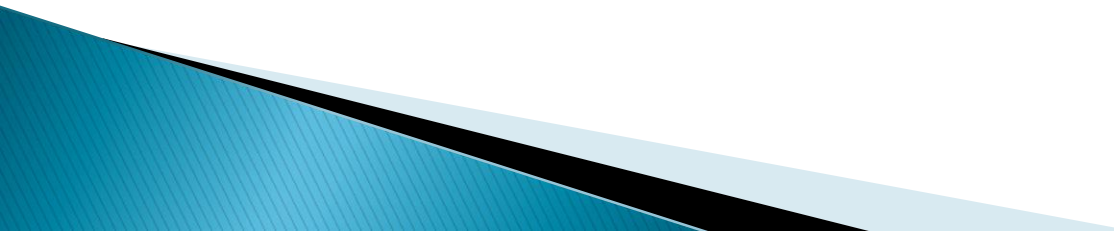


# Counterfeit Kingdoms

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Practical Living Ministry

# Who Wants a “Knock Off”

- ▶ An unlicensed copy of something, (i.e. fashion clothing) intended to be sold at a lower price than the original
  - ▶ Cheaper, but not the Real Thing
  - ▶ Lesser Quality
  - ▶ Usually easy to spot as fake
- 

# Counterfeit Kingdom

- ▶ Many Churches today are not preaching the true kingdom message but profiting from God's people
- ▶ They present a "counterfeit" message full of compromise, half-truths, and doctrine that does not reflect the character of God
- ▶ Instead of "Kingdom Men," we are seeing more of "Kingdom Jesters" preaching a "Groovy Grace," and entertaining the people instead of upholding godly truths



# Scriptures

- ▶ *And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." (1 Samuel 8:1–3 KJV*
- ▶ *For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: <sup>1:11</sup> Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." (Titus 1:10–11 KJV)*

# What is a Counterfeit?

- ▶ Something made in imitation so as to be passed off fraudulently or deceptively as genuine; forged; pretended; unreal

Tell Me More!



# Why Would You Want a Counterfeit?

- ▶ **“I Don’t Have to be Real in an Unreal World”**
  - Many of us exist in a “Social Media” World
- ▶ **If I reduce the sovereignty of the King then I can bring him down to my level (Romans 1:21–23)**
  - The Greeks and the Romans ascribed to their gods their own weakness instead of having a character to draw from
  - Today, we are trying to reduce God to a level to justify our selfish way of living
- ▶ God’s Kingdom exists on His character and sovereignty alone

# The Real Kingdom

The Kingdom of God is a Reality, Not a Reality Show

The kingdom exists at the Word of the King

It's in us, near us, having purpose, providing blessings and wholeness to its residents

