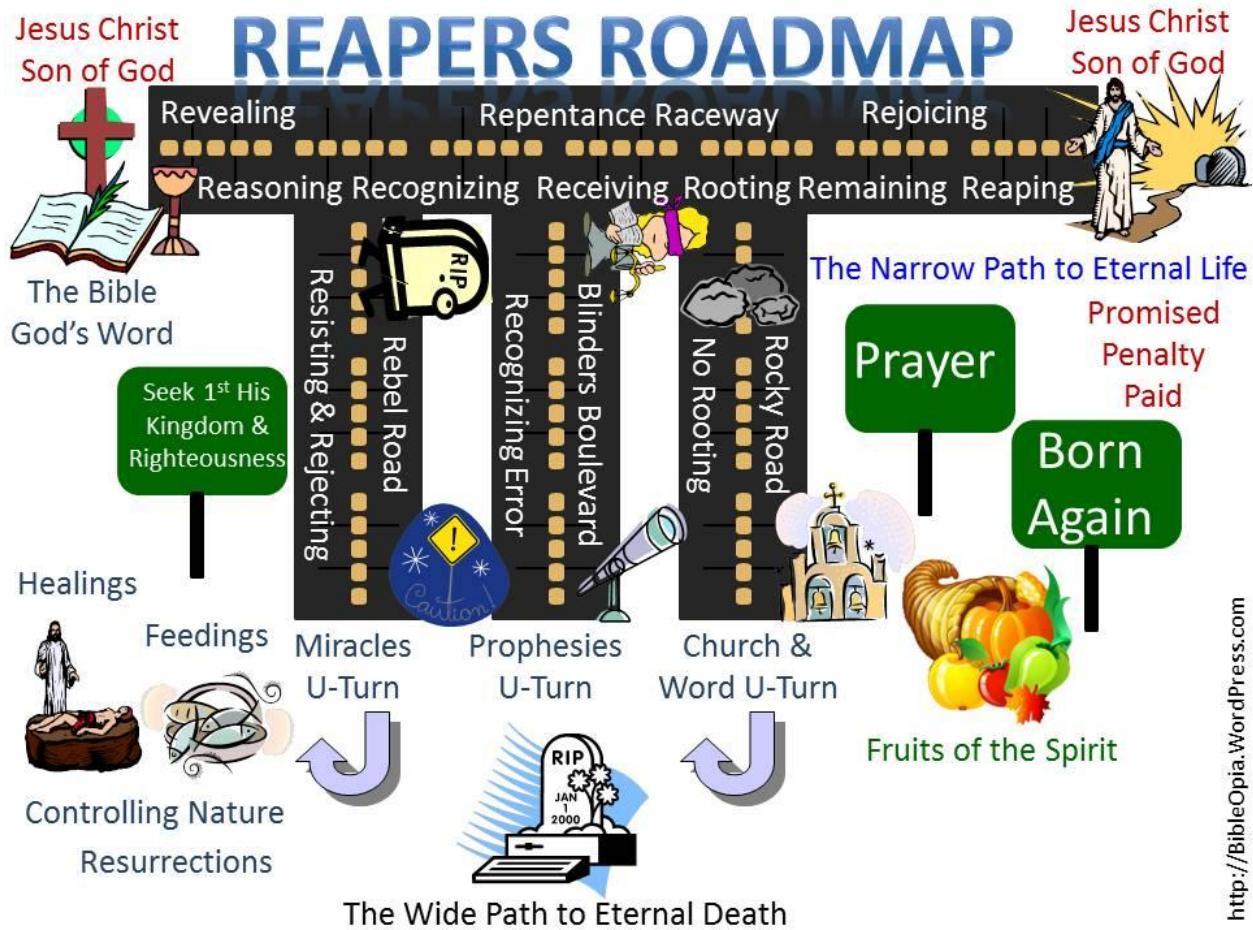
<http://www.spurgeon.org/misc/sower.htm>

1.10 Parable of the Sower Explained Hand Drawn



Chapter 2: The Reapers Roadmap (The 9 R's Roadmap)

2.1 Look at Reapers Roadmap



2.2 Reapers Roadmap Overview

The Bible's Gospel of [John 1:9-13](#) and the "Parable of the Sower" in [Matthew 13:1-9](#) shows the way redemption generally happens, or regretfully fails to happen. The parable shows how people come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or chose another course both for their life on earth and more importantly for eternity. God prefers that all will come to know him and offers the adoption right to become children of God to all who come to believe in him ([John 1:9-13 \(NIV\)](#):
⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.)

2.3 Revealing

God reveals his word and ways so people have the chance to learn more and get to know God better by applying their reason and strength. God presents his message both to Jews and Gentiles. Today, God through his word and the Holy Spirit call to those who attend Christian Services and who hear God's word elsewhere along life's paths. In the "Parable of the Sower" this is like dropping seeds of God's word along the path, as illustrated in the Bible in [Matthew 13:1-9](#).

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): ¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. ²Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. ³Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹He who has ears, let him hear."

2.4 Resisting & Reasoning

Many who know and have heard the word is good, unfortunately resist and ignore it to their own present and eternal detriment. Several suspect obeying God will mean turning from their sinful ways and lifestyles which they wish to continue. They fear society will impart a cost like rejection and reduced influence in life. They are worried their wealth outlook in life will be reduced by choosing what is right. The parable of the sower presents the worries of life and deceitfulness of wealth as the reasons (**Parable of the Sower Explained: Matthew 13:22 (NIV):** ²²The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful). These people use their reason to decide it's better to focus on other things in life, so they'd rather ignore, resist, and reject God's word, than to seek it out with their whole heart, mind, and body.

We see God's sorrow for Israel, as they resist God, and willingly forgo God's generous grace and mercy, that God's will prefers, and longs for them to embrace. (**Matthew 23:37 (NIV):** ³⁷"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing). Knowing the time each person has to search for and recognize and embrace God and God's word is limited, while God can be found (**Isaiah 55:6 (NASB):** ⁶Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near), means paying special close attention to any resisting or rejecting of God is critical for one's own eternal benefit.

2.5 Recognizing & Reasoning

Others have difficulty recognizing God, when God's word is revealed. There are people find it inconvenient to learn more when they have others things they'd prefer to be doing. Prior choices

have moved some increasingly further away from the path of life. Their past decisions then make it more difficult to understand it when it is revealed.

Parable of the Sower Explained: Matthew 13:18 & 19 (NIV): ¹⁸“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: ¹⁹When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.

The scriptures identify the pride of human wisdom as a stumbling block, where people too quickly dismiss the truth, thinking what they have learned already makes them wiser, seeking the world's wisdom rather than God's. Scripture also explains people reject and ignore it on their own because they find the righteousness of God a discomfort, a stumbling block, compared to their own ideas of how God must be.

1 Corinthians 1:22-24 (NIV): ²²Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

2.6 Receiving without Rooting

It's great that people do receive God's word and believe God joyfully. Yet, it's a tragedy when that belief is only short-lived. Jesus explains why this happens.

Parable of the Sower Explained: Matthew 13:20-21 (NIV): ²⁰The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

The lesson here is that when a new believer comes to the faith, it's important to nourish that faith to establish deep root in God's word. It's important both for the new believer to nourish it, and also for the current believers to provide a nourishing environment. This is one reason the Apostle Paul stressed how critical it is to meet together, to become part of God's community of believers.

Hebrews 10:25 (NIV): ²⁵Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

For those who receive the word of God, without working to dig the roots deeply following Jesus, the tragedy is they forgo the right to become the children of God, to their own eternal detriment.

John 1:12 (NIV): ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

2.7 Receiving & Rooting

It'd be great if everyone believed and received the word of God for their own eternal benefit. This opens the door for God to work to improve their hearts. It'd be great if all people nourished this belief diligently, a process we'll call rooting here based on the "Parable of the Sower". God calls us to seek his kingdom and righteousness as the top priority, showing the high importance to create roots in God's world, words, and ways.

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

By believing and receiving God's word, we are given the right to become children of God. This is a right for our soul to be born again by the Holy Spirit of God. We are unable of our own power to do this, since this way of life is naturally foreign to us. We are unable to do what is right all the time due to our sinful nature. We are unable to completely change our own heart and ways ourselves. We are only able to be born again by God's divine intervention, and hence by God's divine choice for this to take place, a choice God made after our belief.

John 1:9-13 (NIV): ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

God is gracious and sees our belief and our effort to know him better. God uses our belief and helps us with our unbelief to work his word and will in our lives, souls, and mind. God causes changes by giving us a new heart and adopting us as his children through his divine intervention.

2.8 Repentance Raceway

The Lord God forgave Nineveh's people when they believed Jonah's message from God and repented of their sins. Jonah was disappointed because what he prophesied at God's direction did not come to pass. It's also possible Jonah was disappointed because God spared his peoples' enemies. God recognized Nineveh people's repentant hearts and rewarded them with his mercy. This pattern of God rewarding belief and repentance with pardon and mercy is a pattern more fully revealed when Jesus' comes and instructs his followers on righteousness.

Jonah 3:10 (ESV): ¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

The Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector instructs that a repentant heart is one God expects in prayer and when reaching out to him, while also informing that to be self-righteous, full of pride, and unrepentant, is sinful.

Luke 18:9-14 (NIV): ⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood up and

prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector.’¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’¹³ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’”¹⁴ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

2.9 Remaining in Righteousness

As God’s children, we are instructed first to follow God’s commands with all our heart, mind, and soul, and second to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Matthew 22:36-38 (NIV): ³⁶“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”
³⁷Jesus replied: ” ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’”³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment.³⁹“The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’”⁴⁰“On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

Our sinful nature means our works will never be sufficient, because we like everyone has sinned and deserve God’s punishment both for what we do, and for what we omit doing. Yet, it is by faith that we work to live righteous lives, lives that are rooted in faith in God through his Son Jesus Christ, who reveals the God the Father.

Romans 4:1-3 (NIV): ¹What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? ²If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. ³What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

We are called to remain in righteousness, knowing God will keep our souls safe in his hands for all eternity.

Romans 8:38-39 (NIV): ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord

2.10 Reaping

Those who truly receive God’s word dig deep roots in scripture, in faith, and knowledge, and will share their lives, experiences, and God’s words with others. The sharing of faith yields the harvest the “Parable of the Sower” describes when God’s good seed falls upon fertile ground.

Parable of the Sower Explained: Matthew 13:18-23 (NIV): ²³But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

2.11 Rejoicing

When many learn the gospel's good news, they receive it gladly and rejoice, like the believer in the Parable of the Sower represented by the plant with the shallow root, who later fell away quickly when troubles came. The lesson here is that being joyful is insufficient for salvation, and is an inadequate basis for confidence in salvation. (**Matthew 13:20-21 (ESV):** 20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.) While insufficient for salvation, rejoicing is a regular essential aspect to our faithfully following Jesus. (**Philippians 4:4 (NIV):** 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.) Those who seek the Lord are expected to rejoice. (**1 Chronicles 16:10 (ESV):** 10 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!)

The Apostle Paul's message in the Bible's Book of Acts parallels The Reapers Roadmap message, as once the Jesus was revealed and received as Lord and Christ, believers are encouraged to do their rooting in him, and remaining established as they walk in the faith, with rejoicing through thanksgiving. (**Acts 2:6,7 (ESV):** 6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.)

2.12 Parable Mapped to Roadmap



The Parable of the Sower directly maps to The Reapers Roadmap as the table below shows. The seeds are God’s Word revealed in the Bible, which contains the Kingdom Message. The Sower (or farmer) is God, who is represented by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who by diverse means is revealing God’s Word. The ground types reflect people’s hearts, minds, and souls, and their receptiveness to God’s Word. The seed falling on the path where the evil one Snatches away the message that is not understood corresponds to an error recognizing and receiving the message on “Blinder’s Boulevard”. The seed that falls among the thorns and was unfruitful represents remaining and reaping errors due to life’s concerns and deceptions corresponds to “Rebel Road”, where resisting and rejecting occur. The seed that falls upon the rocky places corresponds to a person who joyfully receives the message, yet who quickly falls away due to the lack of deep roots, corresponding to rooting and remaining errors on “Rocky Road”.

Table: Parable of the Sower Mapped to The Reapers Roadmap			
Symbol	Symbolizes	Related Roadways	Roadmap
Sower / Farmer	God	Revealing	Jesus Christ Son of God
Seeds	God’s Word	Revealing	The Bible

	Kingdom Message		God's Word
Ground Types: o Path o Rocky Places o Among Thorns o Good Soil	People's Hearts, Minds, Souls	Reasoning Recognizing Receiving Rooting Remaining	Roadways
Path: Birds Ate	Lacks Understanding in Heart → Evil One Snatches Away	Reasoning Recognizing Error Receiving Error	"Blinders Boulevard" Recognizing Error
Among Thorns: Choked Plants	Deceitfulness of Wealth Worries & Concerns of Life Choke, Making Unfruitful	Reasoning Recognizing Receiving Rooting Remaining Error Reaping Error	"Rebel Road" Resisting & Rejecting
Rocky Places: No Roots: Scorched	Hears & Receives Joyfully → No Root → Trouble / Persecution → Falls Away Quickly	Reasoning Recognizing Receiving Rooting Error Remaining Error	"Rocky Road" No Rooting
Good Soil: Yields Crop	Hears the Word Understands Message Produces Crop Yields 100x, 60x, 30x	Reasoning Recognizing Receiving Rooting Remaining Reaping	Repentance Raceway Narrow Path to Eternal Life

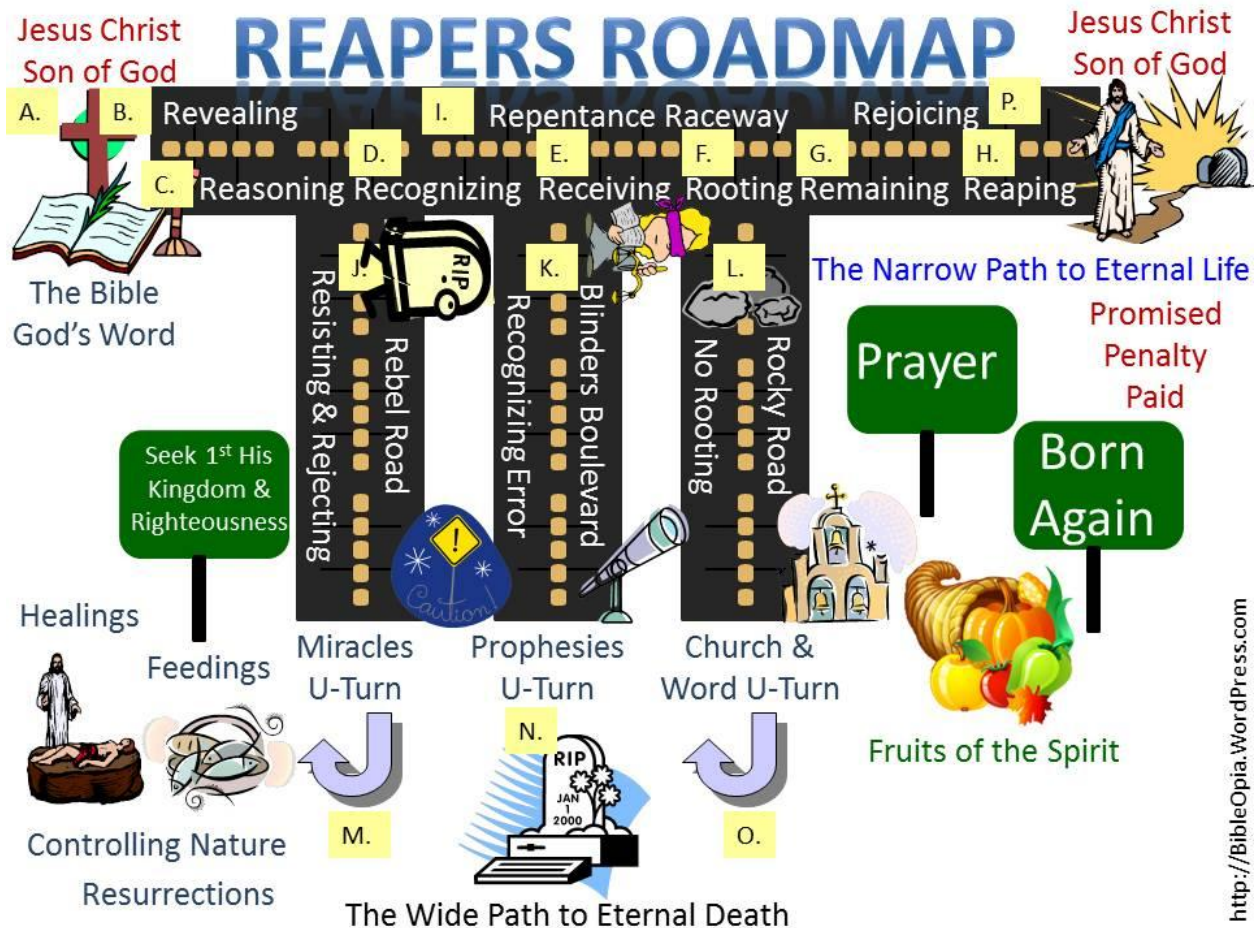
2.13 Key Points: Reapers Roadmap

1. God _____ his Word for people to know him, scattering _____ as the Sower.
2. Excessive concern for wealth and worries lead many to _____ and _____ God, like a plant _____ by thorns.
3. Prior choices and pride cause failure to _____ God's message in their heart, enabling the evil one to snatch the message like a bird carrying _____ the seed.
4. _____ faith in Jesus Christ without rooting becomes short-lived belief like a plant without deep roots is unable to withstands the sun's _____.
5. _____ after receiving and believing Jesus Christ is key to perseverance over troubles and persecution like plants with deep nourishing roots withstanding scorching heat.

6. The Parable of the Pharisee & Tax Collector shows God forgives the sincerely _____, yet withholds forgiveness from the self-righteous before God, who are full of pride, which is sinful.
7. Believers' _____ in righteousness seek to love God and love their neighbors.
8. _____ results from deep faith with understanding like a plant in good soil.
9. Despite being insufficient for confidence in salvation, _____ is a regular essential aspect to our faithfully following Jesus.
10. The _____ Soil represents believers applying reasoning to recognize, receive, and dig deep roots in God Word on the way to remain and reap a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was _____.

2.14 Exercise: Reapers Roadmap Self-Assessment

Reflecting on your own journey, identify where you see yourself and those you know in The Reapers Roadmap, using the visual here. If you pick "Rejoicing", also pick another category.



http://BibleOpia.WordPress.com

The Reapers Roadmap Self-Assessment Exercise has letters on the map above, which maps to a current state/ position as describe in the table below here.

Position	Definition	Here Now? Were Here?
A. Pre-Revealing	Going to learn God's Word for the first time	
B. Revealing	Just Recently Heard God's Word	
C. Reasoning	Thinking about God's Word	
D. Recognizing	Understanding that what learned is really God's Word	
E. Receiving	Letting God's Word sink in to follow it	
F. Rooting	Digging Deeper into God's Word to know & follow well	
G. Remaining	Continue to follow God's Word despite opposition	
H. Reaping	Reaping Spiritual Fruits due to following God's Word	
I. Repentance Raceway	Drawing away from God's Word due to life preferences, concerns, and worries	
J. Resisting & Rejecting / Rebel's Road	Drawing away from God's Word due to life preferences, concerns, and worries	
K. Recognizing Error / Blinders Boulevard	Ignore lessons from God's Word to continue as were, and/or unsure whether message is really God's Word	
L. No Rooting / Rocky Road	Efforts and Excitement to know God's Word faded	
M. Miracles U-Turn	Careful consideration of the miracles in God's Word in History, leading back to God	
N. Prophecies U-Turn	Analysis of the Prophecies in God's Word leading to recognition of Jesus as God	
O. Church & Word U-Turn	Involvement in Church & Learning Word leading you back to God	
P. Rejoicing	Excited about learning God's Word and knowing Jesus as God	

2.15 Discussion Questions: Reapers Roadmap

(1) Reflecting on your own journey and the prior exercises, where do you see yourself and those you know in the Parable of the Sower and The Reapers Roadmap?

(2) What is your responsibility towards God?

(3) What are the eternal rewards and consequences regarding your choice to follow Jesus Christ in this life?

