

*A practical guidebook to help us take God at His word  
and live lives of freedom and power. —Jennie Allen*

Nicole Unice



The  
Struggle  
is  
Real.

Getting better at life,  
stronger in faith,  
and free from the stuff  
keeping you stuck

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
204 ODESSA AVENUE  
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*Fall Bible Study*

**FREEDOM IN THE STRUGGLE**

**PASTOR HENRY L. PERKINS,  
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**November 14, 2018**

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**REVIEW**

**FREEDOM IN OUR STRUGGLE CREATES**

- Fractures with our relationship with God
- Fractures with our relationship with self
- Fractures with our relationship with others
- Fractures with our relationship with the world

**FREEDOM REQUIRES THE INTENTIONAL  
WORK OF COMMUNION &  
CONVERSATION WITH GOD  
(John Chapter 10)**

|        |              |   |
|--------|--------------|---|
| Vs. 9  | Protection   | I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.           |
| Vs. 10 | Provision    | The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. |
| Vs. 11 | Sacrifice    | “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.                                      |
| Vs. 14 | Communion    | “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—  |
| Vs. 27 | Conversation | My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.   |

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**TODAY'S LESSON**

**Lesson Subject:**

Foundation for the Struggle

**Objective:**

To relate how strong foundations produce strong integrity.

**Goal:**

To identify the cracks in our foundation, inviting God to make the repairs according to His renovation work.

**FOUNDATION FOR THE STRUGGLE**

**DEFINITIONS**

**Foundation:**

Usually a stone or concrete structure that supports a building from underneath; something (such as an idea, a principle, or a fact) that provides support for something.

**Renovation:**

To restore to good condition; make new or as if new again; repair.

When It comes to understanding ourselves, our past impacts – but doesn't have to direct --- our future.

What is God's purpose for you?

Dysfunction is contagious. What cracks have you identified that need renovation as you listen to God?

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RENOVATION STARTS WITH  
**HEARING FROM GOD** THAT HIS PURPOSE  
FOR YOU MIGHT BE MANIFESTED

**WHY?** He knows you, He loves you, He has plans for you  
(*Ephesians 2:10; Jeremiah 29:11-13*)

**HOW?** General revelation, specific revelation. THE HOLY SPIRIT. (*Habakkuk 2:14; 2 Timothy 3:16; Acts 9*)

**WHAT?** To be reminded of our responsibility to praise him, to direct us into new stories, to remind us of His love for us. (*Psalms 19:1-2; Galatians 5:13*)

**WHEN?** Often! In various ways through conversation, intentional and practical communication. (*Ephesians 6:18; Thess. 5:17; Psalm 119:107*)

**PROCEDURE FOR COMMUNICATING WITH GOD**

1. **Read** a selected scripture passage slowly.
2. **Read** it again, listening for a word, phrase, or image that stands out to you, and looking for where you might find yourself in the passage. What character, metaphor, or object do you relate to?
3. **Reflect** after reading the passage for a third time. Consider why the words or images from step 2 stood out to you.
4. **Pray**, asking God, *What does this mean, and how does it connect to my life today?*
5. **Contemplate** by staying in that thought for a few moments. Wait on God, or simply rest in His presence. You may not receive immediate answers.

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**FREEDOM REQUIRES**  
Holistic Living (Matthew 22:37-39)  
How?

What is required of us? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FREEDOM REQUIRES**  
Self-Regulation (Psalm 139:23)  
How?

Search \_\_\_\_\_  
Source \_\_\_\_\_  
Sincerity \_\_\_\_\_

Periodic Examination (Philippians 3:16) – How?

**What are the mandates?** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**FREEDOM PROVIDES**

The Power of Self-Examination (Psalm 139)  
(Telling Your Story) How?

Discovery\_\_\_\_\_

Demeanor\_\_\_\_\_

Discipline\_\_\_\_\_

**HOMEWORK**

**(Unfolding Your Story)**

**TESTING ME – WHAT DID YOU DISCOVER?**

1. Were you a rule keeper, rule bender, or rule breaker? Was your behavior similar or different depending on the environment (school, home, social events/church)?
2. How did you handle conflict in your family?
3. How were emotions (positive and negative) treated in your family?
4. What kind of student were you? What would a teacher have said about you?
5. What is your place in your family's birth order? Do you think you have the stereotypical tendencies associated with the oldest (leader), middle (peacekeeper), or youngest child (free spirit)?
6. As a child, did you prefer to be with others or to be alone? Were you given the freedom to be yourself?