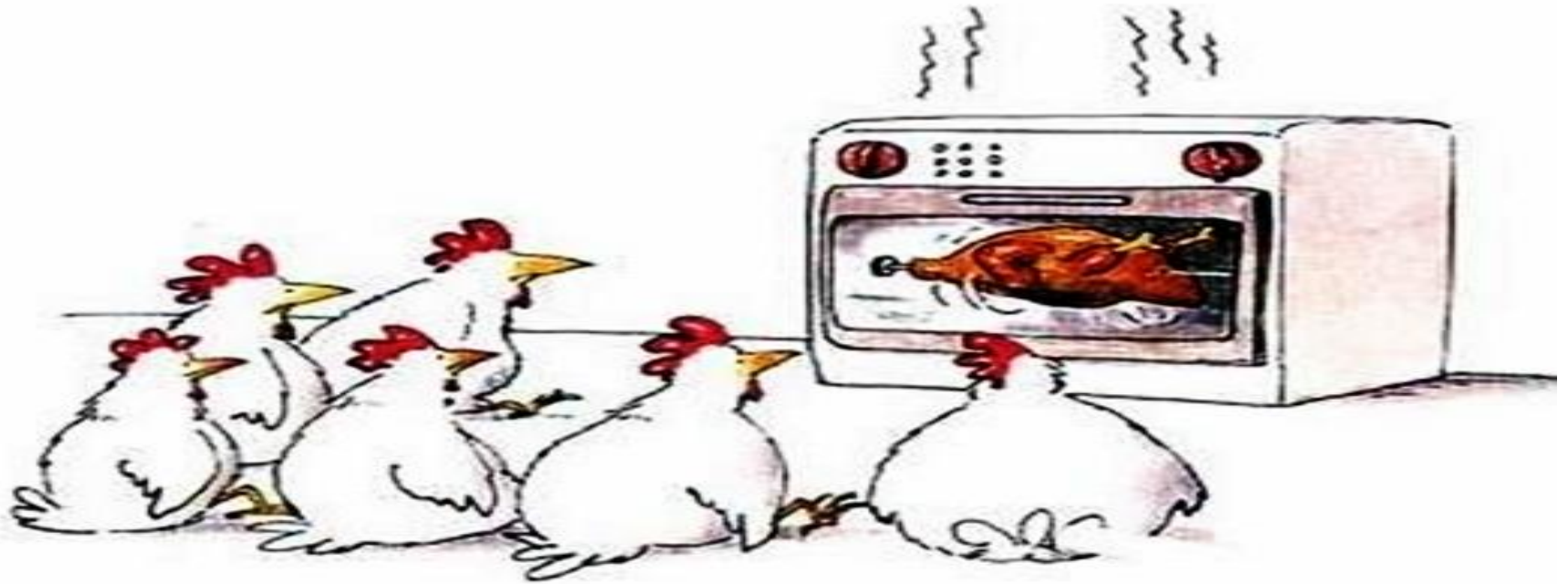
People fight to sustain it and to ensure that it prevails over other kingdoms

**Has it come unto you? Is it real to you today?**



# Really?


It's Amazing What Some People Will Watch



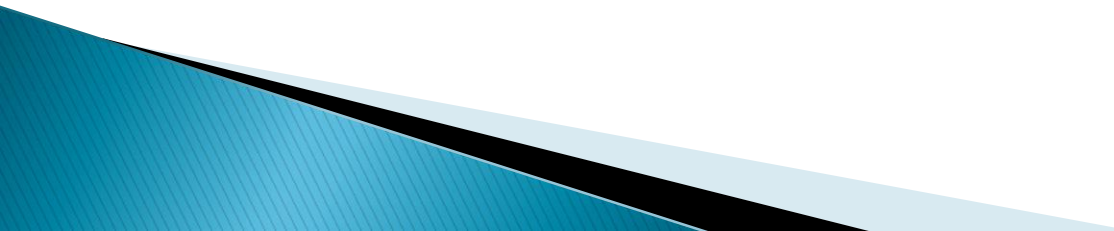
**REALITY-TV**



# Denying the King

- ▶ Jesus commanded His apostles to teach others exactly what He had taught—“**Matthew 28:20**”
  - ▶ He condemned the replacing (**Mark 7:8–9**) of God's commandments with traditions and human reason
  - ▶ Even the Apostles were challenged as we are today with those who “subvert” the teachings of the kingdom (**Titus 1:10,11**)
- 

# False Heralds

- ▶ "For many will **come in My name**, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many (Matthew 24:5)
  - ▶ They say Peace when there is no peace (Jeremiah 8:11)
  - ▶ They speak of the kingdom mindset in a carnal way
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# Dilemma Today