(4) How often have you planned and actually delved deeply to learn scriptures to know Jesus better? How do you and how could you support others in this? How does the Church Community support this? What else could the Church Community do?

(5) When did you first hear the Gospel and what was your response? How has your response changed over your lifetime?

(6) What surprised you from the Bible scripture teachings presented in The Reapers Roadmap, if anything?

(7) How would you draw out visually your path towards God and our Savior Jesus Christ?

(8) What does it mean to be born again? Did you realize you needed God to make you born again? Why do you need God to be born again?

(9) What in this life is keeping you from fully committing yourself and your life to God?

(10) What now makes more sense to you, that previously you found confusing?

(11) Which prophecies about the Savior are you aware of?

(12) What miracles made you think more seriously about scriptures and Jesus? What did you learn from these?

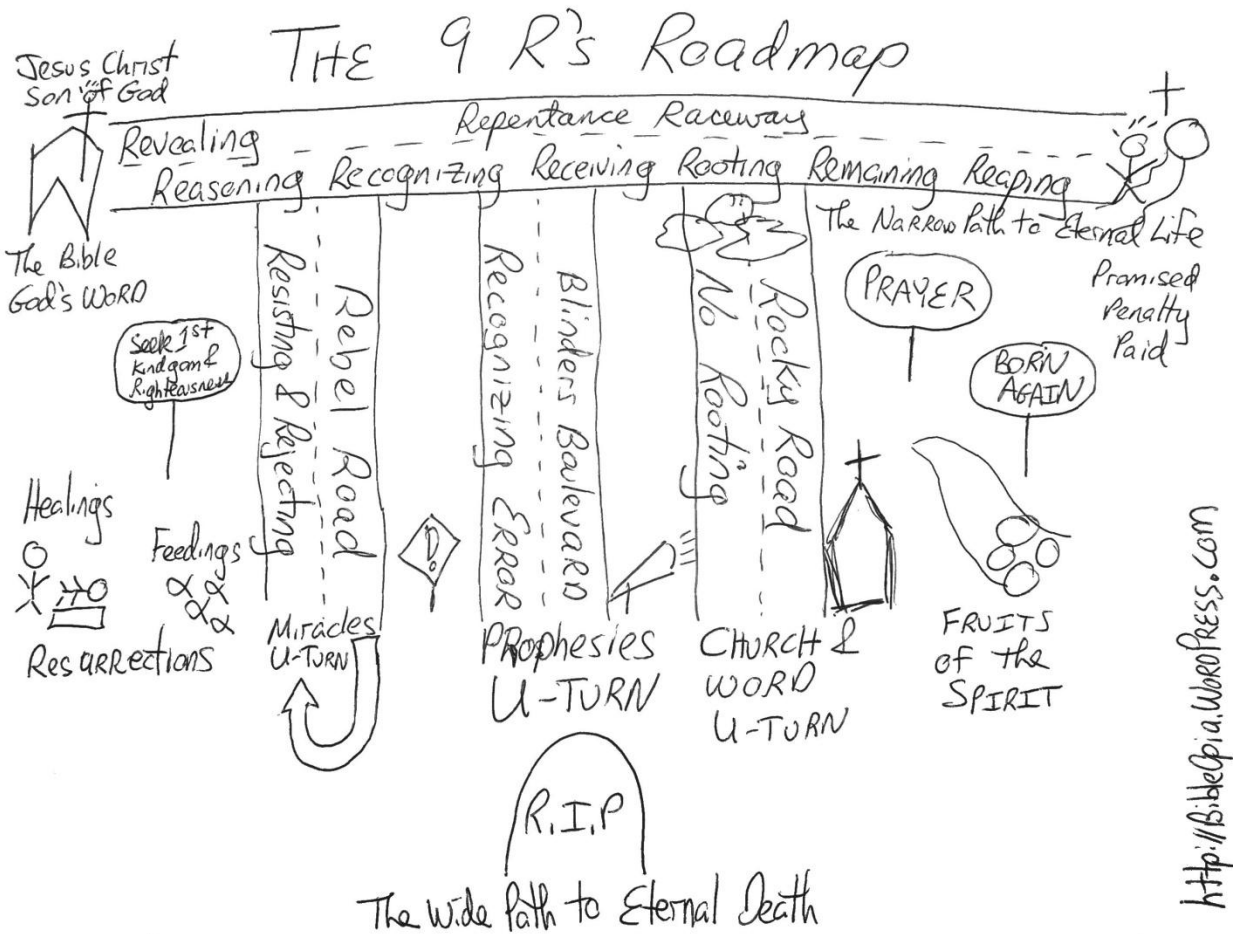
2.16 Reapers Roadmap: Further Study

With this detailed presentation, if you have ears to hear, listen carefully and learn deeply the wisdom contained in God's word as we are reminded in the "Parable of the Sower".

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 9 (NIV): *He who has ears, let him hear.*

Read the Bible further at the Bible Gateway, <http://www.biblegateway.com>, and remember to keep yourself rooted in the word and with the community of believers.

2.17 Hand-Drawn Roadmap Visual

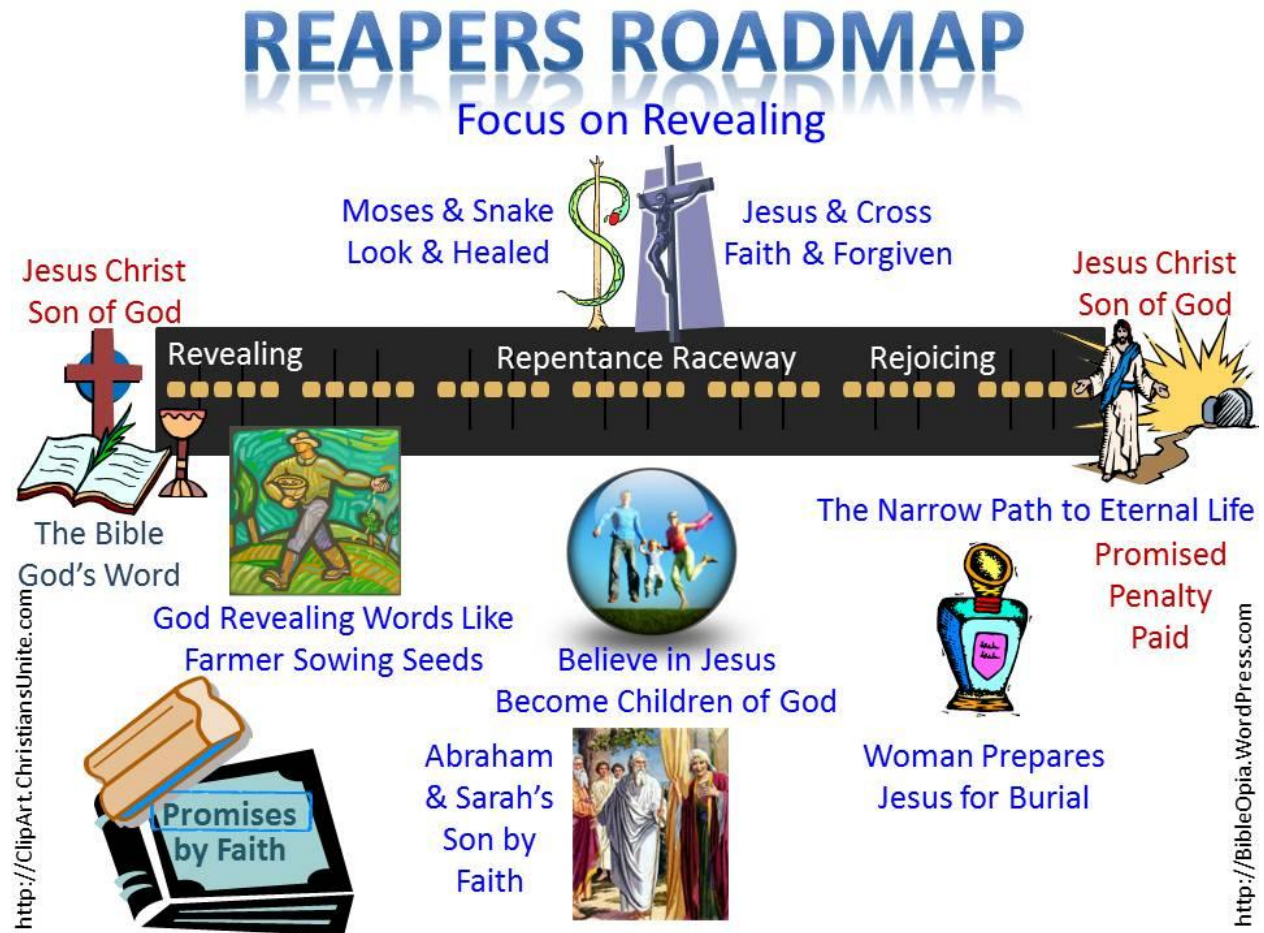


2.18 Key Points: Reapers Roadmap: Answers

1. God reveals his Word for people to know him, scattering seeds as the Sower.
2. Excessive concern for wealth and worries lead many to resist and reject God, like a plant choked by thorns.
3. Prior choices and pride cause failure to recognize God's message in their heart, enabling the evil one to snatch the message like a bird carrying away the seed.
4. Receiving faith in Jesus Christ without rooting becomes short-lived belief like a plant without deep roots is unable to withstand the sun's heat.
5. Rooting after receiving and believing Jesus Christ is key to perseverance over troubles and persecution like plants with deep nourishing roots withstanding scorching heat.
6. The Parable of the Pharisee & Tax Collector shows God forgives the sincerely repentance, yet withholds forgiveness from the self-righteous before God, who are full of pride, which is sinful.
7. Believers' remaining in righteousness seek to love God and love their neighbors.
8. Reaping results from deep faith with understanding like a plant in good soil.
9. Despite being insufficient for confidence in salvation, rejoicing is a regular essential aspect to our faithfully following Jesus.
10. The Good Soil represents believers applying reasoning to recognize, receive, and dig deep roots in God Word on the way to remain and reap a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was sown.

Chapter 3: Revealing

3.1 Look at Revealing Roadmap



3.2 Focus on Revealing

The Bible's Gospel of [John 1:9-13](#) and the "Parable of the Sower" in [Matthew 13:1-9](#) shows the way redemption generally happens, or regretfully fails to happen. The parable shows how people come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or chose another course both for their life on earth and more importantly for eternity. God prefers that all will come to know him and offers the adoption right to become children of God to all who come to believe in him ([John 1:9-13 \(NIV\)](#):
⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.)

3.3 Revealing Review

God reveals his word and ways so people have the chance to learn more and get to know God better by applying their reason and strength. God presents his message both to Jews and Gentiles. Today, God through his word and the Holy Spirit call to those who attend Christian Services and who hear God's word elsewhere along life's paths. In the "Parable of the Sower" this is like dropping seeds of God's word along the path, as illustrated in the Bible in [Matthew 13:1-9](#).

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

3.4 God Revealing Words Like Farmer Sowing Seeds

Jesus revealed in the related Parable of the Weeds, that the one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, who is Jesus, also known as the Son of God. Like the Parable of the Sower, the Parable of the Weeds instructs us that God Revealing his Word is like a Farmer Sowing Seeds.

Matthew 13:36-37: 36 Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." 37 He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

3.5 Look & Be Healed

God revealed his word many times to the Israelites through messengers granted grace from God to instruct his people. As the prophets predicted, God sent his Son Jesus Christ to be our savior and an example to us by his life and words, clarifying the way to God the Father.

John 3:14-18 (NIV): ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

3.6 Revealing Faith: Abraham & Sarah's Son by Faith

God reveals those trusting in his resurrected Son Jesus Christ have his promises, rights to be children of God, their sins forgiven, and righteousness credited to their account.

Romans 4:18-25 (NIV): ¹⁸Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ¹⁹ Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. ²⁰ Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. ²² This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." ²³ The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, ²⁴ but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

3.7 Revealing Promises by Faith

God calls us to believe, so God's promises and guarantees can be ours. To illustrate this key point, let's say people committed evil atrocities, yet God grants them another chance to find him. Even though they deserve death and punishment, God will grant forgiveness, if they repent from your past ways and sincerely believe. Claim your right to become a child of God, through your faith, without turning back.

Romans 4:16-17 (NIV): ¹⁶Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.

3.8 Revealing Righteousness by Faith

King David of Israel elaborated upon the blessings of righteousness available through faith. Without God, works are futile. With faith in God works performed are evidence of your faith, and flow from your faith. Faith in God leads to forgiveness of believers sins. This is a blessing from God.

Romans 4:4-8 (NIV): ⁴ Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. ⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. ⁶ David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

⁷"Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

⁸"Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him."

3.9 Kiss the Son

King David in **Psalms 2:10-12** reveals that people believed in the Son and knew his power prior to the Son of God's coming. We are advantaged to believe in the Son after he authoritatively brought God's cleansing word, endorsed by powerful merciful miracles.

Psalms 2: 10-12 (NIV): ¹⁰ Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. ¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. ¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

3.10 Revealing Jesus the Way: Jesus & Cross, Faith & Forgiveness

The Holy Scripture clearly reveals the only true way to God the Father is through God the Son, as the Bible witnesses several times. To reject the Son of God is to reject God the Father and to fall outside God's eternal life promises. By presenting this challenging truth, God reveals our choice and its' consequences. Use your reason to consider and choose carefully where you'll place your belief.

John 3:31-36 (NIV): ³¹“The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. ³²He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. ³³The man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. ³⁴For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. ³⁵The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. ³⁶Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.”

3.11 Revealing Jesus' Burial Preparations

Jesus Christ the Son of God entered our world to live a sinless life and die unjustly. Since he did not deserve to die, that death penalty payment Jesus is free to apply to forgive sins of believers, who are instructed to live righteous lives. Shortly prior to Jesus' death, a woman prepared his live body for burial with expensive perfume, as recounted in the Bible's Gospel of **Mark 14:3-9**, emphasizing the centrality of Jesus' death.

Mark 14: 3-9 (NIV): ³ While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. ⁴ Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, “Why this waste of perfume? ⁵ It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor.” And they rebuked her harshly. ⁶“Leave her alone,” said Jesus. “Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷ The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. ⁸ She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my

burial. ⁹ I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

3.12 Key Points: Revealing

1. God sent his Son Jesus Christ to be our _____.
2. Like a farmer _____ seeds, Jesus Christ has been _____ God's Words.
3. As the Lord instructed Moses to put a bronze _____ on a pole for all to look to _____, similarly the Lord Jesus Christ was placed on the cross for all _____ to have eternal _____.
4. Abraham's _____ in God was credited to him as righteousness, like God will credit righteousness to _____ in Jesus Christ.
5. Righteousness is by a sincere _____, from which flows external _____ as evidence to one's internal faith.
6. The only true way to God the Father is through God the _____, who is Jesus Christ.
7. All kings and rulers in authority are wisely advised to _____ the Son.
8. The woman poured very expensive _____ on Jesus' head to prepare his body beforehand for _____.

3.13 Discussion Questions: Revealing

- (1) Who is Jesus? What do you think? What does the Bible say about Jesus?
- (2) Why did God the Father send his Son Jesus on a mission that included his Son being killed via crucifixion?
- (3) How is Jesus as Savior like Moses' Snake on the Pole?
- (4) What role does faith and belief have in being saved for eternal life?

(5) Why is it best for even kings and rulers in authority to "kiss the Son"?

(6) If God made a promise to you that defied your understanding of nature would you believe like Abraham did?

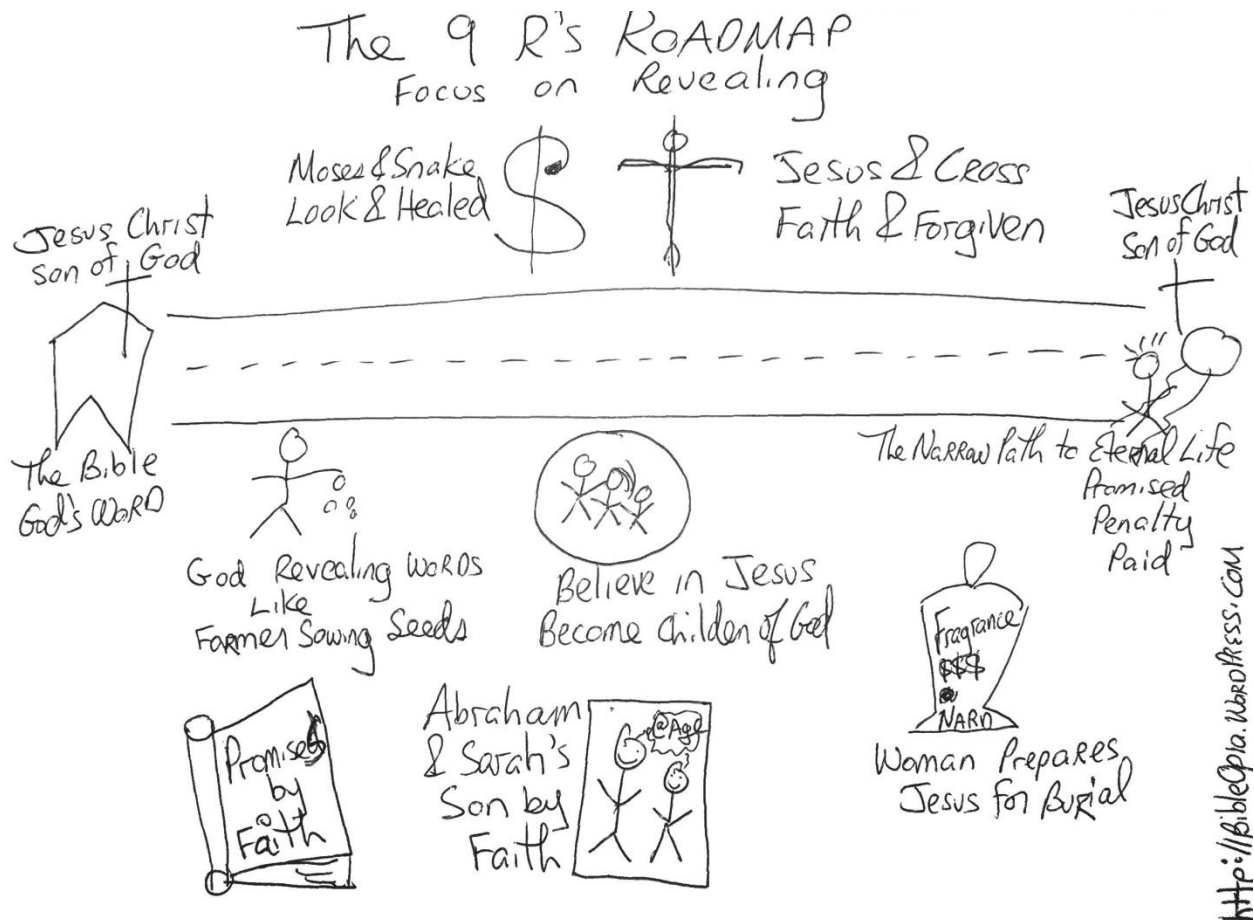
(7) Who else in scriptures exhibited faith against the odds and how did it turn out?

(8) Who is ultimately responsible behind the scenes for you hearing God's word? Who is ultimately responsible for your accepting & following God's word?

3.14 Revealing: Further Study

The Bible reveals much more about God and about his Son Jesus Christ. To learn more, read the bible at the Bible Gateway <http://www.biblegateway.com> or use the Net Bible Translation at <http://www.netbible.org> . Learn more listening to audio sermons and reviewing instructional materials, courtesy of preachers like David Legge at <http://www.preachtheword.com> .

