For Believers, those that have put their trust in Jesus Christ, there is an ongoing battle, a battle for your soul.

People often indicate that life will become “a bed of roses” when someone accepts salvation. Not true. Believers are not immune to the drama and trouble that other people here on earth normally face. Some trouble comes from our own “bonehead” decisions, and some troubles come from outside of our personal control and responsibility. Expect trials because, through all trials, God is expecting us to trust Him. Some trials come upon us because God is trying to teach us some specific personal “home improvement” lessons, and, other times, He is providing us with opportunities to demonstrate by our attitudes and actions that we really do have the trust that we claim we have for Him, and His saving Son. So when something comes out of the blue or your plans have suddenly changed, consider asking yourself if there is some lesson that the Lord is trying to teach you. You see, God is not interested in us being the same person we were when we were first saved. As we mature in our Christian walk, God wants us to be more and more like His precious Son, Jesus.

How interesting that God is so involved in our lives, teaching us and arranging those “divine appointments” and trials so when we get to heaven, our faithfulness in trusting Him, will be something that He can reward us for.

In Revelation 4:10, there is a scene where the elders are casting their crowns of reward at the feet of Jesus. Why, because they know that it was all Him, not them, that orchestrated their reconciliation with Him. Whether from the source our individual attraction to our Creator to our achievements that are of eternal value, it is all from the hand of the God who pursued us. If we can claim or take credit anything at all, we can perhaps say that we were “clay” that yielded to His hands so He could make us according to His purpose and pleasure.

You – A Believer in Christ Jesus

1. **You are saved, and secure** - “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand. John 10:27–29

2. **Nobody can snatch you out of the hand of Jesus** - but through your freewill; you can choose to walk away from the hand of God. Remember, your relationship with God is just that, a relationship. Being a Believer is not something you did ten years ago; it is where you are in your relationship with the Lord, right now. Note: if you leave His hand, you leave His provision and protection and sadly, His salvation.
3. **You are not your own, you were bought for a price** – ... do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s. 1 Cor 6:19-20. What was the price? The Son of God, in all His glory, leaving the sinless and painless realm of heaven to come to this evil world to be struck, have his back whipped, to be spat upon, His beard pulled out and to suffer the painful death for only one reason. To take the punishment for mankind’s sins. His blood has purchased you.

4. **You were created and formed for eternal fellowship with God**, God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:9 – In Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

In Revelation 21:3-4, the whole purpose of everything God has created is revealed:
I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

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**Your Value to God:** In order to live lives that are pleasing to God, we need to fully appreciate how valuable we are to God. Although sometimes hard to believe, the scriptures tells us that we are much more than “sinners saved by grace,” we are “most valuable” and precious to God.

1. **You are the “joy” that was worth dying for:** In Hebrews 12:2, Since looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, While suffering the mental and physical torture of the cross, what was on Jesus’ mind is what He was accomplishing, YOUR salvation and reconciliation with God.

2. **You are a treasure:** Jesus said: ... the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Matthew 13:44. In this parable, the earth is the field and the treasure is you. Jesus gave everything He had for only one reason, to buy YOU.

3. **You are a precious pearl:** Jesus said: ... the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. Matthew 13:45-46. In this parable, the pearl of great price is YOU and Jesus sold all He had to get you.

4. **You are a Joint Heir with Christ – Sons and Daughters** - He inherits, and we inherit The Apostle Paul says: The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. Romans 8:16-17.
And God says: I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. Revelation 21:6-7

5. **You are a vessel, fashioned in a specific way so that while you are on this earth, you can be useful in accomplishing God’s specific purposes.** Our physical attributes and mental capabilities, our talents and gifts have all been fashioned by God. If you feel that you were somehow shortchanged, get over it and waken to the reality that you have been fashioned for specific uses by God. Instead of worrying about your shortcomings, seek to see how best you can serve Him. We need to oftentimes remind ourselves about just who the potter is, and who the clay is. You turn things upside down, as if the potter were thought to be like the clay! Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, “He did not make me”? Can the pot say of the potter, “He knows nothing”? Isaiah 29:16

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**God’s desire for you and His end game:**

1. **God’s desire is to be with you for eternity.**
   I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. Revelation 21:3

2. **God’s desire for your time on this earth right now:** is for you to grow to be more and more like His Son, Jesus, because to some people, you may only be the real example of Jesus that they interact with and that is why we want to be the best representative of Jesus that we can be. Believers in Jesus have been granted new status as citizens of the Kingdom of God and we are sojourners here for a while. Like a song I heard, “this world is not my home, I’m just a passing through.” Each day, we can consciously choose to live our lives as citizens of this world, or a citizen of the Kingdom.

