

~Outline for Life~

Your Life—God’s Design

Part 3—Your Spirit

*May your whole **spirit**, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Thessalonians 5:23 NIV

The Essential Core Principles for Spiritual Well-Being

The human spirit is the lamp of the Lord that sheds light on one’s inmost being.
Proverbs 20:27 NIV

But it is the spirit in a person, the breath of the Almighty, that gives them understanding. Job 32:8 NIV

- 1. You must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and acknowledge Him as your personal Lord and Savior.**
 - This is your salvation
- 2. Read the Bible daily and focus on what God’s Words are saying to you; be attentive to what your inner voice, the Divine Whisper of the Holy Spirit, speaks to you and be obedient to His voice.**
 - This is the beginning of your sanctification—a lifelong process
 - Recommended Bible Versions to use—NLT, NIV, NASB, NKJV
- 3. Pray frequently throughout each day.**
- 4. Worship the Lord daily.**
- 5. Spiritual warfare is essential for survival and you must understand and know your *three* enemies.**
 - Satan—the saboteur; The world—the subliminal deceiver; and Self—the suffocater
 - Book references for the spiritual armor of God, spiritual warfare, and warfare prayer
- 6. Attend a Bible-preaching and Bible-teaching church to continue your spiritual growth and for spiritual support.**
 - Appropriate reasons for attending church and appropriate expectations
- 7. Get baptized.**

- The significance and importance of baptism
8. Continual transformation by cooperation with the Holy Spirit is essential for spiritual maturity and the victorious Christian life.
 - Spiritual submission, obedience, attentiveness, and transformation
 9. Developing spiritual discernment and the continual testing of all things against the Word of God is key to staying focused and aligned with Christ.
 10. Identify and utilize your spiritual gifts.
 - Spiritual gift assessment or questionnaire
 - Book reference/resource for understanding and utilizing the spiritual gifts
 11. Practicing the spiritual disciplines is your spiritual exercise to make you spiritually strong and fit.
 - Book reference/resource for understanding and utilizing the spiritual disciplines
 12. Eagerly seek to become a Spirit-filled believer (filled with the Spirit) as evidenced by your ability to pray in the Spirit—an unknown tongue (language).
 - Book reference for fully understanding praying in the Spirit
 13. Every spiritual apprentice needs a spiritual mentor to take them spiritually deeper.
 14. Lifelong self-study and Bible study are recommended for a thorough understanding and appreciation of the doctrines and nuances of the Bible.
 - Additional recommended resources for your spiritual library

Continue reading for the full discussion of each of these outline points. Also remember to access the referenced resources on the Resources Page of my website, JeffHoracek.com. This Part 3 section is not as detailed in substance as the Body and Soul sections since my books, *Renew My Heart, O God* and especially *Restore My Spirit, O God* cover all this and more in extensive detail. For a complete understanding of these topics the referenced sections in my books are a necessary read. Excerpts are available on my website for much of this additional information.

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- 1. You must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and acknowledge Him as your personal Lord and Savior.** You must fully understand that you are lost as a sinner, you need a Savior, and Jesus Christ is that Savior. Your faith, trust, dependence, and hope are solely and entirely in Him. This is your **Salvation**—heaven is now your home.

For more information on **salvation and sanctification**, please see my book, *Renew My Heart, O God*, pages 413–422.

- 2. Read the Bible daily and focus on what God’s Words are saying to you; be attentive to what your inner voice, the Divine Whisper of the Holy Spirit, speaks to you and be obedient to His voice.** If you are a novice at reading the Bible, begin with a good *Study Bible* in an easy-to-read-and-understand version such as the *New Living Translation* (NLT). Begin your reading at the book of Matthew in the New Testament and proceed through the New Testament before commencing to read the Old Testament starting at the book of Genesis. The Bible is God’s textbook and guidebook for the victorious Christian life—nothing is more important or significant. God’s Word is Truth—the yardstick by which everything else in life is measured, compared, and held accountable to. This is the beginning of your **Sanctification**—being made new in the image of Jesus Christ.