3.15 Hand Drawn Revealing Roadmap



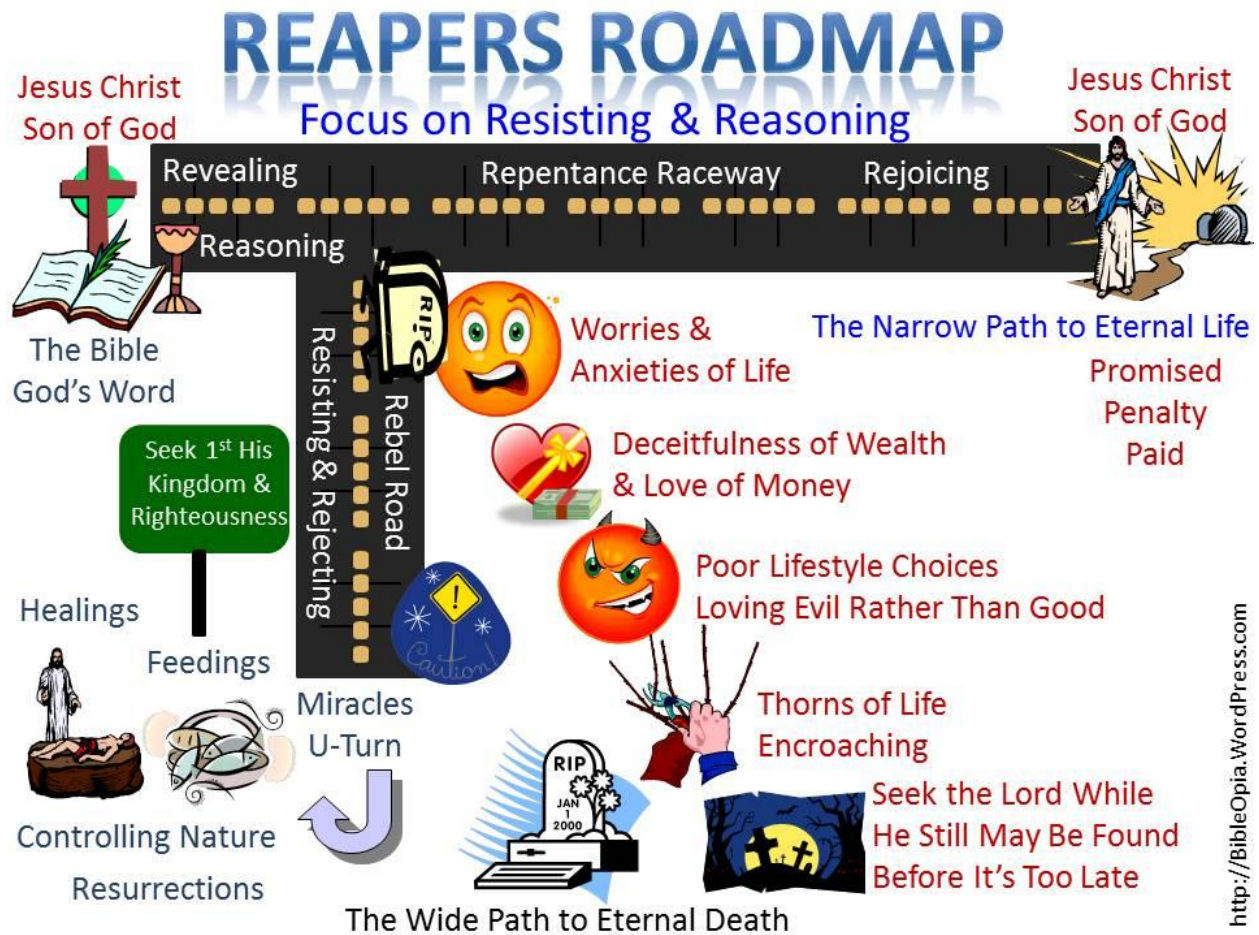
3.16 Key Points: Revealing: Answers

1. God sent his Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior.
2. Like a farmer sowing seeds, Jesus Christ has been revealing God's Words.
3. As the Lord instructed Moses to put a bronze snake on a pole for all to look to live, similarly the Lord Jesus Christ was placed on the cross for all believers / followers to have eternal life.
4. Abraham's faith in God was credited to him as righteousness, like God will credit righteousness to believers / followers in Jesus Christ.
5. Righteousness is by a sincere faith, from which flows external works as evidence to one's internal faith.

6. The only true way to God the Father is through God the Son, who is Jesus Christ.
7. All kings and rulers in authority are wisely advised to Kiss the Son.
8. The woman poured very expensive perfume / cologne / fragrance on Jesus' head to prepare his body beforehand for burial.

Chapter 4: Resisting & Reasoning

4.1 Look at Resisting & Reasoning Roadmap



4.2 Reapers Roadmap Review

The Reapers Roadmap materials previously presented summarized how the Bible's Gospel of [John 1:10-13](#) and the "Parable of the Sower" found in [Matthew 13:1-9](#) shows the way redemption typically happens, or regrettably fails to happen. That is, it shows how people come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or how they choose another course both for their life on earth and more importantly for eternity.

John 1:9-13 (NIV): 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

God reveals his word and ways so people have the chance to learn more and get to know God better by applying their reason and strength. God presents his message both to Jews and Gentiles. Today, God through his word and the Holy Spirit calls to those who attend Christian Services and who hear God's word elsewhere along life's paths. In the "Parable of the Sower" this is like dropping seeds of God's word along the path, as illustrated in the Bible in [Matthew 13:1-9](#).

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

4.3 Resisting & Rejecting Review

Many people know and have heard God's word is good, yet resist and ignore it to their own present and eternal detriment. Some suspect obeying God will mean turning from their sinful ways and lifestyles that they want to continue. Some fear society will impart a cost like rejection and reduced influence in life. Some are worried their wealth outlook in life will be reduced by choosing what is right. Similarly, the parable of the sower presents the worries of life and deceitfulness of wealth as the reasons. These people use their reasoning capability to decide it's better to focus on other things in life, so they'd rather ignore, resist, and reject God's word, than to seek it out with their whole heart, mind, and body.

Parable of the Sower Explained: Matthew 13:22 (NIV): ²²The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

We see God's sorrow for Israel, as they resist God, and willingly forgo God's generous grace and mercy, that God's will prefers, and longs for them to embrace.

Matthew 23:37 (NIV): ³⁷"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

The time each person has to search for and recognize God and God's word is limited, while God can be found, as the scripture reveals in Isaiah 55:6, so it's important to learn the truth when the opportunity presents itself.

Isaiah 55:6 (NASB): ⁶ Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.

4.4 Focus on Resisting & Rejecting

Jesus has authorized his followers to reveal to the world what he shared in secret, even though the world often resists and rejects it.

Matthew 10:27 (NIV): ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.

Those who resist God's word have been known to resort to name calling, physical abuse, betrayal, hatred, and killing too.

Matthew 10:17-25 (NIV): ¹⁷ "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. ²¹ "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. ²² All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. ²³ When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. ²⁴ "A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household!

Those who resist and reject God's good news of grace through belief are subjected to God's law, which exposes their guilt, obligations, and condemnation. It is much better to receive God's word and sincerely seek to understand it, so as to receive God's grace and mercy guaranteed by his promises, rather than judgment.

1 Timothy 1:8-11 (NIV): ⁸ We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. ⁹ We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine ¹¹ that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

When opposed, Jesus the Son of God stressed the importance to believe in the miracles, to come to know the truth of his identity, even for those who were currently not of his flock.

John 14:11 (NIV): ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

Because of this, it's important to learn more about Jesus' miracles, and how those miracles mirror and match the work God performed prior to his coming. The Bible shows several prophets who worked through God to perform miracles and also shows Jesus the Son of God

performing similar miracles. For those who are scientifically inclined, and wish to know how science is consistent with miracles, you can later read the CreationOpia blog at <http://CreationOpia.WordPress.com> to understand a paradigm that provides a scientific vantage point on God's performing miracles.

4.5 Miracles: God and the Son of God

There are several miracles that God performed prior to sending the Son of God, Jesus Christ who performed similar miracles according to God's will. These miracles include resurrections, healings, controlling nature, and feeding people.

4.6 Resurrections

The prophet Elijah asked God and the boy was raised back to life by God.

1 Kings 17: 17-24 (NIV): ¹⁷ Some time later the son of the woman who owned the house became ill. He grew worse and worse, and finally stopped breathing. ¹⁸ She said to Elijah, "What do you have against me, man of God? Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?" ¹⁹ "Give me your son," Elijah replied. He took him from her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his bed. ²⁰ Then he cried out to the LORD, "O LORD my God, have you brought tragedy also upon this widow I am staying with, by causing her son to die?" ²¹ Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this boy's life return to him!" ²² The LORD heard Elijah's cry, and the boy's life returned to him, and he lived. ²³ Elijah picked up the child and carried him down from the room into the house. He gave him to his mother and said, "Look, your son is alive!" ²⁴ Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is the truth."

Likewise, Jesus the Son of God raised Jairus' daughter back to life.

Mark 5:35-43 (NIV): ³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher any more?" ³⁶ Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "**Don't be afraid; just believe.**" ³⁷ He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹ He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." ⁴⁰ But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, "**Talitha koum!**" (which means, "**Little girl, I say to you, get up!**"). ⁴² Immediately the girl stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³ He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

A widow's son was made alive again by Jesus the Son of God.

Luke 7:11-17 (NIV): ¹¹ Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him. ¹² As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, “Don’t cry.” ¹⁴ Then he went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. He said, “Young man, I say to you, get up!” ¹⁵ The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. ¹⁶ They were all filled with awe and praised God. “A great prophet has appeared among us,” they said. “God has come to help his people.” ¹⁷ This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country.

Jesus the Son of God also restored Lazarus’ life after he’d already been dead four days.

John 11:38-43 (NIV): ³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ “Take away the stone,” he said. “But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.” ⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.” ⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

4.7 Healings

Prior to Jesus, Elisha, a prophet and messenger from the Lord, healed Naaman, the commander of King Aram’s army, of a skin disease.

2 Kings 5:9-16 (NIV): ⁹ So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha’s house. ¹⁰ Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, “Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed.” ¹¹ But Naaman went away angry and said, “I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. ¹² Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn’t I wash in them and be cleansed?” So he turned and went off in a rage. ¹³ Naaman’s servants went to him and said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, ‘Wash and be cleansed!’” ¹⁴ So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy. ¹⁵ Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. Please accept now a gift from your servant.” ¹⁶ The prophet answered, “As surely as the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will not accept a thing.” And even though Naaman urged him, he refused.

Likewise, Jesus the Son of God cured people of their skin disease too.

Luke 5:12-16 (NIV): ¹² While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” ¹³ Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” And immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴ Then Jesus ordered him, “Don’t tell anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them.”

Luke 17:11-19 (NIV): ¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!” ¹⁴ When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed. ¹⁵ One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?” ¹⁸ Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹ Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

4.8 Controlling Nature

Jonah was sent by God to preach to the great city Nineveh about their upcoming destruction because of their wickedness, in a place located in the middle east today. The great city contained 120,000 people, plus many animals, and usually took 3 days to travel from end-to-end. Jonah was disobedient and went the other way on a ship headed for Spain. God sent a storm by Jonah was sleeping. God calmed the storm after Jonah was thrown into the sea.

Jonah 1:11-17 (NIV): ¹¹ The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, “What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?” ¹² “Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” he replied, “and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.” ¹³ Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. ¹⁴ Then they cried to the LORD, “O LORD, please do not let us die for taking this man’s life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, O LORD, have done as you pleased.” ¹⁵ Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. ¹⁶ At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him. ¹⁷ But the LORD provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.

At Jesus’ the Son of God’s word the storms calmed.

Luke 8: 22-25 (NIV): ²² One day Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s go over to the other side of the lake.” So they got into a boat and set out. ²³ As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger. ²⁴ The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we’re going

to drown!” He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. ²⁵“Where is your faith?” he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.”

4.9 Feedings

God provided food called manna in the desert for Israel on their way to the Promised Land.

Exodus 16:4-5 (NIV): ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. ⁵ On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.”

Exodus 16:31-32 (NIV): ³¹ The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey. ³² Moses said, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Take an omer of manna and keep it for the generations to come, so they can see the bread I gave you to eat in the desert when I brought you out of Egypt.’”

Jesus fed 5,000 men plus women and children, starting with only 5 bread loaves and 2 fishes.

Luke 9:13-17 (NIV): ¹³ He replied, “You give them something to eat.” They answered, “We have only five loaves of bread and two fish—unless we go and buy food for all this crowd.” ¹⁴ (About five thousand men were there.) But he said to his disciples, “Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each.” ¹⁵ The disciples did so, and everybody sat down. ¹⁶ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to set before the people. ¹⁷ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

4.10 More Miracles Ahead

Jesus performed many miracles. Further miracles performed include healing a paralytic (see [Luke 5:17-26](#)), healing a shriveled hand (see [Luke 6:6-11](#)), curing a centurion’s servant (see [Luke 7:1-9](#)), and more that you can learn about further in the Bible in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John at the Net Bible Online <http://www.netbible.org>, which also contains information on the original Greek words with translators notes. For those who are scientifically inclined, and wish to know how science is consistent with miracles, you can later read the CreationOpia blog at <http://CreationOpia.WordPress.com> to understand a paradigm that provides a scientific vantage point on God’s performing miracles.

4.11 Keep Reasoning to Question Any Resisting Before It's Too Late

Jesus, the Son of God, intercedes with the God the Father, on our behalf, to provide us the opportunity to learn more about God, so we can believe and repent from our wrongdoing. Be happy that God has provided you an opportunity to learn more, consider your ways, learn about God's ways, and to repent.

Luke 13:1-9 (NIV): ¹ Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ² Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? ³ I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. ⁴ Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵ I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish." ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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?' ⁸" "Sir," the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.' "

Go and learn more, knowing the time each person has to search for and recognize God and God's word is limited, while God can be found, as the scripture reveals in [Isaiah 55:6](#).

Isaiah 55:6 (NASB): ⁶ Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.

4.12 Key Points: Resisting & Reasoning

1. Because God cares for how people turn out, God is _____ when people are unwilling to follow his wise council since God knows the disastrous eternal consequences.
2. Excessively _____ about life and obsessively pursuing the deceitfulness of _____ causes many to _____ and _____ God's life plans personally.
3. People who _____ and _____ God's will personally are often found oppressing God's people collectively.
4. Believe Jesus' _____ directly or believe the evidence of the _____, to come to know the truth about Jesus' identity.
5. Recorded _____ miracles teach us God's power over death, like when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter and the widow's son and Lazarus, and Elijah raising the woman's son.

6. Amazing _____ miracles demonstrate God's supremacy over our human body like when Elisha and Jesus cured skin diseases.
7. Shocking miracles controlling _____ exhibit God's dominance over creations' physical elements, like the storm resting when Jonah was thrown overboard, and Jesus calming the fierce lake storm with his rebuke.
8. God's _____ miracles showcase the extremes God goes to provide, like when God provided _____ in the desert for Israel and Jesus provided for thousands, with only 5 bread loaves and 2 fishes.
9. Jesus' miracles _____ and _____ those performed by God previously, adding credibility to believing Jesus' identity as the Son of God the Father.
10. Use your _____ to question any resisting and rejecting before it is too late by _____ for God while he can be found and _____ so you will not perish.

4.13 Discussion Questions: Resisting & Reasoning

- (1) Have you ever stubbornly ignored wise advice that you later regretted ignoring? When did you come to realize it? How could you have been more open minded to wise advice?
- (2) Have you or a friend ever resisted or rejected Jesus? What insights do you have into why? What happened? Is God still tugging at the person's heart? Is it too late for the person? In what ways is the person open or closed minded?
- (3) What concerns and desires in this life distract from focusing on the eternal prize God offers?
- (4) Why did Jesus perform miracles? Was that his primary mission? How are Jesus' miracles like those God performed via earlier messengers?
- (5) What witness do Jesus' miracles show about his character, his origins, and his endorsement by God the Father?

(6) Do you have difficulty understanding miracles? Does your lack of understanding hinder your belief or strengthen your belief, knowing God is beyond us?

(7) What questions do you want God to grant you to find & share insights about as you investigate scriptures and learn from his people?

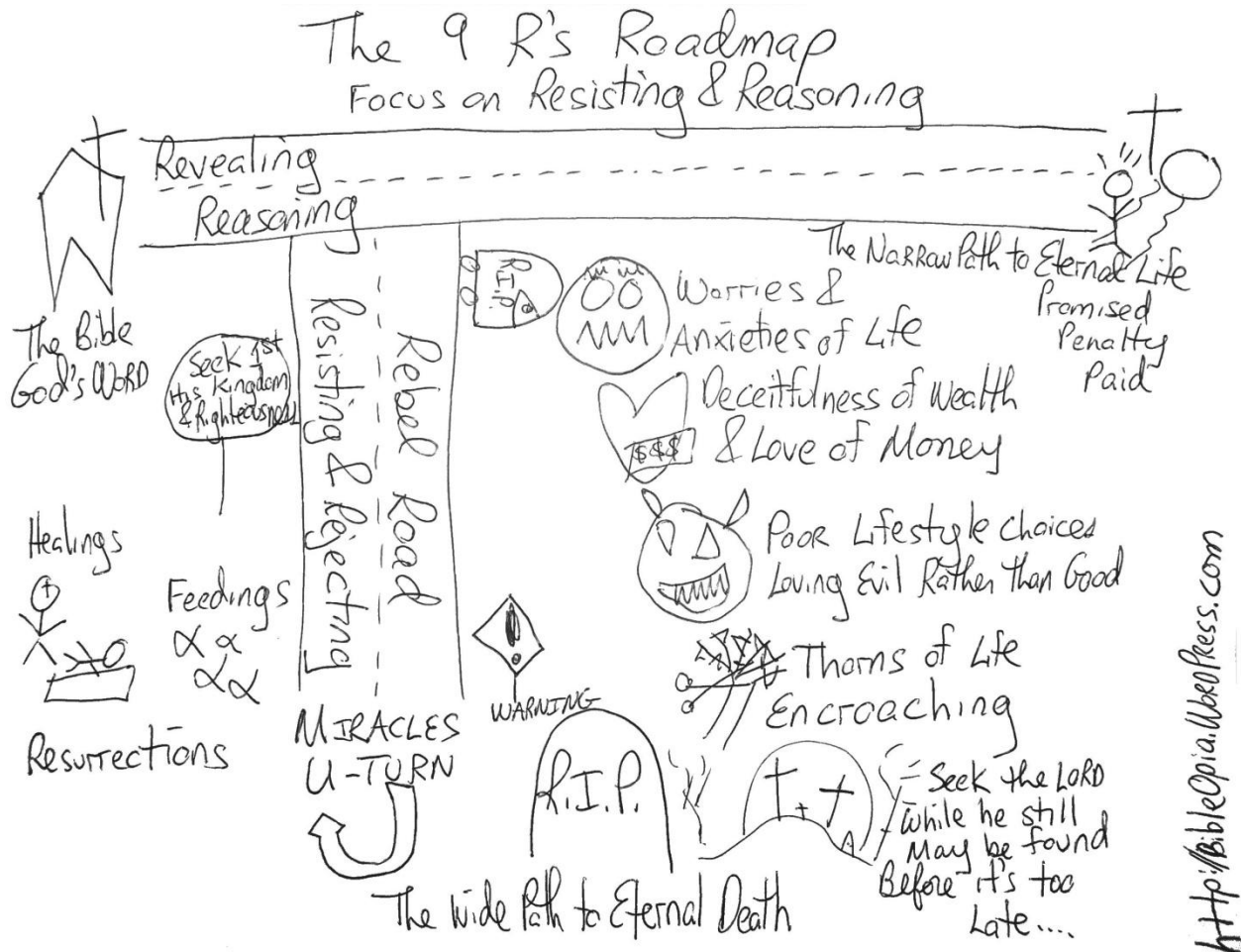
(8) If you could perform miracles like healings, feedings, controlling nature, and resurrections, what would you do? How would you aim to influence others' beliefs when asking God to perform miracles through you? What can you accomplish in your lifetime to help others just by applying worldly tools like charity and medicine and influence? What will you do?

(9) What can you offer from your journey to know God that will be helpful to those with you who are struggling to know if God is, who God is, and whether to follow God?

4.14 Resisting & Reasoning: Further Study

The website <http://www.biblica.com/bible/audio> contains audio versions of the bible in the New International Version (NIV) and Today's NIV (TNIV) translations, while the website <http://www.biblegateway.com> contains various textual translations, plus links to audio too. As the bible can be difficult to understand clearly, recommend you listen to preachers at <http://www.sermonaudio.com>. You can also reference sermon audio, books, and articles online at <http://www.desiringgod.org> too.

