

GT-6 Contents, 7 pgs

p.1, PRINCIPLES TO LIVE BY & things to ponder

GT is not easy. He is both training us for war here & now, and preparing us for heaven *in the sweet by & by*.

His disciples knew Jesus as The Holy One of God & as Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

Westminster shorter catechism, *The chief end of mankind is to glorify God, enjoying fellowship with him forever.*

Give God the benefit of the doubt by placing a positive construction on the events and circumstances of your life because God is good and he cares for you.

The circumstances are not the problem, it's what you make of them that counts.

Develop a mindset **beyond** merely resolving your own difficulties or taking care of your own affairs.

the Framework of Truth Has 3 Tiers

1. INTELLIGENT DESIGN of the Universe

2. PROMISE/FULFILLED THEOLOGY, the correct theological perspective and system for organizing and interpreting Scripture

the 3rd Tier of TRUTH

Tier 3 is based on a mix of knowledge & understanding modified by wisdom & experience within the Christian framework

p.2, Tier 2 instructions from the Scriptures, liveing a new life in the Spirit!

Prayer, thanksgiving, rejoicing, eagerly awaiting our adoption as sons

p.3, The Spiritual Battle

People are unique in the inner life of the mind. The spiritual battle is always in the thought-world.

Tier 3, working out your salvation

The third tier is usually described by the terms “practical” & “application” of tier 2 instruction.

Equity is working out how to thoughtfully implement what you know IN YOUR HEART to be right.

Going from hearing to doing is a tier 2 to tier 3 motion working out the HOW to best proceed, WHAT to avoid, and WHY - applying ourselves to discover, understand, and implement tier 3 knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and experience.

p.4, What's Going on in Christian Churches?

The absence of the drive that a Gospel oriented focus lends to one's life leads to stagnation. We cannot pass on nominal Christianity and expect it to result in true spirituality in the next generation.

p.5, TIER 2 Instruction: our treatment of one another

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good .

Equity is acting as your faith in Christ inspires you to, is appropriate, and in accordance with the Scriptures.

Tier 3: LEARNING TO RECOGNIZE CLUES AND FORMULATE PRINCIPLES

A principle is an enduring, foundational truth or rule that provides general guidance for behavior and decision-making. While laws are direct commands with specific actions and penalties, principles are flexible, applicable in various contexts, and reveal deeper truths.

A clue is a hint indicating what is going on unnoticed or outside of the ordinary, an alert or heads-up insight about something that needs attending to by changing one's plans.

p.6, TIER 2 TRAINING: The Imperative of a Clear Conscience

Maturity involves developing a good & clear conscience. *Herein do I exercise myself, to always have a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men.*

Tier 2: LEARNING FROM THE REPROOFS OF LIFE

CONFESSION & SIN: *When I refused to confess my sin [to make an effort to clear my conscience, it took its toll on me] , my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me.*

TIER 2 Strategy for The Age of the Persecuted Church

Our conscience serves as a moral compass. *Your faith and a clear conscience* are **ESSENTIAL WEAPONS**

Christianity Is not primarily about a disciplined effort toward moral improvement. Training children in true spirituality - the reality of supernatural living and is the goal.

p.7, TIER 2 INSTRUCTION: Forgiving One Another

WE ARE TO BE KNOWN AS SONS OF GOD: *peacemakers*

When you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your trespasses [against him: overstatement]

p.8, What does the Bible say one has to do to be saved?

Come to the Lamb of God Just as you are ... He *whose blood can cleanse each spot ... Thou he will receive, will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve because his promise [of salvation – the gospel] you believe.*

TIER 2 INSTRUCTION & TIER 3 IMPLEMENTATION

Our warfare is to triumph over evil with good & avoid being overcome by evil ourselves.

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way fulfill the law of Christ [love].

Your forgiveness of someone who sins against you is not contingent upon their repentance. holding a grudge is never appropriate, justified, or wise.

A person *caught in a trespass* may need your help to jump-start the process of reconciliation.

Go the extra mile. If you wait for someone else to make the first move, you will miss your opportunity and blessing that comes with peacemaking.

p.9, THE APOSTLES TESTIFY TO THE JEWISH HIGH COUNCIL

FORGIVENESS LOOKS AT THE WOUNDS OF THE OFFENSE AS GOD'S WAY OF DRAWING ATTENTION TO THE OFFENDER'S NEEDS AND GIVING US THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK

WITH HIM IN HIS LIFE.