3. **God’s entire plan is certain:** God says in His word, “done deal.” And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me. *It is done.* I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

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**How Satan Views You:**
1. **With hate:** Since you are created in the image of God, every moment, you continually remind Him of his arch enemy.

2. **Satan’s defeat is certain** and it seems reasonable that he should give up but, evil doesn’t have to make sense, so he keeps trying to somehow “one up” God.

3. **Satan’s plan for you** – Satan cannot separate you from the Lord, but he still has a plan for you.
   
   a. **To make you spiritually impotent** so you can’t “infect” others.
   
      i. Satan would like you to be nothing special in the Lord. His desire is for you to be just another compromised Christian, hypocrite, (actor) and phony. There are many people that seem to think that they are saved, but somehow that they have a license to sin, living lives like the devil. In Matthew 12:33 it says: “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit.” Oh, the path to being a “compromised Christian” may start somewhat subtly with a few beers at home with your friends. Soon your friends are asking why you won’t go to the bar with them since you “drink.” An attitude that will allow you to get close to sin is an attitude that will sin. The Apostle Paul lists the evil fruit of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21

4. **Satan wants you to become spiritually impotent by attacking and hindering your prayer life**

   **Sin is pleasurable for a season** – Satan works on Credit - you get the “goods” up front and you can end the rest of your life paying for it.

   The Apostle Paul lists the evil fruit of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21
   Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

   QUESTON? Is this the kind of fruit in your life? If it is, don’t fool yourself, “those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

   The Apostle Paul then lists the fruit of God’s Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23
   But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

   As you grow in Christ, these are the attributes should become noticeable in you.

   Don’t be disheartened, sin is, and will always, be something we are dealing with and God knows that we are not capable of complete righteousness apart from the blood of Christ that was shed for us. But **God is not willing that we should remain the same people we were when we were first saved.** He wants us to grow as Believers and as we grow, we should be able to have victories over sin where we are sinning less and less, as we become more and more like Jesus.
think thoughts like: “after all, you are only human” or “go ahead, it’s fun and later, you can just ask God to forgive you.” After you fall for his offer, then he will belittle you; reminding you of your failure and just what a terrible Believer you are.

All sin causes separation, when we have unconfused sin like Adam and Eve in the garden. We feel ashamed and sometimes, we hide from God just like they did (Genesis 3:6-10). But just like in the garden, even though God knew about their sin, He was still looking for them and He is still looking for us even though we have sinned, He offers his forgiveness and restoration of fellowship through prayer, if we will only ask.

The cure for falling for Satan’s enticement is the Believer’s bar of soap. 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Also, when Satan reminds you of your sin, you can remind him of the cross.

John further writes: My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin and if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. 1 John 2:1–2

Remember, you cannot be punished for past sins forgiven by God. The writer of Psalms says in Psalms 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

It is important to make prayer a priority in each day. Although God loves to hear from us anytime, it seems only right that we should set aside some “quality time” when we are not tired or hungry. We pray regularly not because God is on our checklist, but, because we just want to be close to Him and we recognize how much we depend on His peace, provision and protection each day.

5. Satan will try to keep you from studying God’s Word. You will be enticed to occupy your time with low quality “mindless” entertainment, so you won’t have quality time to read and study God’s Word which is vitally important in the battle for your soul.

The importance of knowing scripture is seen in the story of Jesus being tempted by Satan in Matthew 4:3-10. In this passage, we see Jesus being tempted three times and each time, Jesus handles it the same way, invoking God’s authority through quoting scripture. God’s Holy Spirit which indwells the Believer is your helper when you are tempted, He will bring to your mind a scripture to defend against the tempter. If however, you are ignorant of what is in God’s Word, it is sort of like having a master mechanic willing to repair your car but you have no tools in your toolbox for him to work with.

The cure for the attempt to keep you from studying God’s Word is prioritizing your life and setting aside some “quality time” each for reading and studying the Word of God.

6. Satan will entice you to avoid worship and fellowship with other Believers.

The only worship Satan is interested in, is for people through their acts and omissions to worship him.
Because worship and fellowship strengthens Believers, Satan wants you to put your own needs and pleasures before worship and fellowship with other Believers and if possible, he would like you to avoid fellowship altogether.

7. **Satan’s end will be the lake of fire** and he would like as many people there with him as possible. Some of his best work is when he through a false religion or even marginal Christianity, delude someone into thinking they are saved when they are not. No wonder one of his names is “Deceiver.”