4.15 Hand Drawn Resisting & Reasoning Visual



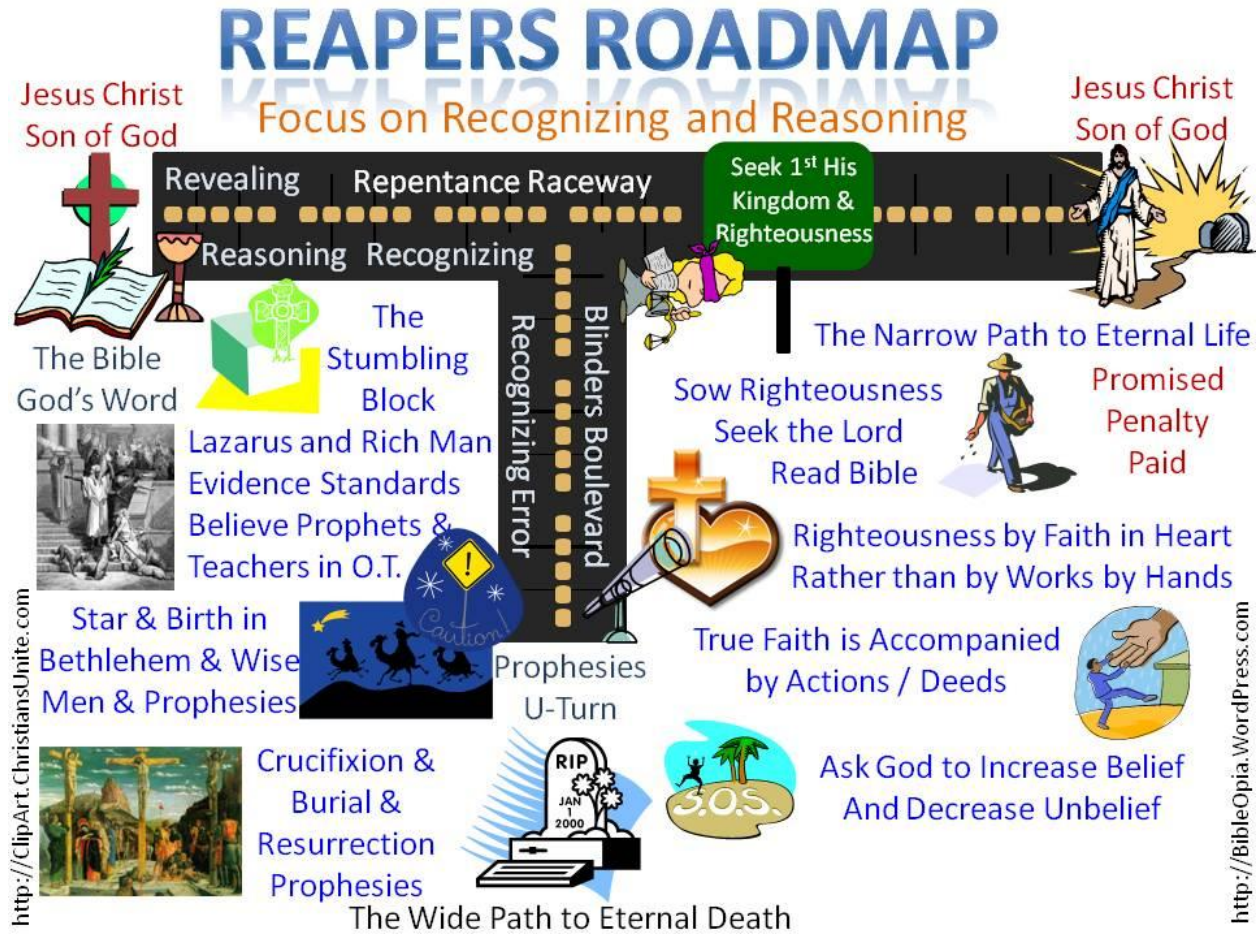
4.16 Key Points: Resisting & Reasoning: Answers

1. Because God cares for how people turn out, God is sorrowful when people are unwilling to follow his wise council since God knows the disastrous eternal consequences.
2. Excessively worrying about life and obsessively pursuing the deceitfulness of wealth causes many to resist and reject God's life plans personally.
3. People who resist and reject God's will personally are often found oppressing God's people collectively.
4. Believe Jesus' words directly or believe the evidence of the miracles, to come to know the truth about Jesus' identity.

5. Recorded resurrection miracles teach us God's power over death, like when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter and the widow's son and Lazarus, and Elijah raising the woman's son.
6. Amazing healing miracles demonstrate God's supremacy over our human body like when Elisha and Jesus cured skin diseases.
7. Shocking miracles controlling nature exhibit God's dominance over creations' physical elements, like the storm resting when Jonah was thrown overboard, and Jesus calming the fierce lake storm with his rebuke.
8. God's feeding miracles showcase the extremes God goes to provide, like when God provided manna in the desert for Israel and Jesus provided for thousands, with only 5 bread loaves and 2 fishes.
9. Jesus' miracles mirror and match those performed by God previously, adding credibility to believing Jesus' identity as the Son of God the Father.
10. Use your reasoning to question any resisting and rejecting before it is too late by searching for God while he can be found and repenting so you will not perish.

Chapter 5: Recognizing & Reasoning

5.1 Look at Recognizing & Reasoning Roadmap



5.2 Reapers Roadmap Review

The Reapers Roadmap materials previously presented summarized how The Bible's Gospel of [John 1:10-13](#) and the "Parable of the Sower" found in [Matthew 13:1-9](#) shows the way redemption typically happens, or regretfully fails to happen. That is, it shows how people come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or choose another course both for their life on earth and more importantly for eternity.

John 1:9-13 (NIV): 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

God reveals his word and ways so people have the chance to learn more and get to know God better by applying their reason and strength. God presents his message both to Jews and Gentiles. Today, God through his word and the Holy Spirit calls to those who attend Christian Services and who hear God's word elsewhere along life's paths. In the "Parable of the Sower" this is like dropping seeds of God's word along the path, as illustrated in the Bible in [Matthew 13:1-9](#).

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

5.3 Focus on Recognizing & Reasoning

Recall that many people have difficulty recognizing God when God's word is revealed. It's possible people find it inconvenient to learn more when they have other things they'd prefer to be doing. It is possible prior choices have moved people increasingly further away from the path of life. Their past decisions then make it more difficult to understand God's word when it is revealed.

Parable of the Sower Explained: Matthew 13:18 & 19 (NIV): ¹⁸"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: ¹⁹When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.

5.4 The Stumbling Block

The scriptures identify the pride of human wisdom as a stumbling block to recognizing God, where people too quickly dismiss the truth, thinking what they have learned already makes them wiser, seeking the world's wisdom rather than God's. Scripture also explains people reject and ignore it on their own because they find the righteousness of God a discomfort, a stumbling block, compared to their own ideas of how God must be.

1 Corinthians 1:22-24 (NIV): ²²Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

There are tremendous consequences for individuals and groups of people when they fail to recognize God, being too quick to favor their own reasoning and ideas above God's. Here Jesus

laments over Jerusalem, because their failure to recognize God in the present had far-reaching consequences into the future.

Luke 19:41-44 (NIV): ⁴¹ As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it ⁴² and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴ They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”

Because God works through individual people to share his word, the ability to recognize God for most people, involves the skill to discern their beliefs, doctrines and understanding of Jesus as the Christ, the Savior of the World.

1 John 4:1-3 (NIV): ¹ Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

5.5 Lazarus and Rich Man

To recognize Jesus Christ, it’s critical that one also believes what has been recorded in the Bible prior to his coming, by the prophets and teachers like Moses, Abraham, King David, Solomon, Isaiah, Micah, and likewise other witnesses of God, the Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God explains that evidence provided over thousands of years as to what to look for in the Savior Jesus Christ is absolutely abundantly adequate for people who are open to believing. For those who wish to use their reasoning to disbelieve, to follow their own ways, and ignore God, even more fantastic evidence would just be discarded. That is, if after so much evidence and miracles and prophesies, they are too little for a person’s impossible standards, then their standards, methods, approaches, and motives to reasoning need serious review.

Luke 16:19-31 (NIV): ¹⁹ “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰ At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ ²⁵ “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ ²⁷ “He

answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house,²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'²⁹ "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'³⁰ "No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'³¹ "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

5.6 Star & Birth in Bethlehem

How is it that Jesus is understood and recognized as the way to God, as the Savior of the World? The promises of God to send a savior involved several specifics, such as the birthplace as Bethlehem in the land of Judah.

Matthew 2:1-7 (NIV):¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:
⁶" "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

The quote the Jewish people offered to King Herod was from the Jewish book of **Micah 5:2**. The prophesy in **Micah 5:2** reveals clues to recognize the identity and origins of the savior as from ancient times.

Micah 5:2 (NIV):² "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

The wise from the east, likely from the territory we'd name as the middle east today, travelled a long distance to give gifts to the savior Jesus, while still just a baby under the protective hand of God the Father, because they reverently recognized his importance.

Matthew 2:9-12 (NIV):⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of

myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

5.7 Crucifixion & Burial & Resurrection Prophecies

The ancient prophecies about Jesus started to be fulfilled before his birth, then as a baby, and later into adulthood, followed also by his death, burial, and resurrection. If you are open to evidence to help you use your reason to recognize God, there are 300 different prophecies about Jesus, The Christ, covered at the website <http://bibleprobe.com/300great.htm> , and several prophecies about Jesus as the Son of God come as on of us available at <http://www.100prophecies.org/evidence.htm> , and a yet another list of prophecies at the website <http://www.aboutbibleprophecy.com/messianic.htm> .

Beyond prophecies, the disciples of Jesus performed miracles in his name after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascent to heaven. To understand how miracles are consistent with the science of world's, visit the CreationOpia website at <http://CreationOpia.WordPress.com> to learn about that paradigm, to overcome limitations narrow science often portrays, by ignoring a broader spectrum of fields like computer science.

In [Acts 4:9-14](#) is just one account of the miracles performed by the disciple Peter and John after Jesus's death and resurrection to help you recognize Jesus Christ's divinity, his ancient heavenly origins.

Acts 4:9-14 (NIV): ⁹ If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, ¹⁰ then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ He is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone. ¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” ¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.

5.8 Sow & Seek & Learn

As you seek to recognize the righteousness of God as revealed through Jesus Christ, follow through. Do your part to learn God's word, to plant the seeds of eternal life by being disciples who learn God's word in the Bible. Be open to letting go of grudges, forgiving others, and caring for others. Show God you wish to turn from doing evil and repent from hating others. This is summarized eloquently by the prophet Hosea in Hosea 10:12.

Hosea 10:12 (NIV): ¹² Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers righteousness on you.

You of your own reasoning can never fully know God. Yet, God calls you to seek him while he can be recognized and found by you. God wishes to see you searching for him, as yet another avenue for God to elect you to know him intimately, which is impossible to do unless God's votes to elect you into his private circle.

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

Isaiah 55:5-9 (NIV): ⁵ Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.” ⁶ Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. ⁸ “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. ⁹ “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

So, once you are ordained into God's favor, make your calling and election sure, through these guidelines the apostle Peter instructs us to follow to properly build upon our faith in Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:3-11 (NIV): ³ 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. ⁴ 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. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Before this happens, recognize that God looks to see who will search for him, and who will turn to the Lord.

Psalms 53:2 (NIV): ² God looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.

Unfortunately, without guidance from God or from those who know God, no one is wise to seek God on their own.

Psalm 53:3 (NIV): ³ Everyone has turned away, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

So, God chooses to inform people we know about God and the wisdom of God. This is so they can reflect that wisdom and knowledge to us. The reflecting provides us a reasonable option, the choice, the chance to recognize and come to know God. God sent prophets and other messengers to inform us of God's will, wisdom, and ways. The apostle Paul, whom God blinded, restored vision, and revealed his word, was chosen by God for this purpose from birth.

Galations 1:13-17 (NIV): ¹³ For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴ I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵ But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus.

5.9 Righteousness by Faith

The apostle Paul sought to teach others to recognize the correct view of God, that can only be known through the redemptive faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is so important to have the correct view of God. Those teaching a different gospel will be eternally condemned by God! Wow! So, search deeply the scriptures contained in The Bible, join a church that teaches that Jesus Christ is the savior of the world, and watch out, be on guard for any false teachings that are contrary to the written revealed word of The Bible.

Galations 1:6-10 (NIV): ⁶ I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! ¹⁰ Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

What is the message to which the apostle Paul speaks to have us recognize? It is the message that, although we are undeserving, God has promised grace to those who believe, whom Jesus Christ will justify by paying the penalty of death required of sinners. Jesus Christ is able to pay the penalty, because he bore the cost for us when he was unjustly crucified on the cross for our sins.

Galations 2:15-21 (NIV): ¹⁵ “We who are Jews by birth and not ‘Gentile sinners’ ¹⁶ know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified. ¹⁷ “If, while

we seek to be justified in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not! ¹⁸ If I rebuild what I destroyed, I prove that I am a lawbreaker. ¹⁹ For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹ I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!”

5.10 True Faith Accompanied by Actions

Because we are justified by faith rather than works, does this mean that faith is without works? Quite the contrary, faith is perfected by works. Works are evidence of faith. Yet, works can never justify those who sinned already. True faith is accompanied by works. Faith without works is dead. Recognize that doing good never justifies any wrong we’ve done.

James 2:14-18 (NIV): ¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. ¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

There are many people who honestly believe there is one God, even acknowledge and recognize Jesus Christ as God. Does that mean they are saved? During Jesus’ life work, several demons recognized Jesus as the holy one, yet they were not saved. So, what type of faith are we talking about? Is it academic faith that acknowledges and recognizes who the one true God is only? No, much more than an academic faith. True faith is strong enough to manifest itself in action and in heartfelt obedience to God. True faith loves and forgives and repents and obeys. True faith envelops ones mind, heart, and figuratively, one’s hands.

James 2:19-26 (NIV): ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. ²⁰ You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹ Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³ And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend. ²⁴ You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. ²⁵ In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? ²⁶ As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

True faith relies upon God’s promises to those who are sincere and faithful.

Romans 10:6-13 (NIV): ⁶ But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. ¹¹ As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, ¹³ for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

5.11 Ask God to Increase Belief & Decrease Unbelief

In what category is your faith? Ask God to help you to recognize him and have faith accompanied by works and to help you both to bolster your belief and to overcome your unbelief.

Matthew 9:24 (NIV): ²⁴ Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

5.12 Key Points: Recognizing & Reasoning

1. Without God reaching out to people, people would never _____ God and would instead pursue their own fallen ways. Even when God reaches out and _____ his word, many people experience difficulty recognizing it. The pride of human _____ can be a stumbling block to recognizing God’s wisdom. Failure to recognize God in the present has far-reaching _____ into the future.
2. The account of Lazarus and the rich man teaches us that the scriptural _____ over thousands of years are sufficient for the open-minded to recognize Jesus Christ, and even more evidence would be _____ by the close-minded.
3. The _____ men recognized Jesus even as an infant, reasoning from scriptural prophecies. Hundreds of specific scriptural _____ testify that Jesus is the promised messiah by announcing beforehand Jesus’ life, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. The _____ by the Apostles in Jesus’ name further showcase God’s continued witness.
4. God wishes to see people _____ for him, for him to show them _____. The only way to reach God’s righteousness is through _____ in Jesus Christ rather than the _____ of the law.
5. True _____ confesses Jesus is Lord. It loves, forgives, repents, and obeys. It is perfected and accompanied by _____ emanating from heartfelt obedience to God and a _____ that God raised Jesus from the dead.

6. You are responsible to make your _____ and _____ sure” by making every effort to add in increasing measure to your faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love as scriptures prescribe. “If you do these things, you will never _____” and “you will receive a _____ welcome into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”
7. When you have doubts, recognize your current _____ level and pray to God to help you overcome your _____, to be most effective in recognizing and following God.

5.13 Discussion Questions: Recognizing & Reasoning

(1) When you learned about the religious leader (the Pharisee) and the tax collector, what does that tell you about the dangers of religiosity, and the importance to be humble before God and ask forgiveness for your sins?

(2) What in life do you believe in despite your doubts? How come you still believe? How does that relate to your beliefs & doubts about God?

(3) Were you surprised to learn that God expected you to responsibly tend to the quality of your soil? What can you do to make yourself to have "ground" receptive to God's words which are designed to benefit you?

(4) Often time early impressions are difficult to overcome despite being inaccurate. Does your early impression about Jesus' life offend you or those you know? How so? Are you or they able to suspend their offense long enough to learn more about God to overcome this early impression?

(5) What evidence standards do you apply for believing in past events? What are your evidence standards for identifying whether to believe in God and his Son Jesus based upon God's historical interventions? What is reasonable?

(6) Does it make sense for an eternal God to prophesy thousands of years ahead of time about the sending a Savior? What is the benefit to using symbols in the sky to accompany prophecies? Would it surprise you to know scientific astronomy software showed the Star of Bethlehem

occurred historically? (Learn more at the website <http://www.bethlehemstar.net/> about the Star of Bethlehem DVD)

(7) How many Prophecies about Jesus our Savior are you aware of? What are the key Prophecies for you? Why?

(8) Is it more important who you are becoming, who you follow, or what you do? How would you expect who you are becoming and who you follow to result in what you do? What things can you learn about what a person is following by observing what they do? What are the limits of observation and how does hypocrisy manifest those limits?

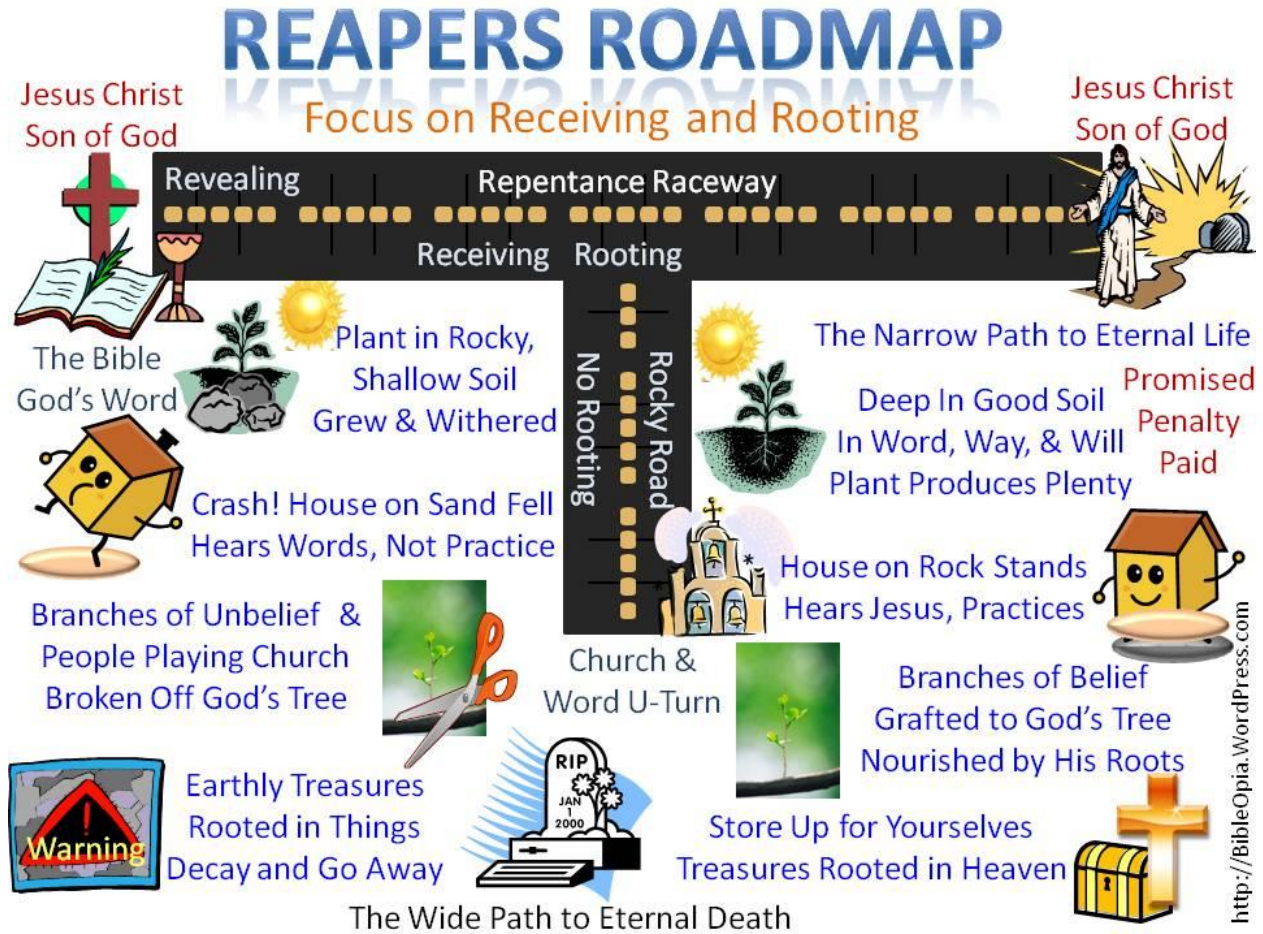
5.14 Recognizing & Reasoning: Further Study

To recognize God correctly, requires your reasoning, and recurring reading and reflection upon God's Word found in The Bible at websites like The Bible Gateway <http://www.biblegateway.com> and an audio bible at <http://www.audio-bible.com/nasb> . You can help your reasoning and recognizing skills by listening to preachers like Miles McPherson at the <http://www.therocksandiego.org> and Pastor Chris Rowney at <http://www.tcfnet.org.au> , who entertain, educate, and edify, and use multimedia formats like Apple iTunes. Finding a local church that follows Jesus and recognizes his divinity can also help you to better learn more about Jesus.