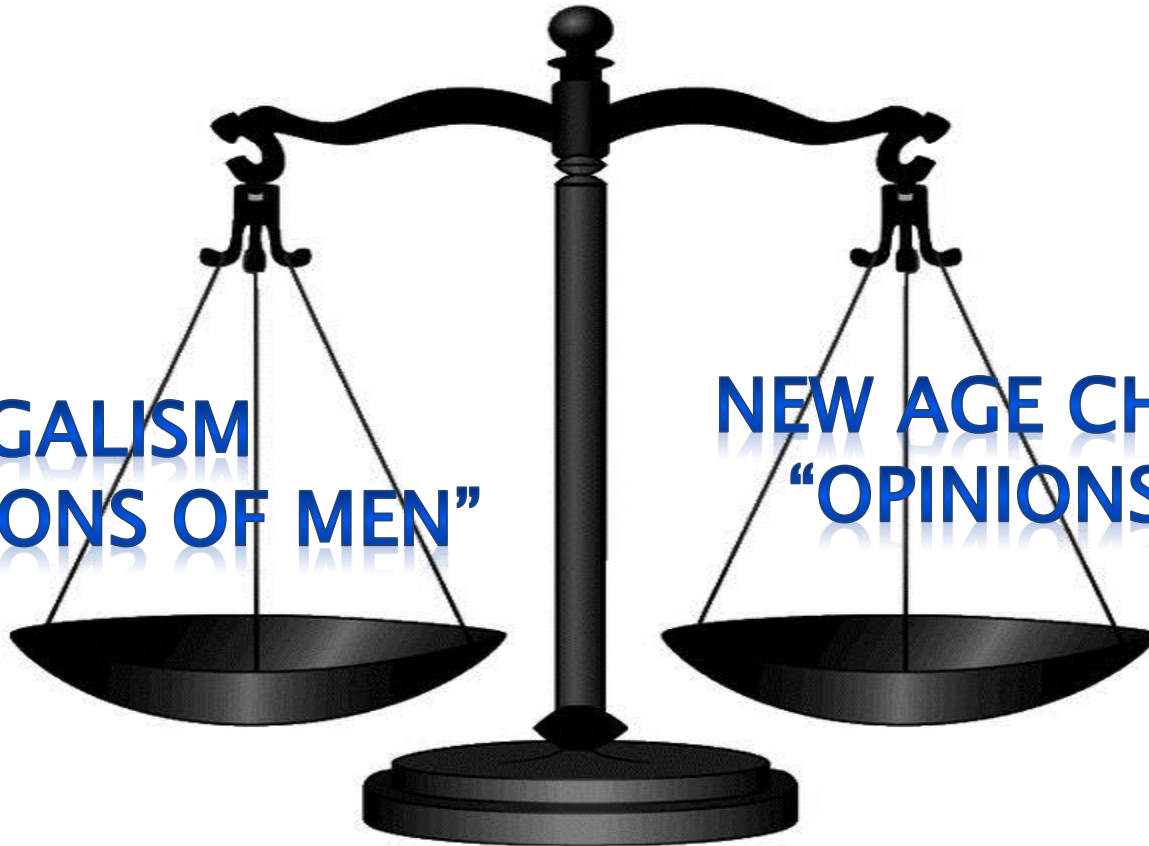
**Doctrine**

**LEGALISM**

**“TRADITIONS OF MEN”**

**NEW AGE CHRISTIANITY**

**“OPINIONS OF MEN”**

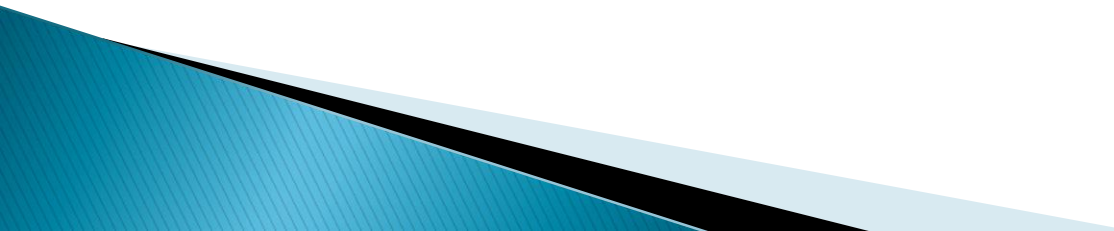


**Truth**

# A Kingdom With No Law

- ▶ Jesus warned His apostles this would happen:  
"Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold"  
(Matthew 24:11–12)
- ▶ Jesus explained that lawlessness, the key element in the message of the false teachers, would make their ideas appealing and popular.