2 Peter Chapter 1 is good to read about some of the attributes a Believer should strive for. In this section, verse 5-11, the Apostle Peter says: “add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

The Apostle Paul encourages his brethren in Ephesians 6: 10-18

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having **girded your waist with truth**, having put on the **breastplate of righteousness**, and having **shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace**; above all, **taking the shield of faith** with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And **take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

**The Things That Keep a Believer Strong in the Faith**
1. **Prayer**

a. **Prayer is effective:** James 5:16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Note: God sees us as righteous only because we have trusted in the blood of His Son.

b. **Some types of prayer**
   a. Formal - When we set aside some quality time to be alone with our creator.
   b. Informal - A word of thanks and praise when the Spirit leads while conducting the business of our day.
   c. Corporate – Praying as a group
   d. Intercessory Prayer - prayer for others, taking the place of another or pleading another's case.

**Jesus instructions on prayer:** Matthew 6:5 “And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly and when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them for your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

c. **The Tabernacle as a model for prayer** – See the attachment “B”

2. **Studying the Word of God**

a. By studying God’s Word, you will discover the depth of God’s love for you and the things that are important to Him.

b. How when Jesus faced temptation, He used scripture to rebuke Satan

c. God’s righteous concepts, become the tools for the Holy Spirit to work with in the area of personal growth and strength in living a life that is pleasing to God.

d. In order to effectively share God’s life saving plan with others, it helps to understand it yourself by studying it yourself.

e. Studying the Word gives you confidence for living through today and facing all the days of drama that this life offers.

f. Studying the Word yourself, will keep you safe from heresy’s (false doctrines) and unscriptural commands and requirements that others try to lay on you.

g. Studying the Word will give you personal peace as huge events and governmental changes such as we are experiencing, happen. You will have peace because you have “read ahead” and you know how God’s story of salvation ends.

3. **Fellowship with Other Believers**
a. Worship is not optional. God, the Giver of life deserves it
b. There is great strength in being with others that love the Lord.
c. There are wonderful opportunities to support and encourage others in the fellowship. We are all sojourners together and our desire should be to help others along the way as we are helped. The trials you have experienced in life, become your credentials for ministry to others.
d. There are wonderful opportunities to serve others – It takes a lot of people to conduct the operation of a church, perhaps you have a special talent that is in need.

Note 1: Believers in Jesus should strive to have and “Others before me” mentality, of course this is opposite of what “normal “unsaved people strive to do.

Note 2: As a Believer grows in Jesus, sometimes there will be a temptation to compare yourself, your gifts and talents with fellow Believers, some which may be struggling. Our reaction to hearing of a fellow Believers struggle is to pray for them and ask the lord if there is some other way you can help. It is helpful when thinking about churches in general to consider them to be basically, hospitals, full of broken and in perfect people. Just expect it.

So, now you are prayed up, studied up and current in fellowship, guess what?

You are ready for duty, doing your part to bring in the Kingdom of Heaven.

1. The Assignment that Jesus Gave All of Us:

“The Great Commission”

And He (Jesus) said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.
Mark 16:15

1. Not just for preachers
   i. All Believers have a circle of people they influence; we should influence them for the Kingdom.
   ii. We should not assume that someone else will share Jesus with them, we may be the only “real” example of Jesus they ever get to know.

Don’t feel qualified? Sorry, well God has a habit of using weak vessels and imperfect people to accomplish His will; the Jewish nation being one good example. When God presents an assignment, examples of lame excuses from the Bible don’t seem so placate or satisfy Him. Some people that tried to use a personal weakness to disqualify themselves for taking God’s assignment:
a. Jeremiah – 1:6 – But I am too young
b. Moses – Exodus 40:10 – I am not a good talker
c. Isaiah – Isaiah 6:5 – But I am a man of unclean lips.
e. The scriptures tell us that Jesus Himself was nothing special to look at.

Note: God could have had Jesus look like a superhero instead of a plain looking man and He could have had Jesus born in the prestigious City of Jerusalem, instead of the small insignificant Town of Bethlehem. The beauty in this is that there was nothing about Jesus that would intimidate people; Jesus was completely approachable to the poor, the sick and the rich alike. When God uses “weak” people to accomplish His will, it becomes obvious that it was really was God that made it all happen.

