Introduction: My r12 Journey

- The sweet taste of grace
- The bitter taste of religion
- The false hope of success
- The joy of a new life
- The misery of a schizophrenic Christian

♦ The Fundamental Question: “What is True Spirituality?”

How do we move beyond religion, church programs, legalism, performance orientation and compartmentalized lives to a grace-filled, authentic relationship with Christ?
1. True Spirituality begins with an accurate **PICTURE** of God.

   - “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.”
     
     1 John 3:1 (NIV)

   - “... your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.”
     
     8“... your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.  9“This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, ...’”
     
     Matthew 6:8-9 (NIV)

   - God’s dream for all of His children is to make us like **HIS SON**.

     2 Corinthians 3:18, Romans 8:29, 1 John 3:1-2

2. True Spirituality is built on the **PRINCIPLE** of relationship.

   - “Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’
     
     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.  39And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”
     
     Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV)

   - True Spirituality is loving God and loving people 24/7 from the heart.
3. Romans 12 provides us with a relational, grace-based **PATHWAY** of True Spirituality.

- **5 Key Relationships** ➞ r12 Biblical Responses

1. **Relationship with God** ➞ Surrender to God  
   Romans 12:1 “. . . in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.”

2. **Relationship with the world** ➞ Separate from the world’s values  
   Romans 12:2 “. . . Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind . . .”

3. **Relationship with yourself** ➞ Sober in self-assessment  
   Romans 12:3-8 “. . . Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment . . .”

4. **Relationship with believers** ➞ Serving in love  
   Romans 12:9-13 “. . . Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves . . .”

5. **Relationship with nonbelievers** ➞ Supernaturally responding to evil with good  
   Romans 12:14-21 “. . . Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good . . .”
• **Warning** – r12 is not a “try hard” moral code to live up to but a faith response to what God has already done for us.

  - Romans 1-3: **SIN** – Our problem that separates us from God.
  
  - Romans 4-5: **SALVATION** – God’s solution in the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.
  
  - Romans 6-8: **SANCTIFICATION** – Living your new life in God’s power and growing progressively in Christ-likeness.
  
  - Romans 9-11: **SOVEREIGNITY** – Living in confidence because God is in control and keeps all His promises.

♦ **A Life-Changing Invitation**

1. Would you like to receive all your Heavenly Father has prepared for you?

2. Would you like to experience true spirituality; the love and freedom Christ purchased for you?

3. Are you willing to commit the next 6 weeks and join us on the r12 journey?
1. Abraham’s journey **SHOWS** what God wants most from each of us.

The call to follow God – “Will you trust Me with your future?”

Will you **trust me** with your **FUTURE**?

**Test #1**: Chap. 12 – Famine - Will you **TRUST ME** to protect you?

**Test #2**: Chap. 13 – Greed - Will you **TRUST ME** to provide for you?

**Test #3**: Chap. 14 – Prosperity - Will you **TRUST ME** with your possessions?

**Test #4**: Chap. 15 – Courage - Will you **TRUST ME** to fulfill my promises?

**Test #5**: Chap. 16 – Timing - Will you **TRUST ME** by patiently enduring?

**Test #6**: Chap. 17 – Obedience - Will you **TRUST ME** when what I ask doesn’t make sense?

**Test #7**: Chap. 22 – The Final Exam - Will you **TRUST ME** with everything and everyone in your life?

- An outrageous request
- An obedient response
- A long walk
- The moment of truth
- The great reward
So, if God exists, what does He want from me?

“When God calls us to risk, He means risk!”

Bill Lawrence

We have to TRUST God, before we know what trusting Him means.

2. Abraham’s confidence in God’s promises and God’s character were the secret to His SURRENDER and REWARD.

“He (Abraham) staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded that what He promised He was able also to perform.

Romans 4:20-21 (NIV)

“And without FAITH it is impossible to please Him, for He who comes to God must believe that He exists and is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

Hebrews 11:6 (NIV)

3. Abraham’s life reveals that SURRENDER is the channel through which God’s biggest and best blessings flow.

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship.”

Romans 12:1 (NIV)

- Surrender is the key to experiencing true spirituality.

“I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”

John 12:24-25 (NIV)
Question: What does God want most from you and me?

1. **ALL** I am, **ALL** I have.

2. He wants me by faith to say “Lord, I’m **ALL IN**!”

3. He wants me to sign the **BLANK CHECK**.
Introduction: Babylon is on the march…

Observation #1:
We are not at the MERCY of a pagan culture.

Observation #2:
The future of the world will be DETERMINED by who CAPTURES the next generation.

Observation #3:
Protection of our children from our culture is IMPOSSIBLE, but preparation of them is IMPERATIVE.