At some point, you will want to have additional versions of the Bible to increase the depth of your understanding of the nuances of God’s Word. I highly recommend the *New International Version* (NIV), which is a great thought-for-thought translation; the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB), known for its word-for-word trueness to the original Hebrew and Greek transliterations; and the *New King James Version* (NKJV), the most memorable, melodious, and memorized version, which is the simplified version of the original *King James Version* (KJV) without the cumbersome use of “thee and thou.” Parallel Bibles are available with these versions side by side.

For more tips on **reading the Bible**, please see my book, *Restore My Spirit, O God*, pages 422–435; for more on **truth and true spirituality**, see pages 398–422.

- 3. Pray frequently throughout each day.** Prayer is simply talking with God, thanking Him, praising Him, and letting your requests for others and self be spoken (He already *knows* what you need). Silent prayer is fine and heard by God, but audible prayer is more powerful because it is heard by the enemy, Satan. Words have power—prayer is your connection with God and most powerful weapon against the enemy.

Prayer takes practice, but eloquence is not required for effectiveness. Pray for understanding when reading the Bible and pray before all life choices and decisions for God’s guidance and direction. Pray for your continual transformation into the image of Jesus Christ. Pray for the transformation and needs of others. Pray first, foremost, and frequently (without ceasing).

For more insight on **prayer**, please see my books, *Renew My Heart, O God*, pages 232–241; and *Restore My Spirit, O God*, pages 125–150, and 230–235.

- 4. Worship the Lord daily.** Worship is not just for a Sunday church service. Worship is an ongoing humility of heart, submission of mind and actions, an attitude of reverence and gratitude, and praising God daily for who He is, what He has done, and what He is going to still do. Worship is a time of focus on Him in reverent silence, praise, music and singing, prayer, rejoicing, and meditation and reflection—it’s meeting with Him.

For more on **worship and praise**, please see my books, *Renew My Heart, O God*, pages 281–288; and *Restore My Spirit, O God*, pages 19–33, and 220–221.

- 5. Spiritual warfare is essential for survival and you must understand and know your *three* enemies.** They are: **Satan**—the saboteur; **the world**—the subliminal deceiver; and **self**—the suffocator.

Satan will attempt to sabotage anything that is of God and anything valuable that you attempt to do for God. To counteract Satan’s ploys, you must know who you are in Christ, have a clear understanding of the Word of God, and use your spiritual armor, discernment, and warfare prayer to neutralize this enemy.

The subliminal deceptions of the world are ever present and powerful and will consistently attempt to pull you away from God and His best plans for you. To combat the deceptions of the world, you must first realize that you are in this world but not of it. You must wash your mind continually with the Word of God to cleanse, heal, repair, and reprogram your thoughts, words, and deeds to conform with the mind of Christ.

The most powerful and dangerous enemy that you face is self—the old self will consistently rise up to suffocate your new creation in Christ. Your new creation in Christ wants to please God. Your old self wants to please self. You cannot serve both. The victorious Christian life requires full cooperation with the Holy Spirit to transform you into the image of Christ with the mindset of Christ. Victory over self requires submission and obedience to the inner workings of the Holy Spirit.

For key points on the **spiritual armor of God** and **spiritual warfare**, please see my book, *Restore My Spirit, O God*, pages 165–182. For a sample **warfare prayer**, see my website, JeffHoracek.com, on the Resources Page, entitled, “Warfare Prayer.”

- 6. Attend a Bible-preaching and Bible-teaching church to continue your spiritual growth and for spiritual support.** Attend church regularly to worship in a group setting, to hear the preaching and teaching of God’s Word, for prayer and spiritual growth and support, and to exercise your personal talents and abilities to help others and bring glory to God. Period. That must be your mindset and motivation for attending church.

Do Not attend church to simply socialize, network or market yourself or business, or for personal gain of anything monetary, material, or others’ time in helping you. You will be disappointed. You are there to meet God and serve God! If you are active in serving or in a ministry, *do not* expect accolades or acknowledgement from men. You will be disappointed. God sees and knows and that must be enough for you! And most of all, remember, Christians are also fallen people, and church is a big family and as is true of many families, churches may be dysfunctional and Christians disagree and may be disagreeable. Knowing and anticipating this ahead of time will save you much agony.

Know your limitations, know how to say “No,” keep priorities in order with appropriate boundaries, and if you’re not growing spiritually, it’s time to move on. Finding a church home that fits is difficult, but it certainly can and should be a wonderful place to be.