*Disregard for God's law would finally become the foundation of a popular and successful counterfeit Christianity.*



# Making the Obvious Seem Obscure


*2 Peter 3:17 – You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness....*

- ▶ “Jesus is my Lord, but I don’t have to Obey Him”
- ▶ “It’s Time to Look at Jesus a whole new way!”
- ▶ If your vision is obscured, it is hard to navigate or move forward

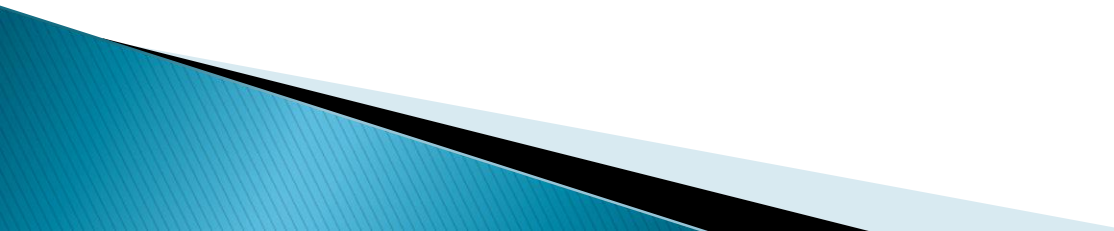
# Counterfeits Begin When

- ▶ Those without competent knowledge try to become expounders of the Word of God
- ▶ Having no established principles – No Authoritative Interpretation of the Bible
- ▶ They are under the control of feeling and emotion
  - liable to embrace one opinion to-day, and another directly opposite tomorrow

# Simon the Sorcerer: Example

- ▶ Acts 8:9–23
  - ▶ Tried to purchased the Holy Thing of God
  - ▶ Faked conversion and managed to receive the baptism to make himself seem “Christian”
  - ▶ Later historical sources indicate that he blended various elements of paganism and mysticism into a counterfeit Christian philosophy.
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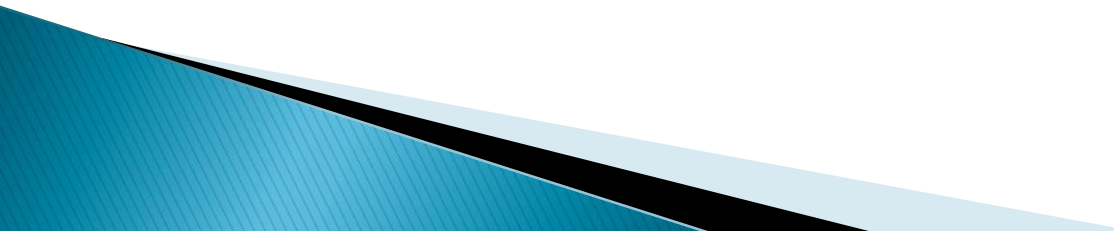
# Distortion of God's Grace

- ▶ To them, grace excuses sin—the breaking of God's law—by allowing them to disregard scriptural teachings they do not like
  - ▶ Advocating the idea that Christians have been *liberated* from the law and no longer need to obey it. (1 John 3:4)
  - ▶ These teachers misrepresented God's law as an unnecessary burden. God's Word is not burdensome (1<sup>st</sup> John 5:3)
- 



# Is This the Way?

***Judges 18:5: And they said to him, Ask counsel, we pray you, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous.***

- ▶ There are many today who want the “success” of God, but not the will of God
  - ▶ Danites on a sinful mission met with a sinful Levite, and wanted to know from a righteous God if their mission would be successful.
  - ▶ Many seek God’s blessings in their lives, but are dishonest on the job, in their giving, in their relationships
  - ▶ The appearance of prosperity doesn’t necessary mean the favor of God
- 

# In the Past – Guard the Flock

It used to be like this Acts 28:20



# What We are Experiencing Today

## Fleece the Flock

Don't Worry, Be Happy

Relax! Just be the best YOU that You Can

God is Love and He knows your heart

Have a doughnut



Are you Comfortable

**The Sheep is no longer threatened because he is now a Consumer**

# You Don't Have to Go to Judah

- ▶ 2 Chronicles 13:8 – "So now you intend to resist the kingdom of the LORD through the sons of David, being a great multitude and having with you the golden calves which Jeroboam made for gods for you."
- ▶ 2 Kings 10:29 – However, as for the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin, from these Jehu did not depart, even the golden calves that were at Bethel and that were at Dan.