In accord with **ways to love others** is by taking a support role in helping them overcome obstacles and achieve their goals.

Tier 3 steps in restoring a relationship with an offender: **The first step in restoration after one sins is to acknowledge the sin to God and respond with gratefulness and relief for his forgiveness.**

Consequences of Not Forgiving

Many personal problems cannot be overcome or effectively counseled without first obtaining a clear conscience.

Depression is one of the most significant consequences of refusing to forgive people who wrong us.

Unwillingness to say, "I'm sorry" to the one I have hurt is one reason so many of us have deadness in our lives.

p.10, DEALING WITH GRIEVANCES

If any of you has a grievance against someone . Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

BUILDING UP THE WEAK

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not just please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor, for his good, to build him up.

ENLARGING OUR FRAME OF REFERENCE

PARABLE OF THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT: the kingdom of heaven is occupied by people whom God had forgiven an unpayable debt, **and** who in turn had themselves **canceled the lesser debt** of those who were indebted to them.

The genuineness of our forgiveness is associated with our consciousness of God's forgiveness of us. *If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [against him] and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

BE RECONCILED TO ONE ANOTHER: CONSEQUENCES

A guilty conscience reveals that one is unacceptable to God & therefore his offering [prayer; worship] will be also.

p.11, BEWARE THE SNARE OF THE DEVIL

Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change their hearts , and they will learn the truth. Then they will come to their senses and escape from the devil's trap.

The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry ... if you do what is right, you will be fine? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. It desires to dominate you, but you must subdue it.

Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God [ie, he belongs to the devil], nor is he who does not love his brother.

p.12, KEEP YOUR GUARD UP

In your anger do not sin: Do not give the devil a place while you are still angry.

TIER 3 courage

At the end of the 2001 movie, **Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone**, Dumbledore awarded

Gryffindor House 10 points for Neville Longbottom's courageous stand against his friends when he tried to stop them from leaving the Gryffindor common room after hours. Dumbledore said, *It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but it also takes courage to stand up to our friends.*

Tier 3: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I gave the devil a foothold in my heart twice: once when I was young, before I became a Christian. The second occasion came after college; 2½ years in the army (during which I came to Christ); after 3 years of Bible school when I was working with a friend ... I am sure I gave the devil entry to my heart or soul because I allowed my friend's habit (which I hated) to get to me.

p.13, TIER 2 INSTRUCTION

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

*Be ready at any time to give a quiet and reverent answer to any man who wants a reason for the hope that you have within you. **Make sure that your conscience is perfectly clear** .*

BE QUICK TO LISTEN

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

TIER 3 TRAINING

A true confession cannot contain excuses, self-justification, or attribute blame to someone or something else.

When guilt sets off your conscience it is demanding immediate attention and will continue to do so as long as the issue remains unresolved or you become insensitive through neglect.

Life situations are often complicated by action and reaction involving more than one person. Once you have determined that you have hurt someone and have not sought their forgiveness, you ought to do so without delay.

An irritation, frustration producing agent, or situation that nags at the back of your mind is acting as a warning. Develop the habit of tenaciously working at surfacing and clarifying it.

p.14, Examination of an action/reaction escalation of a family conflict

Distinguish between immediate and basic offenses. It does little good to ask forgiveness for specific small offenses when they are only expressions of an underlying poor attitude or spirit. The process is reciprocal: just as you need to be forgiven, the person wronged needs to forgive.

Prioritize your mission: if you need to speak to more than one person, first approach the one you have offended the most.

There are several ways to seek forgiveness that are guaranteed NOT to gain it because they do not reflect sincerity and humility.

p.15, CAUTIONS

Be as brief and clear as possible. Stick to your confession of the basic offense. There is a major danger of talking too much while trying to ask for forgiveness. Don't try to explain because it gives the impression that you are trying to justify your offenses in order to minimize them.

Confess your transgressions as soon as possible. Do not wait for the opportunities to arise. Make your own opportunity at an appropriate time and occasion. Don't try to fit a confession into your next visit about other things. Unless asked specific questions about your faith or salvation, don't try to combine witnessing with restitution. Your act of confession and offer of restitution is your witness at this point.