Observation #4:
Only a generation with Biblical CONVICTIONS and a winsome SPIRIT can transform the Babylonian culture of our day.
Momentum  
Learning to Get God’s Best for Your Life  
How to Ignite Your Faith  
(Part 3)  
(Daniel 1)

- The Historical Setting:  
  The Time = 605 B.C.  
  The Place = Babylon  
  The Reason = Judgment  
  The Spiritual Climate = Wickedness  

Daniel 1:1-2
Hebrews 12

- The Babylonian (the world's) game-plan to seduce Daniel's soul:  

Daniel 1:3-7

Change his **THINKING**.

Change his **WORSHIP**.

Change his **LIFESTYLE**.
By which “Truth Proposition” do you live?

☐ The Babylonian System of our day – the World System: The lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

☐ God’s System - Where you say, “I believe in the character of God – that He is good, and that He is just, and that He is holy. I believe the promises in His Word are the key to the fear of God and walking in a path that produces the outcomes that He promises.”

Daniel possessed two critical characteristics:

1. **Convictions** = Refusing to **COMPROMISE** in spite of the cost.
   - They are caught more than taught  Proverbs 13:20
   - They only come by personal discovery – 2 PROAPT

2. **Courage** = Refusing to **CONFORM** even when you’re afraid.
   - Grows out of our convictions. Romans 4:20-21
   - Is sustained by our comrades. Proverbs 27:17
Daniel’s life reveals that getting God’s best is a “NO – YES” proposition.

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”  

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

- Truth, Not “Trying Harder,” is the Pathway to True Spirituality

“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ”If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”  

Jesus of Nazareth - John 8:31-32 (NIV)

Question: How do you get God’s best for your life?

1. What / Who do you need to “say no” to that is squeezing you into the world’s mold?
   - Consider a 3, 5, 10 DAY MEDIA fast.
   - Who can help you keep your commitment to God?

2. What do you need to “say yes” to in order to renew your mind and experience God’s good, acceptable, and perfect will?
   - Consider a 20 minute, daily 2 PROAPT time with God.
   - Who can help you keep your commitment to God?
Introduction: “Who do you think you are?”

“This question is not always an easy one to answer, as there are many factors and many people who try to tell us who we are. To complicate matters even more, our desperate longing for approval drives us to seek, to look, act, and be what we think others want rather than discovering who we really are. It’s a question we all grapple with and one that will determine in large measure the quality of our relationships and the level of contentment that we will experience in this life.”

*True Spirituality*, p.105

- **Factors that shape our lives**

  “Our family background, our environment, our personalities, the significant others and role models of our childhood, the values and beliefs systems we were taught, all play a critical role in the formation of our self-identity.”

  *True Spirituality*, p.105

- **So, who are you …… really?**

  - If you don’t get a sober self-assessment of who you are, you will never fulfill the divine calling God has for you.

  See Ephesians 2:10
1. Moses’ journey **REVEALS** how to come to grips with the real you.

- Moses’ parents, childhood, education and experiences were God’s preparation for him to fulfill His **DIVINE DESIGN**.  
  Exodus 2

- Moses’ **WARPED VIEW** (too high) of himself prevented him from fulfilling God’s purpose for his life.  
  Exodus 2:11-15

- Moses’ **WARPED VIEW** (too low) of himself almost prevented him from fulfilling God’s purpose for his life.  
  Exodus 3-4:19

  - Excuse #1 – “I’m a nobody.”  
    Exodus 3:9-12

  - Excuse #2 – “I’m not smart enough.”  
    Exodus 3:13-15

  - Excuse #3 – “I’m not credible.”  
    Exodus 4:1-5

  - Excuse #4 – “I’m not qualified.”  
    Exodus 4:10-12
Momentum
How to Ignite Your Faith (Part 4)

Learning to Come to Grips with the Real You (Exodus 2-4)

2. Moses’ reluctant trust in God’s promises and God’s character was his “BABY STEPS” to a sober self-assessment.

- Excuse #1 – “I’m a nobody.”
  God’s Answer = “I will go with you.” Matthew 28:20

- Excuse #2 – “I’m not smart enough.”
  God’s Answer = “I have the answers.” Philippians 4:13

- Excuse #3 – “I’m not credible.”
  God’s Answer = “I will empower you.” 2 Timothy 1:7

- Excuse #4 – “I’m not qualified.”
  God’s Answer = “I gifted you for this job.” Romans 12:6-8

3. Moses’ life reveals that a sober self-assessment is a PREREQUISITE to fulfill our divine assignment. (Ephesians 3:20)

“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.” Romans 12:3 (NIV)

- No one can give you an accurate view of your life but God.

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)
Question: How do you come to grips with the real you?

1. **Ask God** to help you recognize the **WARPED** mirrors of the world that have shaped your thinking.