# The Story of Jeroboam

- ▶ Jeroboam – name means, “the people contend”
  - Jeroboam consulted the convenience of his subjects rather than the will of God
  - Most megachurches are like the Church of Laodemia, meaning ruled by the people
- ▶ First king of the Northern Israel Tribes when they were divided
- ▶ He was in constant "war with the house of Judah"
- ▶ Jeroboam decided that he would prevent the Israelites from going to Judah to worship as God directed
- ▶ He built temples and erected two golden calves in Bethel and Dan
- ▶ Then he encouraged the people not to go to Judah but to avail themselves of his temples

# Convenience

- ▶ The Way of Convenience has destroyed many of a Kingdom and many churches
- ▶ Jesus never offered comfort or convenience when it came to following Him. (Luke 9:57–62)
- ▶ Jeroboam's religion was of selfish expediency and not of sacrifice. He wanted to accommodate the people

**Isn't this is what we are seeing today?**



# Jeroboam

## ▶ 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 12:25–33

### ▶ Jeroboam set up a counterfeit religion

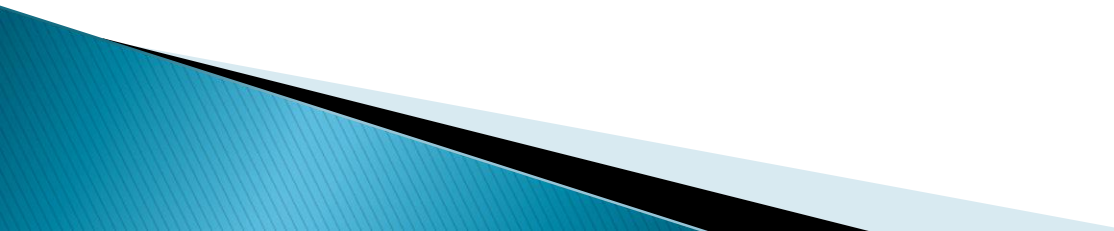
- It was a religion to serve the state and not God
- It was a religion set up out of fear
- He catered to the people's desire for convenience
- He used an old familiar symbol (the golden calves) just as Aaron set up in the wilderness
- Made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi:
  - Jeroboam rejected the commandments of God regarding the priesthood of Israel, and established a priesthood of his own liking.
  - There was no regard for purity or inward holiness.

# Jeroboam

- ▶ It was devised in his own heart
  - Jeroboam is an example of those who create their own religion according to their own taste
- ▶ Israel was struck twice – by the ungodly religion of Jeroboam and by the departure of the godly and faithful



# Jeroboam's Kingdom

- ▶ Strategically Placed – Full of Energy
  - ▶ Provided Symbols of a Religion
  - ▶ Convenience
  - ▶ Created several worship centers
  - ▶ False Priests not from the tribe of Levi – But from the lowest of people (unqualified to serve)
  - ▶ Embraced by the World
- 

# True Kingdom

*Romans 14:17 – [After all] the kingdom of God is not a matter of [getting the] food and drink [one likes], but instead it is righteousness (that state which makes a person acceptable to God) and [heart] peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*



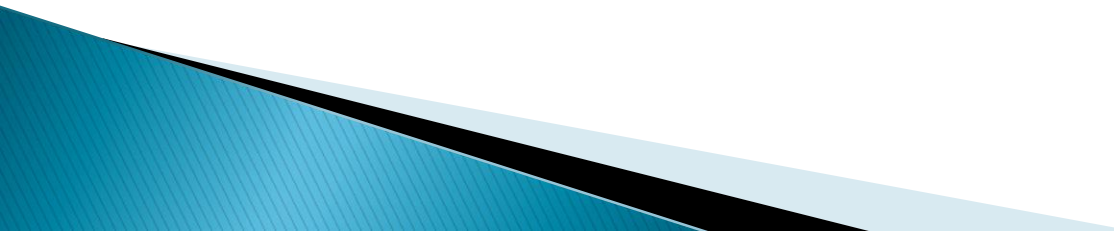
# Kingdom Mindset

“Therefore if you have been *raised up with Christ*, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. *Set your mind on the things above*, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and *your life is hidden with Christ in God*. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”