4. God wishes to see people searching for him, for him to show them mercy. The only way to reach God's righteousness is through faith in Jesus Christ rather than the works of the law.
5. True faith confesses Jesus is Lord. It loves, forgives, repents, and obeys. It is perfected and accompanied by actions / works / deeds emanating from heartfelt obedience to God and a belief that God raised Jesus from the dead.
6. You are responsible to make your calling and election sure" by making every effort to add in increasing measure to your faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love as scriptures prescribe. "If you do these things, you will never fail " and "you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
7. When you have doubts, recognize your current believe level and pray to God to help you overcome your unbelief, to be most effective in recognizing and following God.

Chapter 6: Receiving & Rooting

6.1 Look at Receiving & Rooting Roadmap



6.2 Reapers Roadmap Review

The Reapers Roadmap materials previously presented summarized how the Bible's Gospel of [John 1:10-13](#) and the "Parable of the Sower" found in [Matthew 13:1-9](#) shows the way redemption typically happens, or regretfully fails to happen. That is, it shows how people come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or choose another course both for their life on earth and more importantly for eternity.

John 1:9-13 (NIV): 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

God reveals his word and ways so people have the chance to learn more and get to know God better by applying their reason and strength. God presents his message both to Jews and Gentiles. Today, God through his word and the Holy Spirit calls to those who attend Christian Services and who hear God's word elsewhere along life's paths. In the "Parable of the Sower" this is like dropping seeds of God's word along the path, as illustrated in the Bible in [Matthew 13:1-9](#).

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

6.3 Focus on Receiving & Rooting

It'd be great if everyone believed and received the word of God for their own eternal benefit. This opens the door for God to work to improve their hearts. It'd be great if all people nourished this belief diligently, a process we'll call rooting here based on the Parable of the Sower. God calls us to seek his kingdom and righteousness as the top priority, showing the high importance to create roots in God's world, words, and ways.

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

God is asking you to seek his kingdom and righteousness, because God is willing to help you find it, to search and discover what is good, right, and holy.

Matthew 7:7-12 (NIV): ⁷ "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹ "Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! ¹² So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

6.4 Dig Deep Roots

We know that God calls us to seek his kingdom and righteousness as our first priority. God is watching us, and as a result of us seeking the kingdom and righteousness of God as a first priority, God will provide our life essentials like food and clothes. For those who receive the word of God and aim to dig deep roots, God commits to keep the worries of life and

deceitfulness of wealth from interfering, even though it is self-inflicted by those who use their reason to reject God's ways.

Matthew 6:25-34 (NIV): ²⁴ “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. ²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? ²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

To find God's kingdom, though, the believer needs to be born again of the Spirit of God as children of God.

John 3:3 (NIV): ³ In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” ⁴ “How can a man be born when he is old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!” ⁵ Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

As we seek God's righteousness and his kingdom, it is important to ask God to help repair our eyes, so we can properly live in the light, receive the Holy Spirit, and recognize the truth.

Matthew 6:22-23 (NIV): ²² “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

By believing and receiving God's word, we are given the right to become children of God. This is a right for our soul to be born again by the Holy Spirit of God. We are unable of our own power to do this, since this way of life is naturally foreign to us. We are unable to do what is right all the time due to our sinful nature. We are unable to completely change our own heart and ways ourselves. We are only able to be born again by God's divine intervention, and hence by God's divine choice for this to take place, a choice God made after our belief.

John 1:9-13 (NIV): ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Our journey to become children of God starts with faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God and continues to be fulfilled in faith. While the faith manifests itself in works, our works never earn us the title of righteousness, though a lack of works is evidence of a lack of faith. Putting your trust, your faith, in Jesus, is the only solid foundation, the only solid rock, as the scriptures say.

Romans 9:30-33 (NIV): ³⁰ What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. ³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the “stumbling stone.” ³³ As it is written:

“See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall,
and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

The righteousness of God that we seek to guide our lives is a righteousness rooted deeply in faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:16-17 (NIV):¹⁶ I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

God is gracious and sees our belief and our effort to know him better. God uses our belief and helps us with our unbelief to work his word and will in our lives, souls, and mind. God causes changes by giving us a new heart and adopting us as his children through his divine intervention.

1 John 3:1-3 (NIV): ¹ How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

Regardless of how we come to receive the Son of God, God is generous, and will reward people who receive him, his apostles, and his disciples.

Matthew 10:40-42 (NIV): ⁴⁰ “He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. ⁴¹ Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward. ⁴² And if anyone gives even a cup

of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.”

As children of God, we are in the process of becoming more like God, as the Holy Spirit reveals God to us through his Son Jesus Christ. Yet, we must be careful to avoid self-deception as people who are quick to stroke their self-esteem and place themselves in the **prized category** of the righteous as children of God. Scripture challenges us on this, calling us to back up this self-view with actions, and exhibit the faith internally in our hearts, by caring for others, even those who mean us harm.

1 John 3:7-10 (NIV): ⁷ Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. ⁸ He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work. ⁹ No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. ¹⁰ This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

We are called to reach out to communicate with God through prayer to help us through our life’s journey in a manner worthy of the honor to be called the children of God. Jesus teaches us how to pray.

Matthew 6: 5-15 (NIV): ⁵ “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray:

” “Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

¹⁰ your kingdom come,

your will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² Forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from the evil one.’

¹⁴ For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also

forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

6.5 Store Up Treasures in Heaven

As we seek God's kingdom and righteousness, we must remember God's children primary focus of their heart is to form roots that reach to heaven to eternity, rather than on the transitory treasures of this creation.

Matthew 6:19-20 (NIV): ¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

6.6 Branches of Belief Grafted to God's Tree

There are similar analogies to receiving and rooting repeated throughout scriptures, such as a branch being grafted onto an olive tree, connected to its' nourishing roots. The Apostle Paul in the Book of Romans calls upon believers to remain in the kindness of God. This is a call to remain in the grace of God, which was received through the faith that results in our being credited with righteousness. The analogy is to a plant being grafted to a tree. The believers in the Son of God are the plant that is grafted to the olive tree. Each believer must decide to remain grafted into the tree. Likewise, some who are currently unbelievers are given a chance to be grafted to the olive tree. The olive tree is a metaphor for God's source of nourishment for believers.

Romans 11:22-24 (NIV): ¹⁶If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches. ¹⁷If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, ¹⁸do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” ²⁰Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. ²¹For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. ²²Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. ²³And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

6.7 House on Rock Stands

Another similar analogy to having deep roots is a person building their house upon the rock. In the desert area near Israel there are parts where the ground is hard like rock when it was dry, but then becomes unstable when the rains come. Builders needed to dig deep enough to have their foundation on the rock deep below the ground's surface. Likewise, the believer must dig deeply, so their faith is firmly resting upon a rock solid foundation, a foundation on the Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the rock, the foundation and cornerstone. Jesus Christ shares here that "playing

church” with only “surface deep” superficial worship is a completely unreliable foundation. Those who truly receive, also root their faith to be strong enough to sincerely do what God commands.

Matthew 7:21-27 (NIV): ²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ ²⁴ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” ²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ ²⁴ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

6.8 Key Points: Receiving and Rooting

1. God asks you to seek his kingdom and righteousness, because God is willing to help you _____ it, to search and discover what is good, right, and holy. While you do this, God will provide life essentials like _____ and _____.
2. God rewards people who _____ him, his apostles, and his disciples.
3. Focus your heart to store up treasures _____ in heaven for eternity rather than earthly treasures in things that _____ and go _____.
4. To be like a plant in _____ soil that produces abundantly, dig deep _____ in God’s word, way, and will. God _____ believers to his tree to be nourished by the roots, and _____ off unbelievers.

5. Like a wise builder, each believer must dig deep enough to lay their faith firmly upon a rock solid _____, which is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to both hear God's word and put them into _____.
6. To see the Kingdom of God, you must be _____ again by water and the Spirit to receive a new _____ and be _____ as children, which only happens through _____ intervention after our _____.
7. Children of God stop _____, do what is _____, _____ for others, and _____ all people, even those who mean them harm.
8. Both the Parable of the Sower and the Parable of the Wise Builder show the importance to dig _____ to make one's faith resilient to life's storms, a process The Reapers Roadmap calls _____.

6.9 Discussion Questions: Receiving and Rooting

- (1) What are your most prized treasures? How do you currently value God, friends, family, your possessions, power, health, and others? What is the proper way to value these in relation to each other?
- (2) When the metaphoric storms of life present their challenges, where ultimately do you place your trust? Why? Will this lead to disappointment?
- (3) What are your natural tendencies for behavior and thinking patterns? Are they good or bad?
- (4) What can you do to facilitate the process to dig deep roots in the Lord? How can those around you help you in doing this? What is the risk if you omit this important step?
- (5) How have you received the Word of God? How do continue to do so with increasing depth in knowledge and application?

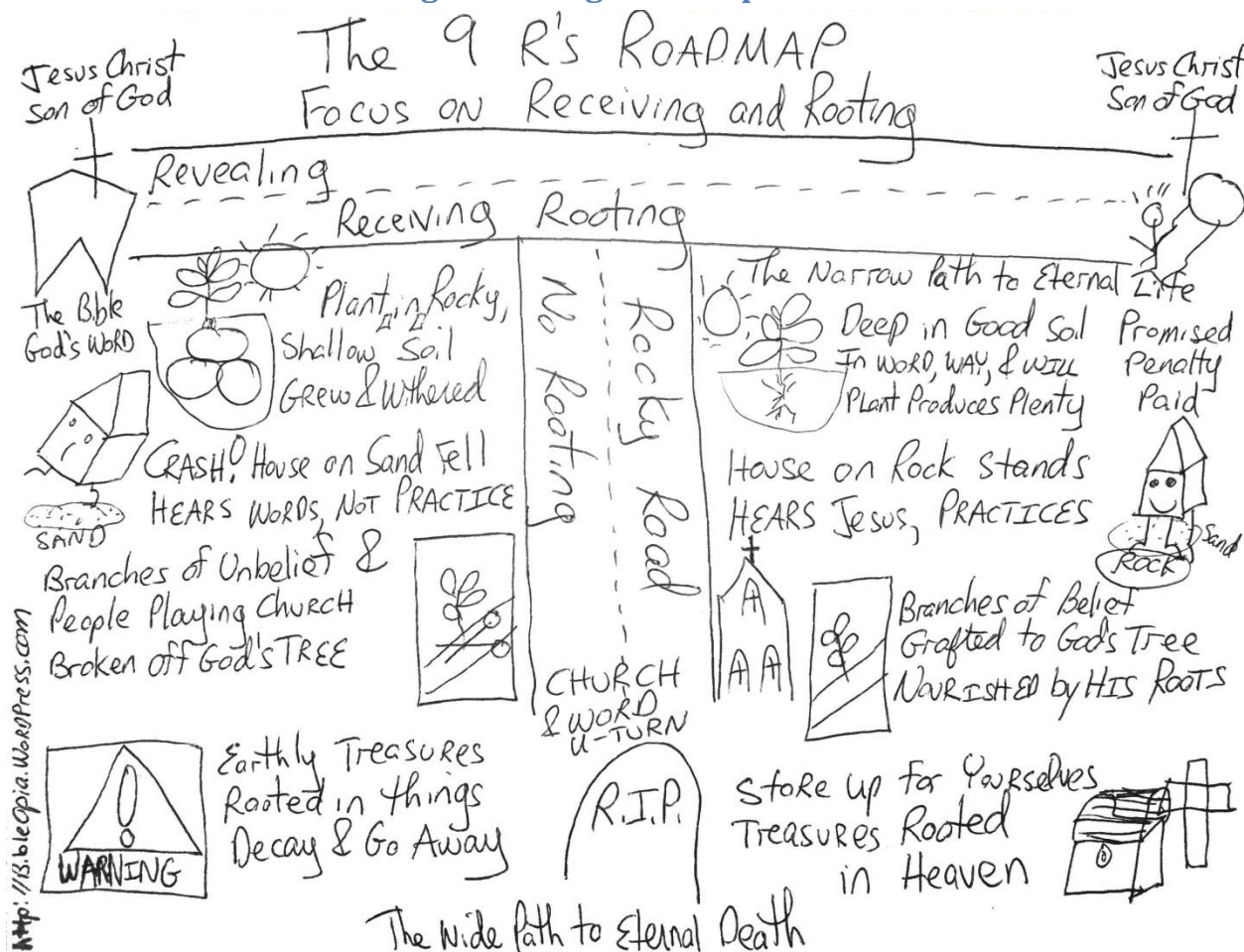
6.10 Receiving & Rooting: Further Study

To dig roots deeper into the faith, read the bible at the Bible Gateway

<http://www.biblegateway.com> and at the Net Bible Online <http://net.bible.org/home.php>. You can also hear sermons online at the Mars Hill

Church <http://www.marshillchurch.org/media/sermons>, and look for a Christian Church to join locally.

6.11 Hand Drawn Receiving & Rooting Roadmap



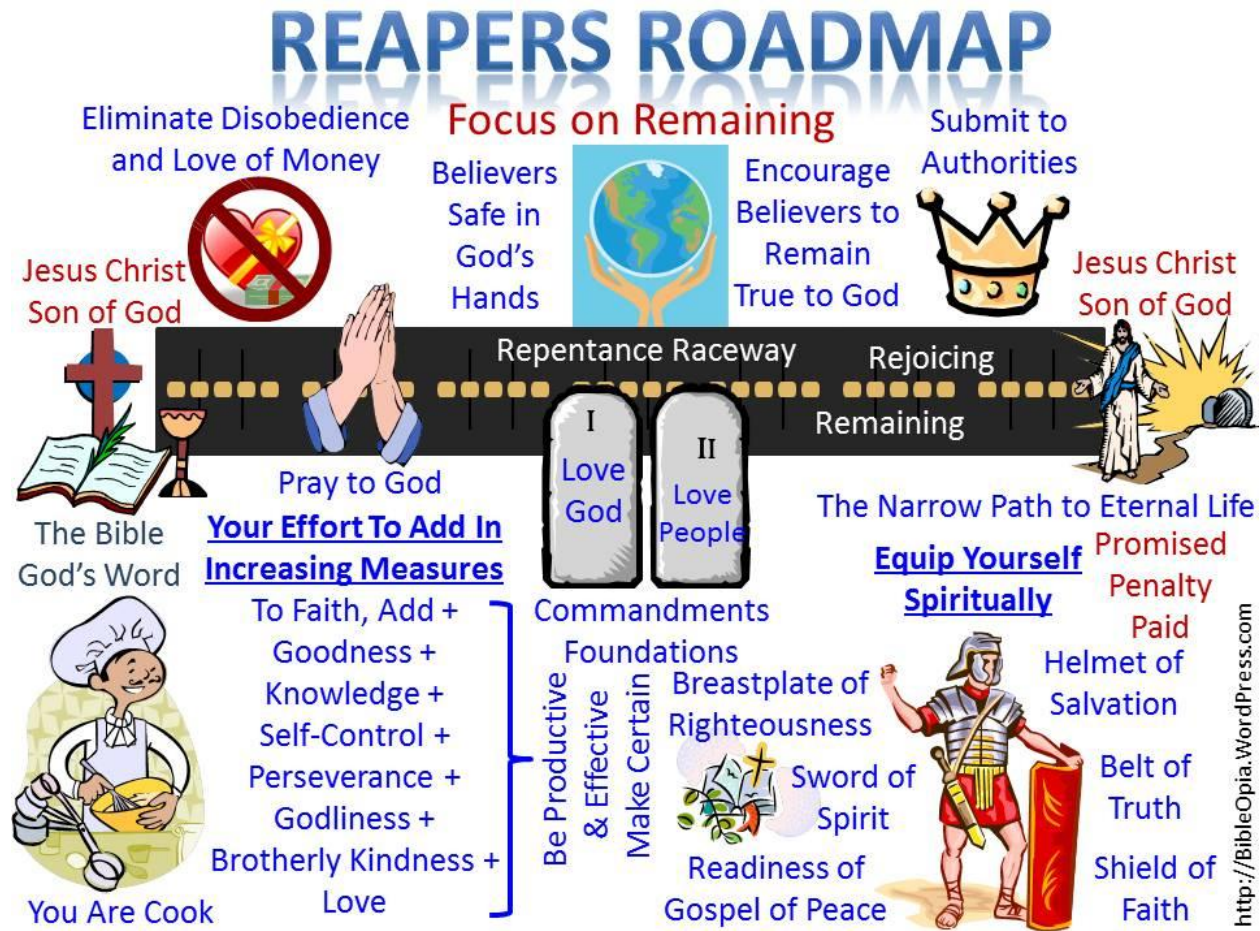
6.12 Key Points: Receiving and Rooting: Answers

1. God asks you to seek his kingdom and righteousness, because God is willing to help you find it, to search and discover what is good, right, and holy. While you do this, God will provide life essentials like food and clothing.
2. God rewards people who receive him, his apostles, and his disciples.

3. Focus your heart to store up treasures rooted in heaven for eternity rather than earthly treasures in things that decay and go away.
4. To be like a plant in good soil that produces abundantly, dig deep roots in God's word, way, and will. God grafts believers to his tree to be nourished by the roots, and cuts / breaks off unbelievers.
5. Like a wise builder, each believer must dig deep enough to lay their faith firmly upon a rock solid foundation, which is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to both hear God's word and put them into practice.
6. To see the Kingdom of God, you must be born again by water and the Spirit to receive a new heart and be adopted as children, which only happens through divine intervention after our belief.
7. Children of God stop sinning, do what is right, care for others, and love all people, even those who mean them harm.
8. Both the Parable of the Sower and the Parable of the Wise Builder show the importance to dig deep / deeply to make one's faith resilient to life's storms, a process The Reapers Roadmap calls Rooting.

Chapter 7: Remaining

7.1 Look at Remaining Roadmap



7.2 Reapers Roadmap Review

The Reapers Roadmap materials previously presented summarized how the Bible's Gospel of [John 1:10-13](#) and the "Parable of the Sower" found in [Matthew 13:1-9](#) shows the way redemption typically happens, or regretfully fails to happen. That is, it shows how people come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or choose another course both for their life on earth and more importantly for eternity.

John 1:9-13 (NIV): 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

God reveals his word and ways so people have the chance to learn more and get to know God better by applying their reason and strength. God presents his message both to Jews and Gentiles. Today, God through his word and the Holy Spirit calls to those who attend Christian Services and who hear God's word elsewhere along life's paths. In the "Parable of the Sower" this is like dropping seeds of God's word along the path, as illustrated in the Bible in Matthew 13:1-9.

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

7.3 Focus on Remaining in Righteousness

Once you have known God, and his Son Jesus Christ, you are wisely instructed to remain firm in this knowledge and experience and relationship, so you will receive the promised eternal life, despite devilish deceptions denying the deity.

1 John 2:18-25(NIV): ¹⁸ Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us. ²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. ²¹ I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. ²² Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son. ²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also. ²⁴ See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is what he promised us—even eternal life.

Our call challenges us to continue in Jesus Christ. We are reminded to remain in righteousness. God himself provides what is needed to do this. God provides the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, the life of Jesus, and the community of believers as support.