2. **Begin the journey** of developing a sober self-assessment by getting God’s view of you through . . .
   
   . . . His Word – Renew your mind
   
   . . . His people – Honest feedback
   
   . . . Personal evaluation – Top 3 Strengths/Weaknesses card
   
   . . . Discovering your primary spiritual gift

3. **Celebrate daily** that you are unique, loved, accepted, capable, and being prepared to fulfill your divine assignment.
The 7 Essentials for Biblical Community:

- **Be AWARE** – God orchestrates circumstances and chemistry.  
  1 Samuel 18:1-2

- **Be INTENTIONAL** – We rarely drift into authentic community.  
  1 Samuel 18:3

- **Be HONEST** – Share the last 10%.  
  1 Samuel 19:1-5

- **Be AVAILABLE** – When crisis comes, “friends” arrive.  
  1 Samuel 20:1-4

- **Be LOYAL** – Don’t “shrink back” when things “heat up.”  
  1 Samuel 20:5-17

- **Be VULNERABLE** – Refuse to let fear or pride limit your relationships.  
  1 Samuel 20:40-41

- **Be SPIRITUAL** – Help them become an r12 Christian every day in every way.  
  1 Samuel 23:15-18
David and Jonathan’s **COVENANT** with God was the basis for their devotion to one another.

> 9“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. 11I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”

Jesus of Nazareth - John 15:9-13 (NIV)

Jonathan and David’s relationship reveals that authentic community occurs when the **real you** meets **real needs** for the **right reason** in the **right way**.

> 9“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. 10Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; 11not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, 13contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.”

Romans 12:9-13 (NAS)

- Authentic community is the **CORE** of Christianity.

> “. . . that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

Jesus of Nazareth - John 17:21 (NAS)
Question: How can you experience authentic community?

1. Get CONNECTED in a spiritually positive, relational atmosphere.
   - Be aware
   - Be intentional

2. Go DEEPER with one or two people in your group.
   - Be honest
   - Be available
   - Be loyal

3. Share and pray about a SIGNIFICANT struggle or fear in your life with a safe person.
   - Be vulnerable
   - Be spiritual
**Introduction:** In a fallen world “the rock” of evil, injustice, and betrayal will happen to all of us sooner or later.

- “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.”

  Peter – 1 Peter 4:12 (NIV)

- “In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.”

  Paul – 2 Timothy 3:12,13 (NIV)

- Who has wounded, betrayed, abused, abandoned, forsaken, forgotten, lied to, or hurt you more than anyone else?

**Question:** How do you overcome the evil aimed at you?
1. Joseph’s journey **reveals** how to overcome the evil aimed at you.

- God sovereignly allowed Joseph to be . . .
  1. Born in a **dysfunctional** family. Genesis 37
  2. **rejected** by his siblings. Genesis 37
  3. **abandoned** to a foreign land. Genesis 37
  4. Sold into **slavery**. Genesis 39
  5. **falsely accused** of rape. Genesis 39
  6. Sent to **prison** unjustly. Genesis 39
  7. **forgotten** by a “friend.” Genesis 40

- Joseph’s response to evil circumstances . . .
  1. He **survived** – he learned and adapted.
  2. He **thrived** – he used his gifts where he was.
  3. He **resisted** – he refused to “bail out” on God’s agenda for his life.
  4. He **waited** – on God’s time and place.
  5. He **grew** – he faced his issues and forgave others for theirs.
2. Joseph’s secret to overcoming evil involved something he **KNEW**, something he **DID**, and something he **REFUSED** to do.

- **What he knew:** Nothing comes into our lives by accident. It is either decreed or allowed by an all-wise, sovereign God for our good.  
  Genesis 45:5-8  
  ➢ Application: I am never a **VICTIM**!  
  (see Romans 8:28-29)

- **What he did:** He blessed those who cursed him.  
  Genesis 45:9-13  
  (see Romans 12:14, 21)  
  ➢ Application: I will do **GOOD** to those who hurt me, in a safe and appropriate way.  
  (see Matthew 5:43-48)

- **What he refused to do:** Take revenge.  
  Genesis 50:15-21  
  (see Romans 12:17-21)  
  ➢ Application: I will choose to **FORGIVE** (release) those who hurt me from the retribution they deserve because Christ has done that for me.  
  (see Matthew 6:14-15)
Question: How do you overcome the evil aimed at you?

1. Choose to **FORGIVE** the person(s) who have hurt you.

   **Forgive ➔ Forgiving ➔ Forgiven**

   **Choice ➔ Process ➔ Resolution**

2. Begin **PRAYING** daily for God to bless the person(s) who hurt you (30 days).

3. Do one act of **KINDNESS** this week for the person(s) who hurt you (if possible and if appropriate).