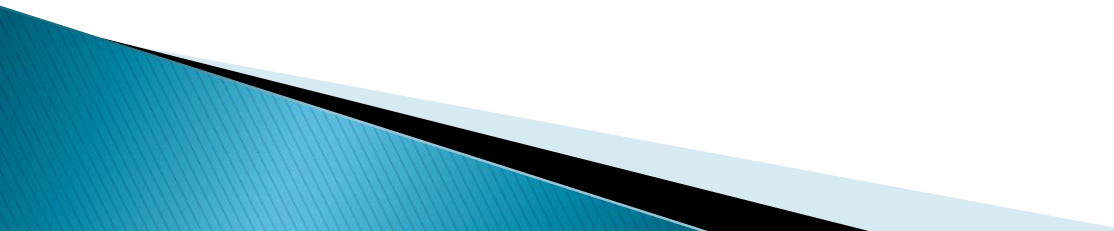
Colossians 3:1–4



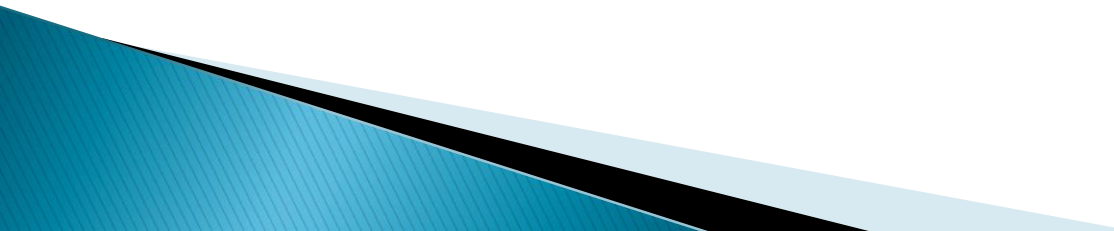
# Righteousness

- ▶ This is a genuine counterpart of heaven; righteousness without sin
  - ▶ More than just having “Right Standing
  - ▶ This word here means “virtue, integrity,” a faithful discharge of all the duties which we owe to God or to our fellow-men.
  - ▶ Righteousness by Doing (1<sup>st</sup> John 3:7)
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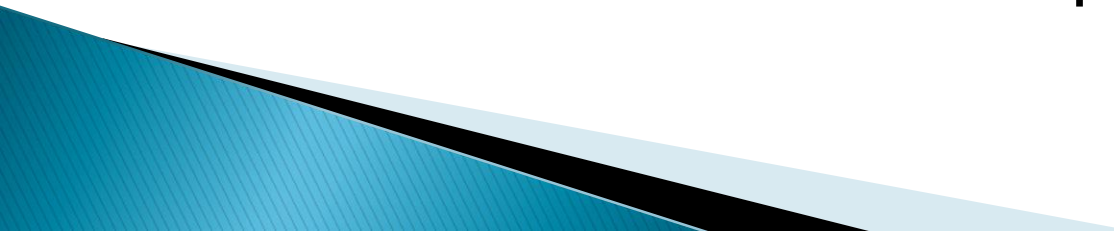
# Righteousness

- ▶ We are blessed to have right standing with the King. What does this mean?
  - ▶ **Access** – Prayer, Presenting Needs
  - ▶ **Approval** – The Bible says we are accepted in the Beloved
  - ▶ **Availability** – the King is Available to us to hear our requests and meet our needs
- 

# PEACE

- ▶ Peace without inward disturbance
  - ▶ Striving to Keep Peace among brethren
  - ▶ Peace – Reflects not the absence of stress, but the mindset in the midst of trials to endure (*“Peace in the midst of the storm”*)
- 

# Joy

- ▶ In a word, it is happiness brought into the soul by the Holy Spirit, and maintained there by the same influence
  - ▶ Joy without any kind of mental agony or distressing fear
  - ▶ joy represents sustained happiness through the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives
  - ▶ Not based on circumstances or events but because of our relationship
- 

# Pray

- ▶ Accept God's Best For Your Life
  - ▶ If your religion is so easy to obtain, it's so easy to lose
  - ▶ A true relationship with Jesus is the Real Thing
- 