1 John 2:26-29 (NIV): ²⁶ I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷ As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him. ²⁸ And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident

and unashamed before him at his coming. ²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

To remain in righteousness, requires us to follow our role model, who is Jesus Christ, whom the Holy Spirit uses to reveal God the Father's character through his teachings and sacrificial giving. We are expected to care for others and help them out with pure motives. When most people do this, it will lead to a clear conscience before God. As we become more like God, loving and caring for others, our prayer petitions will become more acceptable to him and consistent with his will.

1 John 3:16-22 (NIV): ¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. ¹⁹ This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence ²⁰ whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.

There are many people who do what is right to advance their own interests by exalting their own self-image, increasing their popularity, and enhancing their career prospects. God sees all we do and transparently observes selfish acts cloaked in garments of selflessness. We are called to do what is right, and also do it with the right motives to receive rewards from God.

Matthew 6:1-4 (NIV): ¹ "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 6:16-18 (NIV): ¹⁶ "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

To remain in righteousness, we must remain faithful to the fundamentals to follow Jesus Christ, who calls us to love each other. We must embrace God's plan to have the Spirit of God live in our souls. The Spirit of God helps us to understand God's words found in The Bible.

1 John 3:16-22 (NIV): ²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ Those who obey his

commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

7.4 Commandment Foundations

As God's children, we are instructed first to follow God's commands with all our heart, mind, and soul, and second to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Matthew 22:36-38 (NIV): ³⁶“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” ³⁷Jesus replied: ” ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹“The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ ⁴⁰“On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.“

Romans 13:8-10 (NIV): ⁸ Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

7.5 Eliminate Disobedience and Love of Money

While you pursue godliness, realize the purpose of godliness is not financial gain. Instead, use your faith in God to crush the unholy, ungodly, love of money in your soul, so you are kept secure in your faith, and remain on the straight righteous path.

1 Timothy 6:3-10 (NIV): ³ If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. ⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

7.6 Believers Safe in God's Hands

Our sinful nature means our works will never be sufficient, because we like everyone has sinned and deserve God's punishment both for what we do, and for what we omit doing. It is by faith that we work to live righteous lives, lives that are rooted in faith in God through his Son Jesus Christ, who reveals the God the Father.

Romans 4:1-3 (NIV): ¹ What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? ² If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. ³ What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

We are called to remain in righteousness, knowing God the Father who is one with the Son will keep our souls safe in his hands for all eternity.

Romans 8:38-39 (NIV): ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord

John 10:27-30 (NIV): ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

7.7 Make Certain

Once you are called, ordained, and elected into God’s favor, make your calling and election sure to remain in righteousness, through these guidelines the apostle Peter instructs us to follow to properly build upon our faith in Jesus Christ. Add to your faith in Jesus goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love, so your faith will have deep rooting, and you will prevail. This is so important for you to do, as we are assured that building upon our faith in this way will make our calling and election certain. God has provided us the menu, ingredients, recipes, and instructions, along with the responsibility to prepare the feast. God calls us to use our faith to be good to others. God calls us to learn more about how to be good to others, so we can be productive and effective in our outreach. As we gain knowledge about how to be more effective, we need to work on our self-control, so we can do what is necessary. To continual to be successful at doing what is necessary, we need to work on our consistency through perseverance, even in the face of opposition. This perseverance must exhibit and be rooted in a godly foundation and lifestyle free of pride, so we’ll be good witnesses to others and our conscious will further support our actions. Being godly must be sincere, as the sincerity that one caring person shows kindness to their brother, rather than insincere shows of godliness just to gain the flattery of others. The brotherly kindness needs to be rooted in love towards each other, supported by the love of God, so that the motives are pure, so that the law of God is kept and we’ll be effective and productive.

2 Peter 1:3-11 (NIV): ³ 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. ⁴ 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. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly

kindness, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

7.8 Encourage Believers to Remain True to God

Those who believe are to encourage fellow believers to remain true to the faith in the Lord with all their hearts, even as they face hard challenges.

Acts 14:21-25 (NIV): ²¹ They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, ²² strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said. ²³ Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. ²⁴ After going through Pisidia, they came into Pamphylia, ²⁵ and when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

Acts 11:23 (NIV): ²³ When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.

7.9 Equip Yourself Spiritually

As you root your faith deeply to remain in the righteousness of God promised to those who believe with their heart, mind, and soul, prepare yourself to become a rock solid witness. To become a strong witness to others requires utilizing the full armor of God. This armor is not military in nature, just as Jesus Christ instructed Peter to put away his sword and healed the ear of the soldier Peter cut off. Instead, this armor is rooted in the truth about God, and his Son Jesus Christ. This armor includes the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, readiness of feet for the gospel, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Ephesians 6:10-20 (NIV): ¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit

on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Romans 13:11-14 (NIV): ¹¹ And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. ¹⁴ Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

7.10 Submit to Authorities

Because God is King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Ruler above all Rulers, we are also called to obey rulers in authority, and to fulfill our obligations to others. We are called to faithfully meet our financial and interpersonal obligations.

Romans 13:1-7 (NIV): ¹ Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ² Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. ⁶ This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷ Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

1 Timothy 6:11-16 (NIV): ¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴ to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

The Bible contains the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, the record of the works God performed, and God's expectations of us. The expectations pertaining to the faith are realistic in the context of the grace, mercy, and help God provides, because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was subjected to temptations as we are, yet remained in righteousness.

Hebrews 4:12-16 (NIV): ¹² For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. ¹³ Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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. ¹² For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. ¹³ Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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.

To nurture our and our fellow followers' faith, let's continue to share our learning's about God, meeting together, being examples, and encouraging one another.

Hebrews 10:23-25 (NIV): ²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

7.11 Key Points: Remaining

1. To _____ in righteousness requires us to follow our role model Jesus Christ, whom the Holy Spirit uses to reveal God the Father's _____ through his teachings and sacrificial giving. The _____ of God helps us to understand God's words, which are found in the Bible.
2. God's commandment foundations instruct us first to _____ the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, and soul and second to _____ our neighbors as ourselves.

3. Embrace godliness and eliminate _____ towards God and the love of _____, to avoid falling into temptations, traps, and foolish desires that cause ruin and destruction.
4. Do what is _____ with the _____ motives to be rewarded by God, who transparently sees through our _____ acts even when they are cloaked in _____.
5. Do what is _____ and submit to _____ since they are _____ by God. Give _____ what you owe them, whether revenues, respect, or honor.
6. Equip yourself _____ with the full _____ of God to stand firm against the devil's schemes. Believers are _____ in God's hands and _____ fellow believers to remain true to God.
7. You are responsible to remain in righteousness by making your _____ and _____ sure by your every effort to add in increasing measure to your faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love as scriptures prescribe. "If you do these things, you will never _____", you will be productive and effective, and "will receive a _____ welcome into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

7.12 Discussion Questions: Remaining

(1) What character qualities being present in increasing measure will keep us effective and productive as Christians, certain of our calling and election, and setup to receive a rich welcome into heaven? How are you going to nurture those qualities with the help of the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and the Community of Believers?

(2) What are the greatest commandments? Do you love everyone, even those who frustrate and intimate you?

(3) How would you know if you were being led astray?

(4) How are we to equip ourselves spiritually? What do those attributes mean in terms of everyday application?

(5) Why are we to submit to the authorities?

(6) What is hidden from God's sight? Knowing this, are you able to be honest with God about your own shortcomings to pray to God and seek God's help?

(7) Is belief really just a way to manipulate God into giving us worldly riches? What kind of riches does God wish to bestow upon us? What type of provision does God provide for those who seek his kingdom and righteousness?

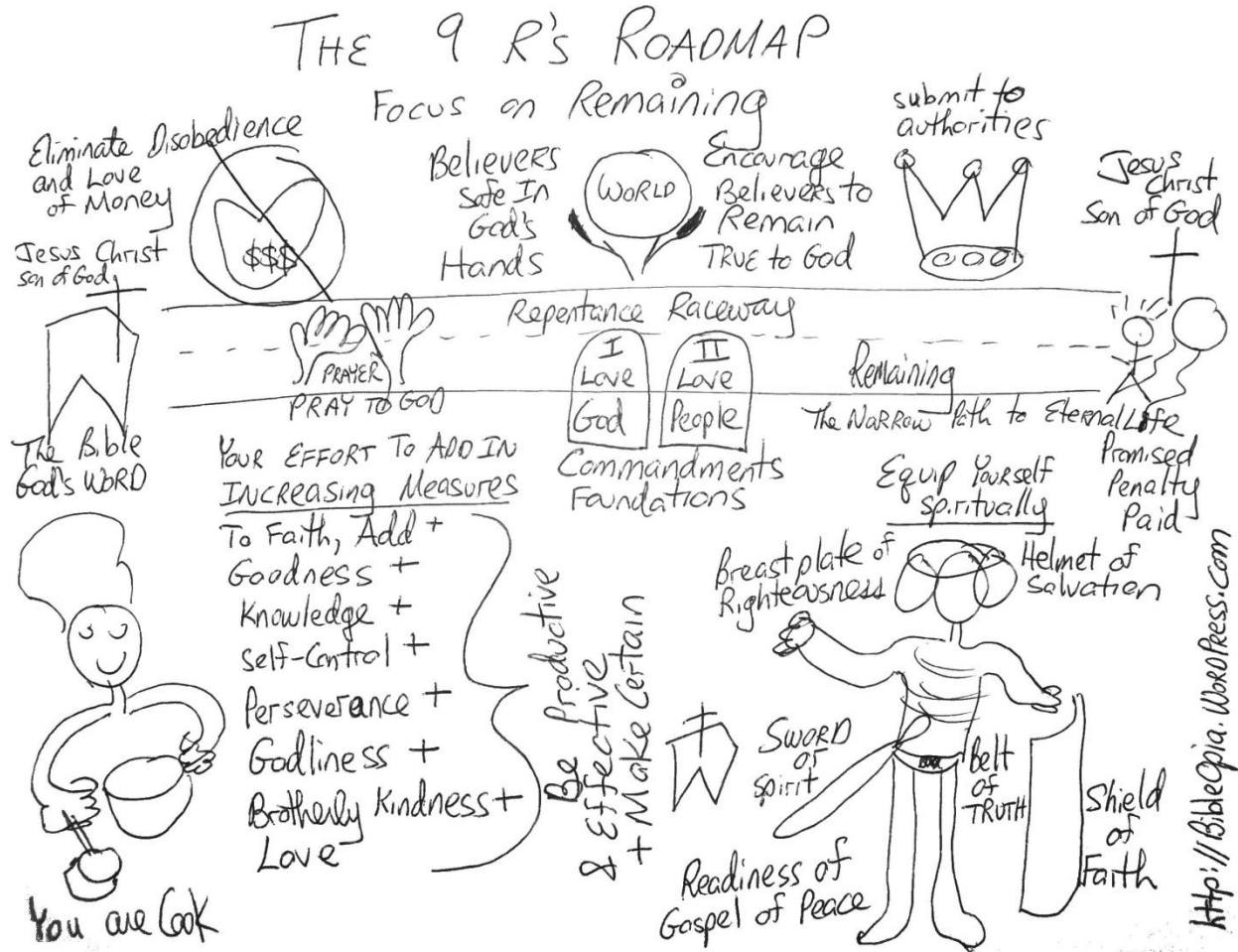
(8) When we do good deeds in this world, what behaviors limit our rewards? How do we increase our rewards with God?

(9) What can you do to help fellow believers to remain faithful to Jesus?

7.13 Remaining: Further Study

To learn more, read The Bible at websites like The Bible Gateway <http://www.biblegateway.com> and The Online Parallel Study Bible <http://www.bible.cc/> . Learn more about God at apologetics ministry websites like Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM) at <http://www.rzim.org/> , which also provide audio Podcasts freely available for download. Find a local Christian Community Church, at a mainstream church like Presbyterian, Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist, and/or Baptist to immerse yourself in God's Word.

7.14 Hand Drawn Remaining Roadmap



7.15 Key Points: Remaining: Answers

1. To remain in righteousness requires us to follow our role model Jesus Christ, whom the Holy Spirit uses to reveal God the Father's character through his teachings and sacrificial giving. The Spirit of God helps us to understand God's words, which are found in the Bible.
2. God's commandment foundations instruct us first to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, and soul and second to love our neighbors as ourselves.
3. Embrace godliness and eliminate disobedience towards God and the love of money, to avoid falling into temptations, traps, and foolish desires that cause ruin and destruction.

4. Do what is right with the right motives to be rewarded by God, who transparently sees through our selfish acts even when they are cloaked in selflessness.
5. Do what is right and submit to authorities since they are established by God. Give everyone what you owe them, whether revenues, respect, or honor.
6. Equip yourself spiritually with the full armor of God to stand firm against the devil's schemes. Believers are safe in God's hands and encourage fellow believers to remain true to God.
7. You are responsible to remain in righteousness by making your calling and election sure by your every effort to add in increasing measure to your faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love as scriptures prescribe. "If you do these things, you will never fail", you will be productive and effective, and "will receive a rich welcome into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Chapter 8: Reaping

8.1 Look at Reaping Roadmap



8.2 Reapers Roadmap Review

The Reapers Roadmap materials previously presented summarized how The Bible's Gospel of John 1:10-13 and the "Parable of the Sower" found in [Matthew 13:1-9](#) shows the way redemption typically happens, or regretfully fails to happen. That is, it shows how people come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or choose another course both for their life on earth and more importantly for eternity.

John 1:9-13 (NIV): 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

God reveals his word and ways so people have the chance to learn more and get to know God better by applying their reason and strength. God presents his message both to Jews and Gentiles. Today, God through his word and the Holy Spirit calls to those who attend Christian Services and who hear God's word elsewhere along life's paths. In the "Parable of the Sower" this is like dropping seeds of God's word along the path, as illustrated in the Bible in [Matthew 13:1-9](#).

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

8.3 Focus on Reaping & 30x 60x 100x

Those who truly receive God's word dig deep roots in scripture, in faith, and knowledge, and will share their lives, experiences, and God's words. The growth and sharing of faith yields the harvest the "Parable of the Sower" describes when God's good seed falls upon fertile ground.

Parable of the Sower Explained: Matthew 13:18-23 (NIV): ²³ But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

The Parable of Sower teaches us that sowing God's word yields a plentiful crop. God calls us to sow righteousness and seek the Lord, so we will reap the fruit of knowing God and his eternal love.

Hosea 10:12 (NIV): ¹² Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers righteousness on you.

8.4 God Gives the Increase

The Apostle Paul who was chosen by God to know him, reflects on reaping via a plant metaphor. Our shared responsibility to sow God's word and nourish his people is a team effort where God ultimately deserves the credit. God watches efforts each person makes to share The Word and care for others to reward each person according to their actual contributions.

1 Corinthians 3:1-9 (NIV): ¹ Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. ³ You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere

men? ⁴ For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere men? ⁵ What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. ⁶ I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. ⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. ⁸ The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. ⁹ For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.

As each person contributes to building out God’s kingdom, our foundation laid must be solidly on Jesus Christ. Worldly rewards are unsuitable as a foundation, because they come and go very rapidly. We must seek the truth and desire to communicate it clearly. Why? God tests our work, words, and theologies. If unsound, they’ll be exposed. Believers with imperfect contributions will still receive eternal life, resting upon God’s promises. How much better to receive eternal life plus more great rewards!

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 (NIV): ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

8.5 Test Oneself

John the Baptist in the Spirit and Power of Elijah called people to repent from their sinful ways in preparation for the messiah’s coming. The top religious people came also to see him. John the Baptist explained the repentant will reap fruits of righteousness. He challenged the top religious people to reflect and test themselves according to God’s standards, indicating they fell short. These are tough words to shock, shake-up, and wake-up people. Why so firm? The consequences are eternal and the deserved penalties are high. God wishes for all people from all nations to repent and come to know him.

Matthew 3:1-12 (NIV): ¹ In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:
“A voice of one calling in the desert,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.’” ⁴ John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the

coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

8.6 Born Again

Jesus, the Son of God, elaborates upon the concept of being born again, being a new creature, with a new heart towards God.

John 3:1-21 (NIV): ¹ Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.” ³ In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” ⁴ “How can a man be born when he is old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!” ⁵ Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” ⁹ “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked. ¹⁰ “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? ¹¹ I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. ¹⁹ This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.”

8.7 New Heart, New Spirit, New Creation

The way you are able to use your free will to follow God properly, is to repent and reach out to God to be born again, to have a new heart, to be a new creature. While you look the same on the outside, inside your heart and will are changed to be generous, kind, good, and loving like God, becoming prepared to approach God's kingdom, as you are born again by the Spirit.

Galatians 6:11-19 (NIV): ¹¹ See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand! ¹² Those who want to make a good impression outwardly are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³ Not even those who are circumcised obey the law, yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your flesh. ¹⁴ May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation. ¹⁶ Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God. ¹⁷ Finally, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. ¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

Ezekiel 18:30-32 (NIV): ³⁰ “Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you, each one according to his ways, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. ³¹ Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!

Ezekiel 36:25-27 (NIV): ²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

John 3:3 (NIV): ³ In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.

8.8 Stewards 0x 5x 10x: Parable of the Ten Minas

Reaping is of utmost importance, as Jesus's Parable of the Ten Minas revealed. This Parable reinforces the concept that faith without works is dead. Your faith saves you only because of God's promises, and it must be a faith that is alive and active and reaping. God sent his word to be active in your soul. You must choose to collaborate with God to make his word active and effective in your heart, mind, and soul. Be like the two profitable servants in the Parable who put the value resources they were given to work. Put God's resources to work in your life to transform yourself from sin to eternal life. Be a witness and example to others, so they too will reach out to God to transform their lives too. Your faith by itself, even with works, is insufficient to earn salvation. It's God's promises for those who are true believers that guarantee salvation. As you know the holy and loving character of God more through the Revelation of

Jesus Christ, it is easier to turn more of your life and yourself to God confidently, knowing you are doing what is right.

Luke 19:11-22 (NIV): ¹¹ While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. ¹² He said: “A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. ¹³ So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’ ¹⁴ “But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We don’t want this man to be our king.’ ¹⁵ “He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.

¹⁶“The first one came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned ten more.’

¹⁷” ‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’

¹⁸“The second came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned five more.’

¹⁹“His master answered, ‘You take charge of five cities.’

²⁰“Then another servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. ²¹I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.’

²²“His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? ²³Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’

²⁴“Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’

²⁵” ‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’

²⁶“He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. ²⁷But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’”

8.9 Sow to Spirit, Reap Holiness

God has freed you from your past sinful ways, so you choose to follow God’s holy will, do what is right and holy, and reap the reward to spend eternity with him. While shame entered

manifested itself into humanity when Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God, God has granted you the freedom to follow his holy ways.

Romans 6:15-23 (NIV): ¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. ¹⁹ I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. ²⁰ When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹ What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

8.10 Fruits of the Spirit & Crucify Sinful Nature

The fruits of the Spirit harvest is reaped for those who follow God's words, will, and way. God makes you a new creature born of the Spirit, by giving you a new heart towards God, where his laws are written on your conscience. These laws of the new creature involve loving others as yourself and loving God above all. With this new view of the world, and new attitude towards others, take the time to consider how your actions affect others, and how you can help others.

Galations 5:22-26 (NIV): ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

8.11 Live as Light & Speak with Psalms, Hymns, Spiritual Songs

Learning from scriptures to please God leads to reaping the fruit of light which is goodness, righteousness, and truth. The reaping manifests itself in choosing lifestyles embracing doing what is right, avoiding what is wrong, immersing in God's word, and directing people to God.

Ephesians 5:8-21 (NIV): ⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰ and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴ for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said:

“Wake up, O sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. ¹⁹ Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

8.12 God Prunes

To continue to bear fruit as vines in God’s garden we must remain attached to the vine, which is to continue in faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This is to continue to reach out to learn and follow his words, instructions, parables, and examples. When a person becomes a Christian, who follows Jesus Christ, many sinful tendencies still remain as a residue of the old self persists. God will help you to cut out your sin, by pruning those parts of you. Learning that you have flaws that need fixing might initially seem unpleasant, even more so if you thought you were righteous, perfect, great, and super. Yet, the wise accept instruction, and accepting the one true God’s instruction is wise. As one comes to know the Son of God, who is Jesus Christ, one starts to learn more about God’s word, heart, and expectations. As one learns more, one must stop hating others and start caring for them. One learns God calls us to forgive others. These things are hard to do and run counter to natural sinful tendencies instilled in us. God is there to help, guide, and shape us spiritually to be holy and fruitful.