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7. As a child, how did you express creativity (building, acting, singing, role-playing, exploring, etc.)? Was that celebrated or frowned upon?
8. How do you feel similar to your ten-year old self? How do you feel different?
9. If you could go back to your teenage self, what would you want to tell him or her?

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**Matthew 22:37-39 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’

<sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment.

<sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

**Ephesians 3:16 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>16</sup> I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

**Ephesians 2:10 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>10</sup> For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

**Jeremiah 29:11-13 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>11</sup> For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

<sup>12</sup> Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

<sup>13</sup> You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

**Habakkuk 2:14 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>14</sup> For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

**2 Timothy 3:16 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,



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**Acts 9 New International Version (NIV)**

**Saul's Conversion**

**9** Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest

<sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.

<sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

<sup>5</sup> "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.

<sup>6</sup> "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

<sup>7</sup> The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.

<sup>8</sup> Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus.

<sup>9</sup> For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

<sup>10</sup> In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying.

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<sup>12</sup> In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.”

<sup>13</sup> “Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem.

<sup>14</sup> And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel.

<sup>16</sup> I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

<sup>17</sup> Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

<sup>18</sup> Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized,

<sup>19</sup> and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

**Saul in Damascus and Jerusalem**

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus.

<sup>20</sup> At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.

<sup>21</sup> All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?”

<sup>22</sup> Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.

<sup>23</sup> After many days had gone by, there was a conspiracy among the Jews to kill him,

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<sup>24</sup> but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him.

<sup>25</sup> But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.

<sup>26</sup> When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple.

<sup>27</sup> But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus.

<sup>28</sup> So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.

<sup>29</sup> He talked and debated with the Hellenistic Jews,<sup>[a]</sup> but they tried to kill him.

<sup>30</sup> When the believers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

<sup>31</sup> Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

**Aeneas and Dorcas**

<sup>32</sup> As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the Lord's people who lived in Lydda.

<sup>33</sup> There he found a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years.

<sup>34</sup> "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up.

<sup>35</sup> All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

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<sup>36</sup> In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor.

<sup>37</sup> About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room.

<sup>38</sup> Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"

<sup>39</sup> Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

<sup>40</sup> Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up.

<sup>41</sup> He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive.

<sup>42</sup> This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord.

<sup>43</sup> Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

Psalm 19:1-2 New International Version (NIV)

**Psalm 19**

***For the director of music. A psalm of David.***

<sup>1</sup> The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

<sup>2</sup> Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.

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**Galatians 5:13 New International Version (NIV)**

**Life by the Spirit**

<sup>13</sup> You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh<sup>[a]</sup>; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

**Ephesians 6:18 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>18</sup> 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 Lord's people.

**1 Thessalonians 5:17 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>17</sup> pray continually,

**Psalms 119:107 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>107</sup> I have suffered much; preserve my life, LORD, according to your word.

**Psalms 139:23 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>23</sup> Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.

**Psalms 139 New International Version (NIV)**

***For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.***

<sup>1</sup> You have searched me, LORD, and you know me.

<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

<sup>3</sup> You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup> Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.

<sup>5</sup> You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

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- <sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?
- <sup>8</sup> If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
- <sup>9</sup> If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,
- <sup>10</sup> even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.
- <sup>11</sup> If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,”
- <sup>12</sup> even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.
- <sup>13</sup> For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.
- <sup>14</sup> I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.
- <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
- <sup>16</sup> Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.
- <sup>17</sup> How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them!
- <sup>18</sup> Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand—when I awake, I am still with you.
- <sup>19</sup> If only you, God, would slay the wicked! Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!
- <sup>20</sup> They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name.
- <sup>21</sup> Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?
- <sup>22</sup> I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies.
- <sup>23</sup> Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.
- <sup>24</sup> See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.