Tier 2 Instruction & tier 3 insight

PARABLE OF THE LOST SON: repentance and working out the wording of a confession. Be careful not to lose the point in the details. Your words and demeanor must match your sincerity of heart. God uses circumstances to bring one to his senses. His father was longing for the son's return. The older brother is responsible for his negative reaction.

p.16, Tier 3: Preparing your Heart to Confess Wrongdoing and Ask Forgiveness

Empathy is the capacity to participate in the feelings of another. We must allow God to break our hearts with what we have said or done so we can feel ashamed and truly regret our sin.

Tier 2 Instruction

HUMILITY & SUBMISSION: humility is the main quality that pleases God. *God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore submit to God ... Lament, mourn, and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another

p.17, Tier 3: forgiveness and spirituality from God's point of view

If after being offended our initial focus is on the offender, it is difficult not to become angry or bitter. But if we focus on the offense as God's training tool ... we are much better able to look at the offense as a significant aspect to our personal character development. Our reactions to offenders and offenses automatically become our responses to God and his training.

FORGIVENESS DEALS WITH OUR EMOTIONAL REACTION TO AN OFFENDER: It recognizes that bitterness is assuming a right we do not have. Forgiving others unlocks for us the privilege of helping them.

Common Rationalizations Hindering gaining a Clear Conscience

One of the hardest deaths to die is the death to pride. Our minds are ingenious at devising reasons that will circumvent or postpone our confronting what obviously needs to be addressed.

p.18, BASIC COUNSELING INSIGHTS

Ask precise questions rather than making positive [accusative] statements that are likely to raise their defenses.

Never make major decisions, phone calls, or texts while you are upset or frustrated with someone. Until you have forgiven them, you cannot help but radiate your discontent and disappointment which only causes them to become defensive.

One who is engaged in some trespass and knows it will react to an inquiry or breach of the subject defensively and argumentatively because they are guilty and oversensitive. They stubbornly dig in their heels, resist the truth, and refuse to listen to wisdom. They are bolstering their resistance by rationalizing their sin.

A Soldier's Confession

We fought many battles in those days against men like ourselves whom we thought were our enemies. Much later God once again raised up another Joshua to deliver his people. He didn't overpower his enemies by physical means, but he won their hearts, conquered their fears, and paved the way for ultimate victory by his death and resurrection. He showed us that the real enemies of mankind were supernatural. So Jesus recruited us as his own and transferred our citizenship to his kingdom where we trained to overcome our real enemies through the fullness and power of his Spirit. Now, we have **New Rules of Engagement; a New Battle Plan; a New Mission Goal**; we train with a **New Kind of Armor** and use **different Weapons: Our Battle Cry > HIS KINGDOM IS FOREVER!**

p.19, Tier 2: FINISHING THE COURSE

People who finished their course well: Enoch; Abraham; Elijah; Elisha; Joseph (son of Jacob); Daniel; Rahab; Ruth; Esther; Mordecai; John the baptist; Stephen; John the apostle; the apostle Paul; etc.

PERSEVERANCE

When a righteous person [is tested and he] turns back from his righteousness and practices wrongdoing, he will die for it ... When a wicked person turns [repents] from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he will preserve his life.

If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ [but then] are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse-off at the end than they were at the beginning.

we have become people who share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firmly until the end.

p.20, Paul's Race

... the time for my departure [death] is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness.

p.21, ENDURANCE: Our Training & Race

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses [those who preceded us in the pre-Christian era described in **Heb. 11**], we must get rid of every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and run with endurance the race set out for us, keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus [spurred on and energized by faith in him] ... For the Lord **disciplines** [trains; educates; instructs; corrects; chastens] the one he loves and **chastises** every son he accepts ... he disciplines us for our benefit, that we may share his holiness ... it produces the peaceable fruit of **righteousness for those trained by it**.*

In the 2015 movie, **Mad Max: Fury Road** - Immortan Joe surrounded himself with devoted acolytes whose ultimate joy and desire was to die spectacularly.

In the 2013 movie, **Odd Thomas**, his girlfriend, Stormy, was shot and killed in the mall where she worked ... Thomas reminisces about her: *She always believed that life is not about how fast you run, or with what degree of grace, but that this life is a boot camp - that we must persevere through all the obstacles and hardships to earn our way into the next life*. He mused, **sometimes it seems to me training is unnecessarily painful!**

MAY YOU FINISH WELL