2. Equipped for Ministry - All Believers talents and gifts – Starting In 1 Corinthians 12:8 the Apostle Paul lists some of the gifts of the spirit. Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Prophesy, Discernment, Tongues, Interpretation of tongues, Comfort.

b. Do we select our own gifts? No.
   But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand. Isaiah 64:8

c. Does the clay tell the potter what should be made out of it? No!
d. We are all special vessels designed for special purposes.
e. Don’t envy some else’s gift/s, and don’t flaunt your gifts.
f. Other talents: There are many kinds of talents that Believers can use for the Kingdom. Maybe you have experience in construction or auto repair. Perhaps you are skilled in the use of a computer or even janitorial skills. Remember that Jesus said that what makes someone great in His eyes is their willingness to be a servant for Him: “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great, exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you let him be your slave, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:25-28

g. The difficulties a Believer has experienced in life can become “special qualifications” for ministry. For example, someone that has been in prison can “connect” in witnessing better, than someone that has not had that experience. Someone that has lost a child at a young age is better equipped to comfort and encourage someone in mourning that has lost a child.
2. Some Final Thoughts

- When it comes to sharing Christ, expect to be considered a fool and ridiculed, but, it is worth it especially when the Holy Spirit and circumstances prompts you to share.
- Live your life in a way that says “thanks” to Him for what He has already done for you.
- Live each day with the expectation that God is going to use you somehow as you are led by the Holy Spirit.
- Stay spiritually alive to your environment, remember you are a citizen of the Kingdom, act like it.
- Careful of what you allow your eyes to see and your ears to hear. The internet is a sewer, we know that. If the porn being continuously offered on the internet stumbles your walk with the Lord, disconnect. Music – music is very powerful and thank the Lord that there are many different styles of music available that praise the Lord. What a blessing it is to wake up in the middle of the night with a song that praises the Lord on your mind.
- Versions of the Bible – I recommend the New King James version. While being faithful to the message of the King James Bible, the NKU replaces the sometimes difficult words of the old English, replacing them with contemporary words. The Blue Letter Bible online is a great resource.
- As you grow in the Lord, it becomes a temptation to compare your spiritual walk with others. Don’t do that because it leads to pride and pride over spiritual gifts stinks just a bad as regular pride. Instead of comparing ourselves to others, we should be comparing ourselves with our Savior Jesus Christ and making adjustments in our own lives instead of spending our energy trying to correct others.
- I have found it a blessing to have a special “personal” book for prayer and study.

Prayer book – During my prayer life, I noticed that there were things I prayed about each day and there were events and people I lifted up in prayer on occasion. During prayer though, I also noticed that my mind would wander and my ability to regularly uphold people in prayer tended to be sporadic. Here is what I came up with that has really helped me become more focused in my prayer life. I bought a small notebook and sectioned it off in five different sections:

1. **Prayer Requests** - I have ½ a page for each day of the week and this is where I list the people and concerns for me to pray about. I do this in pencil because God answers prayer and when that concern is over, I can erase it and record another. Maybe it would be a good idea to just let them accumulate so we could see how God answers prayer.

2. **Bible Studies** – This is where I write my notes on whatever Scripture I am currently studying.

3. **Special Insights** – Where I write those special nuggets of scripture and insights.

4. **Favorite Verses** - Self explanatory.

5. **Praise and Thanksgiving** – Basically, these are letters to God thanking Him for His special intervention and for His usually subtle involvement and answers to prayer. These records of God’s faithfulness will be important in the future when I am feeling overwhelmed and I need reminding of those times in my life when God answered prayers and was faithful in our times of need.

   **This book has been a great blessing in my life and perhaps yours as well.**
Appendix: A - The Believer and Alcohol

Should Christians drink alcoholic drinks? – While we are instructed not to get drunk, there is no clear-cut prohibition against drinking an alcoholic drink. HOWEVER, we live in a society where many people perceive that drinking is incompatible with being a Christian and when they see a Christian drinking, they also see a flashing sign over them in big letters saying, “HIPPOCRATE.”

The real issue about drinking is whether our partaking will cause someone to “stumble.” “Stumbling someone.” takes on a few different forms. Perhaps you don’t have any problems with alcohol so you drink in the home and your children understand the lesson that drinking is OK and then one of them becomes an Alcoholic. Was the liberty of you drinking really worth it?

Or, you have a coworker that you have worked with for awhile and now he is asking you questions about Jesus and Christianity. Then, he sees you drinking and to him, you become just another hypocrite so his interest in Jesus falters. Was the liberty of you drinking worth it?

Or, you are friends with another believer that has come from a past where he struggled with alcoholism and he sees you drinking. Since you represent what a “real Christian” is, he partakes of some alcohol and relapses. Was the liberty of you drinking worth it?

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.” Proverbs 20:1

It is good neither to eat meat* nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak. Romans 14:21 *(the reference to meat here involved eating meat that the person knew had been previously offered to idols.)