John 15:1-8 (NIV): ¹“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He 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. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

8.13 You Reap What You Sow

We are called to do and sow the good word of God. Because the world is sinful and our natures have been corrupted by sin, this can be a challenge at times. Even though we could be unwise and give up, we are instead called to be wise to keep going, so we will reap the harvest and reward of our labors. We are also called to share what insights into God’s word we have, with those who are helping us to learn from God’s word. God has given each of us the ability to plant

seeds, and the consequence to reap resulting rewards. God desires us to plant seeds rooted in the Spirit, in goodness, and kindness. God knows what our tendencies are, but called us, and helps to change us, to give us the choice to follow him. Choose wisely, and reap rewards pursuing righteousness. Whatever you do, remember that you reap what you sow. You must test your own actions, to evaluate what you are sowing and reaping, thinking and feeling, and the heart of your motivations.

Galations 6:1-10 (NIV): ¹ Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. ² Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. ³ If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴ Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, ⁵ for each one should carry his own load.

⁶ Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor.

⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ 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. ⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

8.14 Righteousness, Goodness, Truth

God has given us a free will, though its' freedom has been impaired by sin. With the free will we are called to obey his word, not like mindless robots, or like slaves forced to submit, but rather cheerfully like a person who has an awesome friend with whom they enjoy to spend time with together. While some who follow God will need help from others, God provides plenty to others who follow him, so both those with plenty and in need benefit from the generous heart God works to institute in all true believers. The best gifts from God are not worldly wealth that can be gone in an instant, but gifts that enable you to know, enjoy, and practice the righteousness and goodness that comes from God. Some people want to know God for the wealth and power he can bestow. It is better to pursue God for his character, to learn how to be like his Son, Jesus Christ. In this way, even the poor in worldly wealth can experience deep Spiritual riches God has to offer.

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 (NIV): ⁶ Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷ Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." ¹⁰ Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 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. ¹² This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³ Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. ¹⁴ And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

8.15 Key Points: Reaping

1. God has given each of us a _____ will, although its' _____ has been impaired by sin.
2. You _____ what you sow. Choose wisely to sow for yourselves _____ and reap the fruit of unfailing _____. Sow to the _____ to reap holiness. The Fruits of the Spirit are love, _____, peace, _____, kindness, _____, faithfulness, _____, and self-control.
3. God gives the increase to _____ when we _____ and _____. Our shared _____ is to sow God's word and nourish his people, which is a _____ effort. Share _____ into God's word with those helping you to _____ God's word. God watches each person to _____ each person according to their actual _____.
4. Like in the Parable of the Sower, since God gives the increase, the harvest could be plentiful multiples ____, ____, or ____ times what was sown. The _____ and _____ of faith yields the harvest.
5. When you are born again, you get a new _____, a new _____, and are a new _____. The new creature _____ God above all, and _____ their neighbor as themselves. Jesus pays the promised _____ for our past sins for true believers.
6. Sow to your _____ nature, and _____ the wages of sin, which is eternal _____, which is punishment forever. Instead, crucify your _____ nature.
7. God _____ fruitful branches for them to be more productive to reap more and God _____ off unfruitful branches. Live as children of _____, reaping goodness, _____, and truth. Speak to each other with psalms, _____, and spiritual _____, making _____ in your heart to the Lord.

8. Faith without _____ is dead. Be like the two _____ servants in the Parable of the Ten Minas who put the valuable _____ they were given to _____, who reaped multiples of ___ or ___. Without _____ perfecting your faith, your multiples are _____, like the unwise wicked servant who unproductively hid the mina.
9. Test yourself honestly to see if you are _____ and _____ the fruits of righteousness according to God's standards, to subvert the eternal consequences of self-deception. The scriptures have tough words to _____, _____, and _____ people.

8.16 Discussion Questions: Reaping

(1) When we sow righteousness into our lives who grants the multiplied increase? When you sow to the spirit, what do you reap?

(2) Why is it important to use the resources God gave you? What are the consequences if you let the resources God gave you to manage sit idle?

(3) What type of relationship does God wish us to have with him, and how does that contribute to our cheerfully sowing more plentifully?

(4) God disciplines like a loving Father to his children, even though it will at times seem painful short-term. How can you prepare to be receptive to learn from God's discipline? What is the difference between pruning a fruitful branch and cutting off a unfruitful branch?

(5) What pleases and displeases the Lord?

(6) Inside our own beings, what do we internally examine to know if we've been granted a new heart, a new spirit, and are a new creation?

(7) How are we to test ourselves?

(8) What good fruit is expected to show our sincere repentance before God?

(9) What does the scripture propose as the proper alternative to getting drunk? How will you make that experience a consistent part of your life?

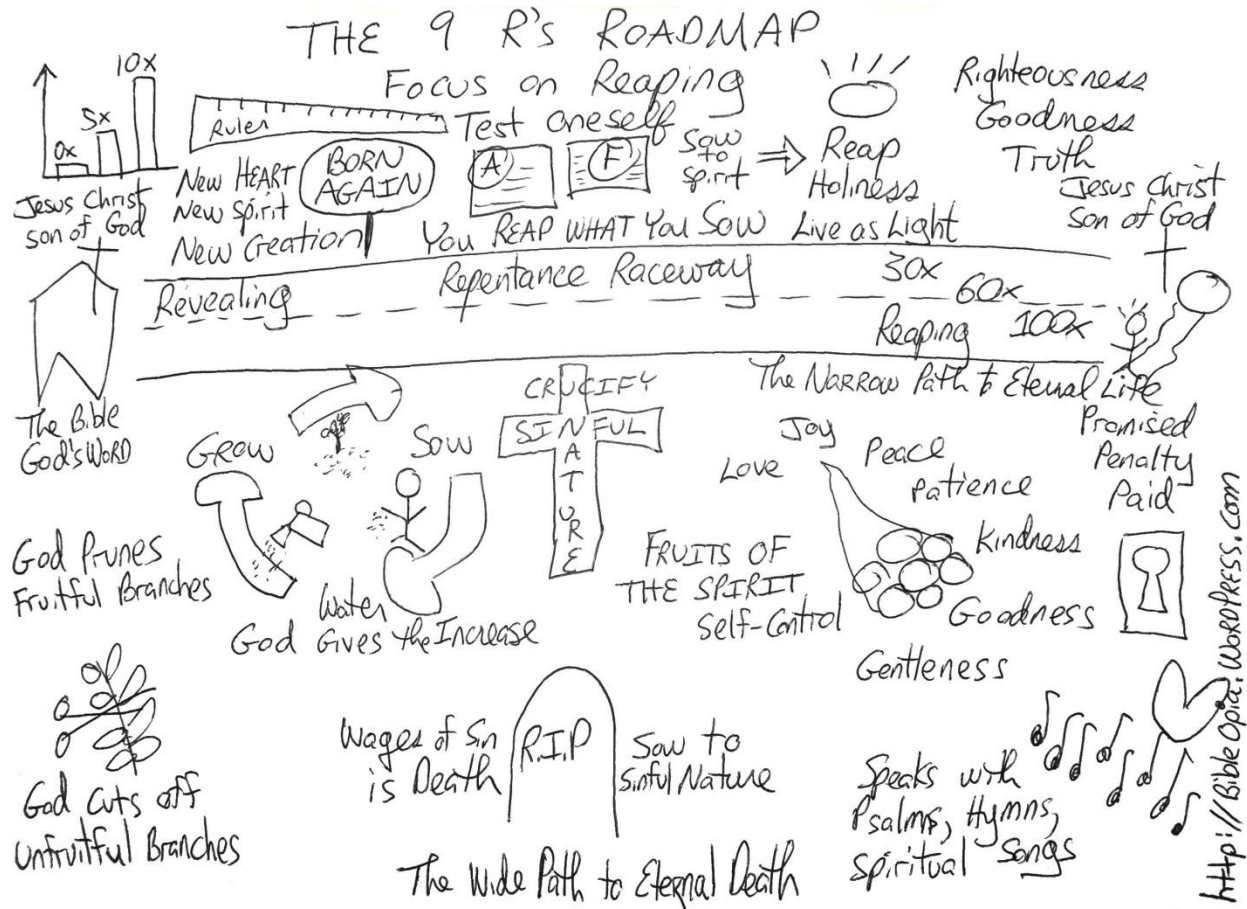
(10) How many rewards do you wish to have when you go to heaven? What's your plan to achieve your optimal reward level? What can you learn from each others' plans? What can you do to help each other with plans that are holy, loving, and wise, and accord with God's revealed will in scripture?

(11) How are you to live wisely and make the most of the time you have in this life?

8.17 Remaining: Further Study

As you find freedom granted by God to do what is right cheerfully, and reap the rewards, knowing you reap what you sow. There is more in the scriptures on reaping and sowing, so take the time to read The Bible online at <http://BibleGateway.com> or a way you prefer, whether in print, audio, or multimedia experiences. There is an excellent sermon online that explains both the Apostle Paul and James on Faith teachings with exceptional clarity, touching upon the concepts of being a new creature. This is available from the First Baptist Church Woodstock Sunday Service – 12.06.09 AM Pastor Johnny Hunt's Sermon: The Great Divorce: Counterfeit Faith <http://www.fbcw.org/podcast/index.php?id=337> . You can find more at that website. Websites like Sermon Audio.com <http://www.sermonaudio.com> provide access to several other preachers. Because reaping effectively is a team effort, please ensure you are connected to a church.

8.18 Hand Drawn Reaping Roadmap



Note: Need to add Faithfulness to the Fruits of the Spirit hand-drawn image

8.19 Key Points: Reaping: Answers

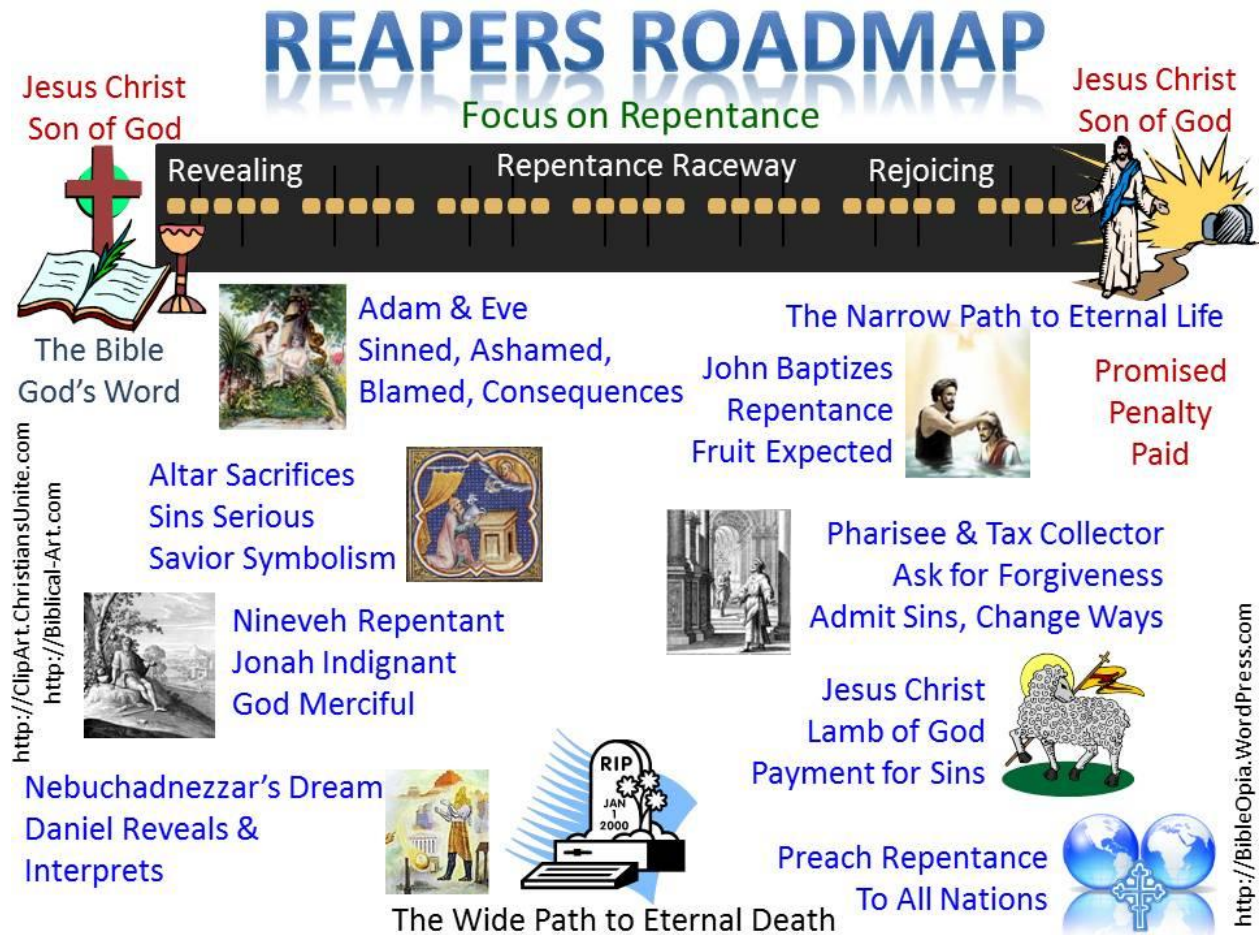
1. God has given each of us a free will, although its' freedom has been impaired by sin.
2. You reap what you sow. Choose wisely to sow for yourselves righteousness and reap the fruit of unfailing love. Sow to the spirit to reap holiness. The Fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
3. God gives the increase to grow when we sow / plant, and water. Our shared responsibility is to sow God's word and nourish his people, which is a shared / team / joint / collaborative effort. Share insights into God's word with those helping you

to learn God's word. God watches each person to reward each person according to their actual contributions.

4. Like in the Parable of the Sower, since God gives the increase, the harvest could be plentiful multiples 30, 60, or 90 times what was sown. The sharing and growth of faith yields the harvest.
5. When you are born again, you get a new heart, a new spirit, and are a new creation. The new creature loves God above all, and loves their neighbor as themselves. Jesus pays the promised penalty for true believers past sins.
6. Sow to your sinful nature, and reap the wages of sin, which is eternal death, which is punishment forever. Instead, crucify your sinful nature.
7. God prunes fruitful branches for them to be more productive to reap more and God cuts / breaks off unfruitful branches. Live as children of light, reaping goodness, righteousness, and truth. Speak to each other with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, making music in your heart to the Lord.
8. Faith without works is dead. Be like the two wise / profitable servants in the Parable of the Ten Minas who put the valuable resources they were given to work, who reaped multiples of 5x and 10x. Without works perfecting your faith, your multiples are zero / none, like the unwise wicked servant who unproductively hid the mina.
9. Test yourself honestly to see if you are sowing and reaping the fruits of righteousness according to God's standards, to avert eternal consequences of self-deception. The scriptures have tough words to shock, shake-up, and wake-up people.

Chapter 9: Repentance Raceway

9.1 Look at Repentance Roadmap



9.2 Review

The Reapers Roadmap materials previously presented summarized how The Bible's Gospel of John 1:10-13 and the "Parable of the Sower" found in Matthew 13:1-9 shows the way redemption typically happens, or regretfully fails to happen. That is, it shows how people come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or choose another course both for their life on earth and more importantly for eternity.

John 1:9-13 (NIV): 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

God reveals his word and ways so people have the chance to learn more and get to know God better by applying their reason and strength. God presents his message both to Jews and Gentiles. Today, God through his word and the Holy Spirit calls to those who attend Christian Services and who hear God's

word elsewhere along life's paths. In the "Parable of the Sower" this is like dropping seeds of God's word along the path, as illustrated in the Bible in Matthew 13:1-9.

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

Focus on the Repentance Raceway:

9.3 Adam & Eve:

While repentance is central to coming to God, we people often exhibit a contrary tendency towards blame and self-righteousness rather than repentance. Consider how Adam and Eve responded after their first disobedient act of rebellion, where they violated God's commands, his trust, and their relationship with him. When caught, Adam and Eve reacted by blaming rather than taking responsibility and repenting. Adam blamed Eve. Eve blamed the serpent. Today people blame society, parents, family, friends, enemies, and others for their behavior. Even when all these are contributors, ultimately we are responsible for ourselves, and must decide to repent and ask for God's forgiveness and assistance to start making better decisions.

Genesis 3:8-13 (ESV): ⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." ¹¹ He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" ¹² The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

9.4 Altar Sacrifices:

One reason God instituted sacrifices is to remind people of how serious their sins are, so it makes sense that God still expects those who offer sacrifices to God to still listen and to obey God. While the blood of sacrifices was required for forgiveness of sins and to purify earthly symbols of heavenly objects, the higher purposes points to the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, who was to be offered as the sacrifice for forgiveness of sins for all who believe and follow him.

1 Samuel 15:22 (ESV) ²² And Samuel said, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.”

Leviticus 17:11 (ESV): ¹¹ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.

Hebrews 9:21-23 (ESV): ²¹ And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. ²² Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. ²³ Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

9.5 Jonah and Nineveh:

The Lord God forgave Nineveh’s people when they believed Jonah’s message from God and repented of their sins. Jonah was disappointed because what he prophesied at God’s direction did not come to pass. It’s also possible Jonah was disappointed because God spared his peoples’ enemies. God recognized Nineveh people’s repentant hearts and rewarded them with his mercy. This pattern of God rewarding belief and repentance with pardon and mercy is a pattern more fully revealed when Jesus’ comes and instructs his followers on righteousness.

Jonah 3:10 (ESV): ¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

Jonah 4:1-4 (ESV): ¹ But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. ² And he prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. ³ Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴ And the LORD said, “Do you do well to be angry?”

9.6 Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream:

Great King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that greatly troubled him. To ensure a proper dream revelation was provided, the King insisted the wise men reveal both the dream and its interpretation, and threatened to execute all the wise men if they were unable to do so. God revealed the dream and its’ interpretation to Daniel, who told the dream and shared its’ interpretation with King Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 2:31-36 (ESV): ³¹ “You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. ³² The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

³⁴ As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. ³⁶ “This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation.

Daniel 2:37-45 (ESV): ³⁷ You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, ³⁸ and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold. ³⁹ Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all these. ⁴¹ And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³ As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴ And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, ⁴⁵ just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.”

King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream prophesied about God’s Kingdom to come through the Son of God, Jesus Christ. God’s Kingdom is not an earthly Kingdom where people war and fight for it. It is a heavenly Kingdom, where entry is prefaced by seeking the Kingdom of God and God’s righteousness, which Jesus Christ reveals. To come to know Jesus is to imitate him and his true followers, knowing God’s Kingdom is often opposed by earthly powers. As King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream revealed, the certainty of God’s Kingdom eternal dominance is assured. Those who follow Jesus Christ, the Savior, the Messiah, the ultimate King of Kings and Lord of Lords are resting on a firm foundation. That firm foundation is the solid rock, the stone God the Father set in place, stands forever.

9.7 John the Baptist:

As prophesied by Isaiah the Prophet, John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus Christ’s coming, by making a straight path of repentance for God’s people to follow.

Mark 1:1-5 (NIV): ¹ The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² It is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”—³ “a voice of one calling in the desert,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’ “

⁴ And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River

Many people hear the Word of God, recognize Jesus Christ for who he is, acknowledge their need to repent, and do so. Sorry for sinful wrongs they’ve committed previously, they focus on learning more about God, doing right now and in the future, and even make amends for their past too in certain circumstances. This sincere response mirrors what John the Baptizer expected when he called people to repent.

Matthew 3:10-12 (NIV): ¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

John the Baptist called several religious teachers to true repentance, since they appeared externally righteous, yet their internal hearts were far from God. Repentance involves changes to heart, mind, and actions. Repentance requires changing our lifestyles, how we relate to others, and what we think. John the Baptist challenged religious leaders to evidence their repentance was true by their actions.

Matthew 3:7-9 (NIV): ⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

9.8 Parable of the Pharisee & Tax Collector:

The Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector instructs that a repentant heart is one God expects in prayer and when reaching out to him, while also informing that to be self-righteous, full of pride, and unrepentant, is sinful.

Luke 18:9-14 (NIV): ⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ ¹³ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven,

but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' ¹⁴ "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

John's letter likewise reinforces the importance to repent of our sins, and highlights the failure to do is evidence to convict us.