- 7. Get baptized.** Every Christian denomination places a different emphasis on baptism. I personally do not feel that it is a requirement for salvation, but it surely is an event that every Christian should complete if possible. Baptism is a public declaration of your willing acceptance and acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior and His substitutional death for yours on the Cross, paying the penalty for your sin, your complete forgiveness thereof, and your new (born-again) eternal life through Him. This action solidifies in your mind and by the witness of others, your new life decision.

Baptism by total immersion was the biblical way and the means by which Jesus Himself was baptized. Immersion clearly identifies with the death of the old self and the born-again new life in Christ. If immersion is impossible, I have nothing against sprinkling or dousing with water as appropriately symbolizing your decision. Furthermore, if you were baptized as an infant, I would surely attempt baptism by immersion, since baptism is clearly a declaration of your conscious decision, not a decision made for you by others.

See also my book, *Renew My Heart, O God*, pages 416–417.

- 8. Continual transformation by cooperation with the Holy Spirit is essential for spiritual maturity and the victorious Christian life.** The process of sanctification is a lifelong process of continual **submission** and **obedience** to both the Word of God and the still small voice of the Holy Spirit within you. You must be **spiritually attentive** at all times and in all places and

heed the messages that you receive both through your physical senses and that which is strictly of the invisible spiritual realm.

Transformation is all about changing *you* into the image of Jesus Christ; it's not about changing others. It is developing a heart, mind, words, and actions like Jesus. It is reprogramming your thoughts, attitudes, motivations, behaviors, words, actions, purpose, and total lifestyle to be in accordance with the Word of God and the life of Jesus. Nothing is more powerful in the accomplishment of this transformation than the continual reading of the Bible, prayer, meditation, and reflection on what God speaks to your heart and being ever obedient to that.

9. Developing spiritual discernment and the continual testing of all things against the Word of God is key to staying focused and aligned with Christ.

The only way you can have a keen **spiritual discernment** is by knowing and understanding the Word of God and having an intimate, ongoing relationship with Him. Satan is the masquerader, the deceiver, and the father of lies and he is currently the ruler of this world. Deceptions, lies, and half-truths are everywhere—in the depths of your mind, in the church, and even spoken to you through close friends and family.

You must continually wear your spiritual armor and keep your spiritual discernment in fine tune. God's Word is Truth and everything, no matter from whence it comes, must be tested against that Truth and the voice of the Holy Spirit as He enlightens you. Spiritual wisdom and discernment will come with spiritual maturity.

- 10. Identify and utilize your spiritual gifts.** Every believer has one or more of the approximately twenty-seven **spiritual gifts** as described in the Bible. The Holy Spirit distributes these gifts according to His will for the primary purpose of edifying and building up other believers in the body of Christ. Your spiritual gifts are best determined and utilized in a church setting, although this is not absolutely necessary. To help you ascertain what your spiritual gifts are, it is helpful to take a *spiritual gift assessment* or *questionnaire* such as that by C. Peter Wagner, which you can purchase inexpensively online at Amazon. This will greatly enhance your understanding of your spiritual gifts and how you may best use them. Exercising your spiritual gifts frequently will greatly enhance your own spiritual growth and maturity as well as be a blessing to others.

For more in depth information about **spiritual gifts**, please see my book, *Restore My Spirit, O God*, pages 183–204, or you can access the book excerpt on my website, JeffHoracek.com, on the Resources Page, entitled, “The Spiritual Gifts.”

- 11. Practicing the spiritual disciplines is your spiritual exercise to make you spiritually strong and fit.** Spiritual wellness and maturity require dedication and persistence. The **spiritual disciplines** such as worship, prayer, study, and meditation and reflection should ideally be practiced daily. An occasional fast may be necessary for spiritual breakthroughs and the practice of a well-ordered heart must be ongoing. As you become more like Christ, a lifestyle of servanthood and submission to the Holy Spirit should be clearly evident. Without continual spiritual exercise, your spirituality and well-being will become stale, stagnant, and stunted,

and you will be easy prey for the enemy to devour.

For an in depth look at the **spiritual disciplines**, please see my book, *Restore My Spirit, O God*, pages 219–271, or you can access the book excerpt on my website, JeffHoracek.com, on the Resources Page, entitled, “The Spiritual Disciplines.”