The bottom line is really how well we personally desire to represent Jesus to those saved and unsaved around us and whether or not we are willing to give up some “personal pleasure” for the sake of the Gospel of Christ? I encourage you to be the best example of Jesus you can be.

*footnote: the reference to meat here involved eating meat that the person knew had been previously offered to idols.
Appendix: B - The Tabernacle as a Model for Prayer

When the Children of Israel were in the wilderness for 40 years after being freed from bondage in Egypt, God said: "let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them, make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you." The instructions on how to build the tabernacle (means dwelling place) start in Exodus 25:8. The worship of God at the tabernacle and later in Israel’s temples, were in a very specific order.

Although there are probably several levels of meaning for the layout of worship at the tabernacle, at a basic level, the tabernacle lays out a pattern for prayer. In prayer’s most simple form, the steps are:

1. Setting aside quality time to be alone with the Lord.
2. Confessing our sins and accepting the forgiveness of our sins through the blood of Jesus that was shed for us.
3. A time of praise and worship to God as our light in this world, our provision and our protection.
4. Praying for others and ourselves.
5. Spending some time, just listening to hear what the Lord has for us.

Please don’t misunderstand; the most important thing to God is your relationship with Him. He is always glad to hear from you at anytime but, a hurried prayer in your thoughts on the way to a project, or, while driving, is not a replacement for good quality time spent with your Creator. Sometimes, it is a real blessing to pray while in your “mind’s eye” you are walking through the reverent steps of the tabernacle worship.
1. The Gate - Praise
Standing outside the gate, we are reminded that we are still in the world, but, because we are saved, we are not “of this world.” We notice that there is only one way into the place of fellowship with our Creator, and we consider that Jesus is that “one way” when He said: I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me. We thank God that we know His Son Jesus, and we enter into the gate with thanksgiving and praise. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. (Psalms 100:4)

2. The Brass Alter - Confessing our sins
Removing the taint of sin is essential when approaching our Holy God. At the place where innocent animals were once killed and burned to pay for the sins of the people, we see in their place, Jesus, the Lamb of God that suffered and died for our sins past, present and future. “If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

Jesus said: “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:14-15
3. The Laver of water - Cleansing and purification

The Priests during the tabernacle and temple times were instructed to wash their bodies with the water of the laver; which is a basin. In Hebrews 10:22 it says: Let us draw near (to God) with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Paul the Apostle also equates water with the Word of God when he said in Ephesians 5:26: That he might sanctify and cleanse it (the church) with the washing of water by the Word. We are reminded that the Lord desires us to strive to be unsoiled by the world as instructed through the study of His Word and living our lives with purity.

The Laver of Water

The Priest must wash at the laver before ministering at the altar or entering the Tabernacle

"When they go into the tabernacle...they shall wash with water or when they come near the altar to minister." Exodus 30:20

The laver was a place of washing and cleansing from sin.

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22:16

Brazen Laver
The Place of Cleansing
4. The Holy Place -- The Seven Branch Oil Lamp

As we enter the Holy Place, our eyes are drawn to the seven branch oil lamp called the Menorah, which is the only illumination in the room. This reminds us of what Jesus said in John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” In Matthew 5:14, Jesus told those listening to him teach: “You are the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.” This speaks to us the importance of being the best examples of Jesus to others in our dark world that we can be.

5. The Holy Place - - The Table of Showbread

To our right, we see the table of showbread which the priests replenished with fresh bread each week. We are again reminded of our Savior who said in John 6:35 And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.” Matthew 5:6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Not only does Jesus fill our needs for righteousness, he is also the provider of “our daily bread” and everything else that sustains us. Our response to His goodness should be a thankful Heart.

6. The Holy Place - - The Alter of Incense

This is where we can send our personal petitions upwards to God. Prayer is likened in scripture to the smoke of incense which rises up heavenward. In Revelation 8:3-4, And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. James 5:16
Our Lord Jesus said: “And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who [is] in the secret [place]; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Matthew 6:14-15

Our Lord Jesus said: “And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. “Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.” In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. Matthew 6:6-13

The Apostle Paul says: For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:15-16

7. The Most Holy Place – Fellowship with the Living God

Only once a year could the High Priest enter the Most Holy Place to sprinkle blood on the Ark of the Covenant as an atonement for the people of Israel.

When Jesus was crucified, the heavy curtain that blocked the way into the place where God dwelled, was torn from the top to the bottom. This supernatural sign signified that because of Jesus’ sacrificial death, the way was now open for us to enjoy communicating with, and encountering our Holy God.