1 John 1:8-10 (ESV): ⁸ If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

How do you know what to repent for? You learn more about God, and our need for repentance, by reading the Bible, focusing upon Jesus' life, and joining a community of believers, if one is available to you. What is it like to follow Jesus with a willingness to repent for your wrongdoings? As Jesus' follower, you continue to find more sins to eliminate from your life, knowing you've sinned, as you learn more about God's righteous expectations.

When you follow Jesus, you'll find several **behaviors** to eliminate. You'll enjoy many successes doing that, despite setbacks causing you to reflect and redraw boundaries to appropriately address your own tendencies. Reflecting further upon God's word, you'll learn what you **communicate** verbally, non-verbally, and via writing is of key importance. Praying for help and focusing upon the Lord's words, you'll continue to enjoy many successes, as you implement and observe improvements in your own language use.

Delving deeper into God's words, you'll see **self-control** is expected too, whether its' self-control in expressing your emotions, satiating your appetites, or other varieties. Whether it's this challenge or another area to improve, several years will pass as you face these challenges. With God's help, and the support network of many believers imitating Christ, you are able to conquer these challenge too. You'll understand your **thoughts** and **desires** underlie sins which lead you astray at times. Observing your thoughts and watching your desires closely, you'll come to know again how sinful you are, and how needful it is to repent.

You'll find many things worldly people value, such as wealth and materialism, you also value too highly. You'll ask God to help you direct your focus upon what is right and holy, leading to improvements in your thinking, reasoning, and priorities. You realize sin is more than just what we do that is wrong, but is also when you omitted doing the right you ought to do too, and so you'll repent of that too.

You'll realize God's expects us to love and care for others, and recognize you've missed many opportunities to do so, and now aim to be more proactive to find and follow-up on chances to show others love and kindness. The more you improve, the more you'll learn there is to improve. As you repent, you'll admit your ultimate responsibility for your sins. Your recognition of God's holiness leads you to seek to soak up Jesus' life and words to permeate your soul, so you'll be prepared to succeed, and prepared to keep going despite temporary failures and setbacks.

You'll search for ways to share what you've learned and how you've been successful in overcoming many of life's challenges with the support of God's words and his people so others receive help they need too, like you did. You'll realize many others are also seeking to help those in need too, yet you were ignorant of what they've overcome. This realization leads you to pursue opportunities to be a match maker, between those with needs for help, and those who know how to address those needs, with help from God's word and their own life's experience.

You'll discover being wise will help you be more effective when helping others, so you'll advance your knowledge in many areas. You'll be informed there is worldly wisdom and heavenly wisdom that is even higher, so you are careful to use any worldly wisdom as tools to teach the higher wisdom of God. You'll align your assistance with those already forming collective groups to help others more effectively. You'll explore creative thinking to address needs previously looking insurmountable in your pursuit to bring hope and joy into people's lives.

Perhaps you as a follower of Christ will like the rest of us only fulfill a portion of the repentance and redirection in our lives before we return to the dust of the earth from which we came. Perhaps you'll live a full life, doing the above and much more, as you follow Jesus Christ. Perhaps you'll tackle several challenges at simultaneously. The important part is turning your life over to Jesus Christ, so you begin and continue to walk the narrow path to life until God the Father determines it's time to depart this world.

9.9 Jesus Christ the Lamb of God:

Sacrifices of animals were a foreshadow and copy of the sacrifice Jesus Christ made as a perfect Lamb for the world's sins when Jesus was crucified on the cross and died for our sins. Our part is to believe, be repentant, and decide to seek and follow God, whom Jesus Christ revealed.

John 3:16-17 (ESV): ¹⁶“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 (ESV): ⁷ Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Matthew 26:1-4 (ESV): ¹ When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, ² “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.” ³ Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, ⁴ and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him.

9.10 Preach Repentance to All Nations:

Repentance is foundational to Jesus' ministry and to his disciples, who seek people who will acknowledge their sinful condition, confess their sins, and turn towards God in truth and action.

Luke 5:31-32 (NIV): ³¹ Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Acts 20:21 (NIV): I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

Acts 26:20 (NIV): First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

God is patient and suffers many evil doers who appear successful in what they do. God permits this, as part of his plan to bring as many people as possible to embrace repentance. Despite this, several people will choose the wide path of the unrepentant, to their own eternal punishment.

2 Peter 3:8-9 (NIV): ⁸ But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance

Many people who do wrong insincerely claim they are sorry. Several are primarily only sorry they were caught and were not sorry for their actions. This is an ungodly sorrow. Godly sorrow fuels sincere repentance.

2 Corinthians 7:9-11 (NIV): ⁹ yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. ¹⁰ Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. ¹¹ See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter

Disciples in the faith are called to pursue God's holy righteousness in their lives, avoiding unproductive arguments, and being kind to everyone.

2 Timothy 2:20-26 (NIV): ²⁰ In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. ²¹ If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. ²² Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. ²³ Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. ²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not quarrel;

instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. ²⁵ Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

Life's choice is between repentance and stubbornness, between seeking God's mercy versus rejecting God's mercy in favor of God's just wrath, whether received on Earth now, or later for eternity.

Romans 2:20-26 (NIV): ⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? ⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ God "will give to each person according to what he has done." ⁷ To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. ⁸ But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

As Jesus' followers preach the Kingdom of God, the need to seek God's righteousness, and the critical necessity of repentance to all nations, they can be confident in God's eventual victory, thanks to the Prophecy of Daniel embedded in King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.

Daniel 2:37- (ESV): ⁴⁴ And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, ⁴⁵ just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

9.11 Key Points: Repentance Raceway

1. Adam and Eve illustrates people's tendency to _____ another to avoid their responsibility, rather than _____ when feeling _____ as a result of sinning, in a vain attempt to avoid deserved _____.
2. Altar sacrifices remind us that sins are _____ and foreshadow Jesus as the _____ being offered to God as payment for our sins.
3. Just like God was _____ after Nineveh was _____, God expects all people to be _____ too.
4. God revealed to Daniel King Nebuchadnezzar's _____ and its' _____, which prophesies Jesus' Kingdom to fill the whole _____.

5. John baptizes people with a baptism of _____, expecting the _____ of repentance as proof of sincerity deep in the heart. Likewise Jesus' disciples declared all must repent, turn to God, and _____ their repentance by their _____.
6. The Parable of the Pharisee & Tax Collector shows God _____ the sincerely repentant, yet withholds _____ from the self-righteous before God, who are full of pride, which is sinful.
7. Godly _____ fuels sincere repentance.
8. Followers of Jesus continue to find more _____ to eliminate from their life and more _____ to do in their life, as they continue to learn and apply more about God's _____ expectations.
9. Jesus Christ is known as the _____ of God because he offered himself on the cross as the _____ for the sins of true believers.
10. The Great Commission involves Jesus Christ instructing followers to Preaching the Gospel of _____ to make disciples of all nations, a mission whose success is _____, thanks to the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.

9.12 Discussion Questions: Repentance Raceway

- (1) What did you learn from Adam & Eve's example about our innate tendencies towards repentance?
- (2) Considering times you and others have done wrong, why is God patient with evil doers?
- (3) What does The Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector teach us regarding the importance of repentance and the folly of self-deceptive self-righteousness, pomp, position, and appearances?
- (4) What does the history of Jonah and Nineveh show us about God's character, righteousness, and generosity?

(5) Why are there no altar sacrifices in Christianity? What does God value more than altar sacrifices? When was the ultimate altar sacrifice made for all who'd repent and believe?

(6) At a high-level, of what types of thoughts, actions, communications, and omissions do you need to repent?

(7) Why did John the Baptist focus upon preaching repentance? How central is repentance to God's worldwide outreach?

(8) How do you know Jesus' Gospel outreach will be successful in reaching people in all nations in this world despite opposition? How can you contribute to this mission over the course of your lifetime? What progress have you made?

(9) What advantage is gained from applying wisdom, learning from others, and collectively working together on God's mission field?

5. John baptizes people with a baptism of repentance, expecting the fruit of repentance as proof of sincerity deep in the heart. Likewise Jesus' disciples declared all must repent, turn to God, and prove their repentance by their deeds.
6. The Parable of the Pharisee & Tax Collector shows God forgives the sincerely repentant, yet withholds forgiveness from the self-righteous before God, who are full of pride, which is sinful.
7. Godly sorrow fuels sincere repentance.
8. Followers of Jesus continue to find more sins to eliminate from their life and more good to do in their life, as they continue to learn and apply more about God's righteous expectations.
9. Jesus Christ is known as the Lamb of God because he offered himself on the cross as the payment / propitiation for the sins of true believers.
10. The Great Commission involves Jesus Christ instructing followers to Preaching the Gospel of repentance to make disciples of all nations, a mission whose success is certain / sure / assured, thanks to the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.

Chapter 10: Rejoicing

10.1 Look at Rejoicing



10.2 Review

The Reapers Roadmap materials previously presented summarized how The Bible's Gospel of John 1:10-13 and the "Parable of the Sower" found in Matthew 13:1-9 shows the way redemption typically happens, or regretfully fails to happen. That is, it shows how people come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, or choose another course both for their life on earth and more importantly for eternity.

John 1:9-13 (NIV): 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

God reveals his word and ways so people have the chance to learn more and get to know God better by applying their reason and strength. God presents his message both to Jews and Gentiles. Today, God through his word and the Holy Spirit calls to those who attend Christian Services and who hear God's

word elsewhere along life's paths. In the "Parable of the Sower" this is like dropping seeds of God's word along the path, as illustrated in the Bible in Matthew 13:1-9.

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13: 1-9 (NIV): 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

10.3 Focus on Rejoicing:

The Apostle Paul's message in the Bible's Book of Acts parallels The Reapers Roadmap message, as once the Jesus was revealed and received as Lord and Christ, believers are encouraged to do their rooting in him, and remaining established as they walk in the faith, with rejoicing through thanksgiving. (**Acts 2:6,7 (ESV):** 6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.)

10.4 Rejoicing & Salvation:

When many learn the gospel's good news, they receive it gladly and rejoice, like the believer represented by the plant with the shallow root in the Parable of the Sower, who later fell away quickly when troubles came. The lesson here is that being joyful is insufficient for salvation, and is an inadequate basis for confidence in salvation. (**Matthew 13:20-21 (ESV):** 20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.) While insufficient for salvation, rejoicing is a regular essential aspect to our faithfully following Jesus. (**Philippians 4:4 (NIV):** 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.) Those who seek the Lord are expected to rejoice. (**1 Chronicles 16:10 (ESV):** 10 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!) After learning the good news that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior, rejoicing is frequently a regular and sincere response to God's love, mercy, and grace. The open-minded eunuch that the Holy Spirit lead Philip to teach about Jesus exemplifies this normal response (**Acts 5:39 (ESV):** 39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.)

10.5 Rejoicing through Trials:

Rejoicing is expected in all variety of circumstances, which includes tough circumstances. (**1 Thesalonians 5:16-18 (ESV):** 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.) In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus explained believers properly following God are expected to be glad and rejoice, despite facing opposition. Why? God's has rewards reserved for the righteous. Encountering opposition and

persecution to good works is further reason to rejoice when your faith is authentic. (**Matthew 5:11-12 (ESV)**: 11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.) The apostles exhibited this response to rejoice after being beaten and instructed to desist from preaching the good news about Jesus. (**Acts 5:41-42 (ESV)**: 41 Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. 42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.) To respond with rejoicing is expected of all believers as they face the tough trials of life, knowing God provides spiritual and emotional support. (**1 Peter 4:12-13 (ESV)**: 12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.)

10.6 Rejoicing with Dancing, Singing, and Instruments:

Besides with words, inward rejoicing is expressed outwardly with music using a wide variety of musical instruments too. (**1 Chronicles 13:8 (ESV)**: 8 And David and all Israel were rejoicing before God with all their might, with song and lyres and harps and tambourines and cymbals and trumpets.) Shouts to the Lord are other ways to rejoice. (**2 Samuel 6:15 (ESV)**: 15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn.) Besides music, dancing and leaping are also ways to express rejoicing. (**2 Samuel 6:16 (ESV)**: 16 As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, and she despised him in her heart.) Today there are many more musical instruments, music videos, and theatrical shows. Professional quality media are available online and after performances. Electronics like smart phones, music players, and touch screen devices enable this music to be collected and played conveniently.

10.7 Inwardly Rejoicing:

Rejoicing emanates inwardly from following God and appreciating his wisdom and instructions. (**Psalms 19:8 (ESV)**: 8 the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; ...) Understanding God's message clearly is important for having a proper thought process for rejoicing. (**Nehemiah 8:12 (ESV)**: 12 And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.) Teachers and preachers, who know the Bible and explain the gist of what is being communicated, facilitate a fruitful understanding of God's word. (**Nehemiah 8:8 (ESV)**: 8 They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.)

10.8 Rejoicing in Toil, Wealth, and Possessions:

Proper understanding of scriptures also leads to rejoicing in all good material things God has given you and those with you. (**Deuteronomy 26:11 (ESV)**: 11 And you shall rejoice in all the good that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house, you, and the Levite, and the sojourner who is among you.)

Rejoice and thank God if you have been granted the gift to enjoy your work, wealth, and possessions under the sun, being careful to keep God first in your heart. (**Ecclesiastes 5:18-19 (ESV)**: 18 Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. 19 Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil--this is the gift of God.)

10.8 Rejoicing when the Lost Repent:

Jesus', Parable of the Lost Sheep, Coin, and Sons (**see Luke 15**) show God, his angels, and friends rejoicing over souls that come to a place of repentance to transform their life eternally. (**Luke 15:5 (ESV)**: 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.) Likewise, the Apostle Paul rejoices when those whom he knew repented, even though it was sorrow leading them towards repentance. (**2 Corinthians 7:9 (ESV)**: 9 As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.)

10.9 Rejoicing in Others Progress & Proper Dealings:

It's right to rejoice in the continued progress of fellow believers' faith. (**Colossians 2:5 (ESV)**: 5 For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.) Be thankful and rejoice without gloating or hatred, when God handles those who reject all that is good, even as you still hope all will come to know God, perhaps through your kindness to them. (**Deuteronomy 32:43 (ESV)**: 43 "Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him and cleanses his people's land.") Rejoice when your dealings with people have been proper. When dealings have been improper, repent, for God watches and judges. (**Judges 9:19 (ESV)**: 19 if you then have acted in good faith and integrity with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you.) Rejoice when God saves the poor and weak from evil adversaries and follow God to aspire likewise. (**Psalms 35:19 (ESV)**: 9 Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord, exulting in his salvation. 10 All my bones shall say, "O Lord, who is like you, delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, the poor and needy from him who robs him?")

10.10 Key Points: Rejoicing:

1. God and his angels rejoice when the lost _____.
2. Though counter-intuitive, believers are expected to rejoice through _____.
3. Dealing with people _____ is another reason to rejoice.
4. Knowing, understanding, following, and appreciating God's wisdom leads to _____ rejoicing.

5. Dancing, leaping, singing, playing instruments, and performances are forms of _____ rejoicing.
6. While many find it natural to rejoice when initially receiving God's Word, being joyful is an inadequate basis for confidence in _____.
7. Caring for others leads to rejoicing in others' _____ in their faith walk.

10.11 Discussion Questions: Rejoicing

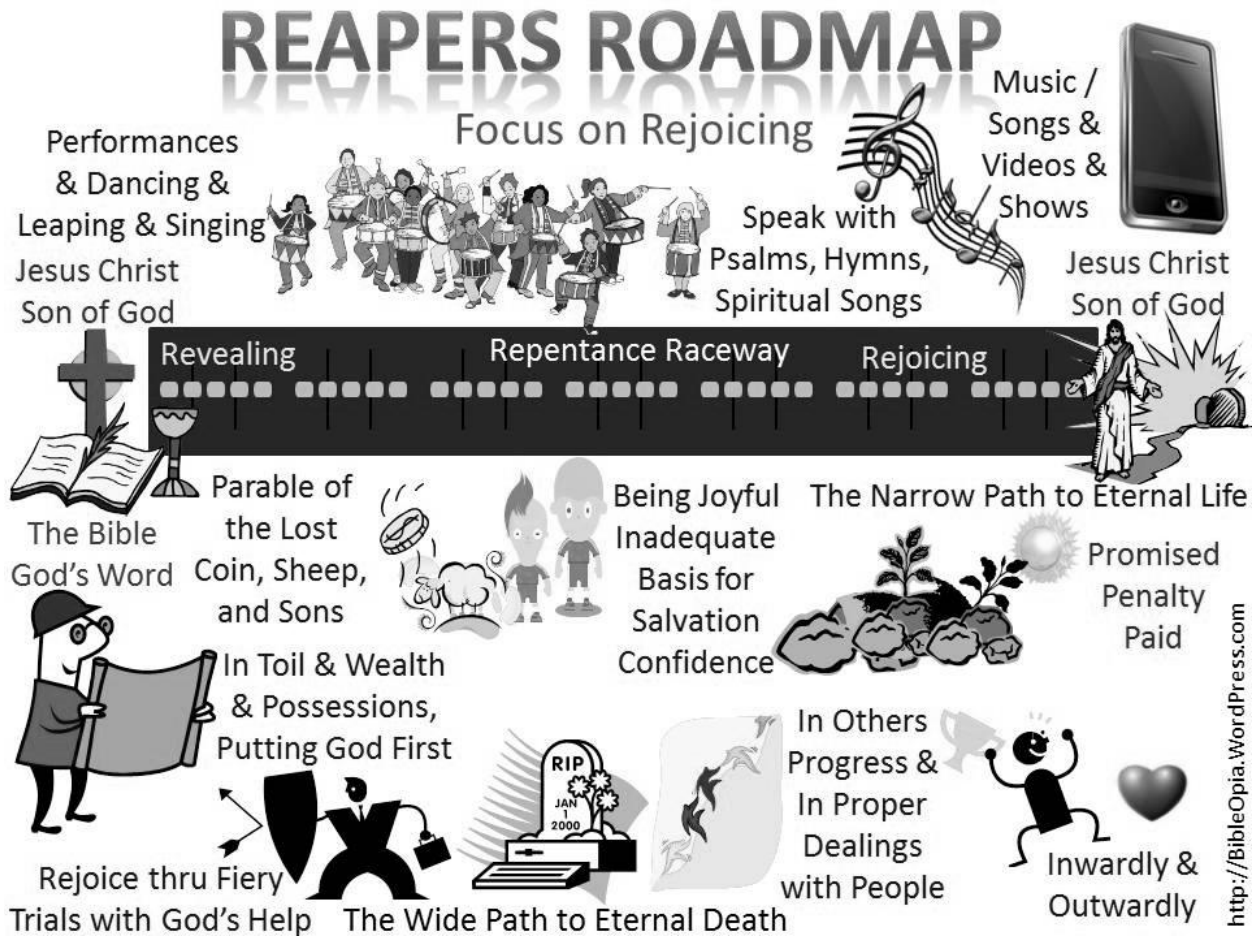
- (1) How is it possible to rejoice in the midst of fiery trials inflicted because you are doing what is right?
- (2) What types of outward expressions of rejoicing do you and fellow believers express?
- (3) What modern devices have you used to facilitate your rejoicing in the Lord? What are your favorite artists, composers, and performers?
- (4) Why is being joyful an inadequate basis for salvation, knowing the lesson from the Parable of the Sower?
- (5) What is the proper basis for confidence in salvation?
- (6) What type of proper conduct towards others does Jesus expect towards our friends, family, and enemies?
- (7) When others do well and progress in their faith, do you tend to be happy for them, or become jealous and envious of them?

(8) How could those who became jealous of believers receiving praise from God use that to fuel their own missions to become closer to God?

(9) Knowing we are expected to rejoice in our hard toil under the sun, how does that influence how awesomely you do you work?

(10) When blessed with an abundance of wealth and possessions, how could you use them to solicit praise from God, leading to your own rejoicing due to God's approval?

10.12 Black & White Rejoicing Roadmap Visual



10.13 Key Points: Rejoicing: Answers

1. God and his angels rejoice when the lost repents .
2. Though counter-intuitive, believers are expected to rejoice through trials .

3. Dealing with people properly is another reason to rejoice.
4. Knowing, understanding, following, and appreciating God's wisdom leads to inward rejoicing.
5. Dancing, leaping, singing, playing instruments, and performances are forms of outward rejoicing.
6. While many find it natural to rejoice when initially receiving God's Word, being joyful is an inadequate basis for confidence in salvation .
7. Caring for others leads to rejoicing in others' progress in their faith walk.