- 12. Eagerly seek to become a Spirit-filled believer (filled with the Spirit) as evidenced by your ability to pray in the Spirit—an unknown tongue (language).** Receiving this special ability from the Holy Spirit requires an eager desire to obtain it and a total submission to the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is extremely difficult for many to obtain this unique ability due to the inherent mental blockades that are innately set in place—it seems impossible, illogical, and somewhat insane—which is precisely why God uses it—the foolish to confound the apparently wise. Most Christian denominations blatantly deny that it even still exists, but it is most assuredly alive and well among Pentecostals and Charismatics alike.

Praying in the Spirit does not make you spiritually superior in any way, but it does uniquely connect you with God in a powerful and permanent way. It is simply one more tool that God uses through you to bring about His good and perfect will. When praying in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit Himself is praying powerful words that are unintelligible to you and those around you but are precisely the will of God. Since we never fully know the true will of God, praying in the Spirit can be most effective, and at the same time offers us anonymity. For example, suppose a friend was severely injured in an accident and is in a coma. Our human wisdom would surely be to pray for total healing and recovery. But what if God wants to take this person home now because He knows the alternative future to be one of pain and utter despair and His perfect choice now is death? God’s ways are higher than our ways. Praying in the Spirit allows us to effectively pray God’s will without appearing to be praying in an aberrant or contrary way.

For more information on **praying in the Spirit**, please see my book, *Restore My Spirit, O God*, pages 147–150.

- 13. Every spiritual apprentice needs a spiritual mentor to take them spiritually deeper.** If God is calling you to a particular area of ministry, then you’ll certainly want to obtain a deeper spiritual connection with God to empower your spiritual gifts and abilities for maximum effectiveness. A trusted and God-directed **spiritual mentor** and **prayer and accountability partner** are key for your continued spiritual growth and for obtaining and maintaining a powerful and effective ministry.

This could be just one person or a few—a pastor, leader, or mature spiritual believer—to whom God has directed you to. You’ll need mature guidance, direction, and a covering of spiritual protection and prayer.

- 14. Lifelong self-study and Bible study are recommended for a thorough understanding and appreciation of the doctrines and nuances of the Bible.** Continual study will encourage continual spiritual understanding and growth. Along with your **Study Bibles** in a couple different translations, I would also highly recommend a few additional helpful resources: a **concordance** such as *Strong’s*, to

help you find key words in every passage of Scripture (make sure the concordance is keyed to your Bible version; KJV, NIV, etc.); a **word study series** such as that by Zodhiates to gain understanding and note nuances of the original Hebrew and Greek words; a **Bible dictionary** such as *Eerdmans*; a **Bible encyclopedia, handbook, and/or atlas**; a book on **manners and customs of the Bible**; and for deep theological study, a **systematic theology** such as that by Geisler.

Not all of these are necessary, of course, and none of these textbooks are inexpensive. Much information can assuredly be found online and there are some good Bible apps available for your smartphone as well. Just continue to learn and grow—no matter the cost.

There are two additional resources that I would strongly recommend; the first is essential for a firm foundation in the Christian faith and a victorious life in Christ, and the second referenced book is essential for anyone going into any form of ministry or Christian leadership.

The Foundations of Christian Living, by Bob Gordon with David Fardouly, Sovereign World, 2015.

Master Builders—Developing Life and Leadership in the Body of Christ Today, by Bob Gordon with David Fardouly, Sovereign World, 1990.

[Second only to the Bible, this book transformed my life more than any other, and it solidified God's call on my life to a teaching ministry as a layperson.]

On a final note—The depth of these Essential Core Principles for Spiritual Well-Being along with their referenced resources should be proof of how important to one's life this is. Too many Christian believers never get past their initial Salvation to become Sanctified, powerful and victorious Christians. They remain infants with a scant, superficial spirituality and are spiritually lifeless and powerless. Let that not be you.

Furthermore, please note that I have prepared this Outline for Life in the way in which *we* typically view ourselves—body first, soul second, spirit third—but note the priority in which God's Word views us in our primary Scripture—***May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*** (1 Thessalonians 5:23 NIV). God is Spirit, and He has created us in His image—first and foremost as spirit-beings. It's Your Life, Your Spirit—by God's Design. I'm praying for you.