

Preparation for Covenant

This section is meant to be a helpful tool to assist you in the process of cleaning out years of residue from Self's rule over the inner command center within your soul. Please do not begin this process now unless you have an extended period of time in which to work through it. This is a process that demands a long period of time. You shouldn't feel rushed, but should slowly and thoughtfully walk your way through these questions. Make sure you have a pen and paper ready on which to write what the Spirit of God stirs within your heart and mind.

This will certainly not be an exhaustive process. There may very possibly be other things not mentioned in the lists below that have muddled the walls of your inward command center. As you journey through the following questions, allow the Spirit of God to bring things to your mind, things that may not be included on this list. Our God is faithful not to leave any stone unturned. He jealously longs for your soul to be purified and readied for a covenant life with Him.

Let me forewarn you that this process is not easy. When a cyst is removed from the body, a knife is involved. As the knife of the Spirit of Christ cuts, the pain at times will be extreme, but the freedom that follows is ten million times worth the momentary struggle within your heart and mind. Your King desires to take your trembling hand and walk you through this process of purification. Invite the Holy Spirit to penetrate into the deepest caverns of your heart and show you what must be done to gain unhindered intimacy with your Lord.

Getting the Most out of this Process

Whenever you have lived amidst trash for so long, you accustom yourself to its presence and no longer even realize that it is there. I guess it's similar to hanging out in a smelly barn. If you are in the barn long enough you no longer realize how bad it stinks. If this is the first time you have ever walked through a cleaning process like this, it can be quite shocking to realize how much junk you have allowed to pile up inside your life. Lean heavily upon the strong arm of your King throughout this process, and remember His amazing love for you. He loves you so much that He can't allow you to remain buried beneath the trash that Self's rule has piled up within your soul.

With each of these questions you will need to answer *yes* or *no*. There is no use hiding from the truth and acting as if the question doesn't apply to you if it really does. God already knows every thought, action, and attitude you have ever had throughout your entire existence. Trying to justify or reason the garbage away doesn't remove it. If trash is there, *it is there*. Only by answering honestly can you remove the garbage from your inner command center and discover the freedom that Christ purchased for you on the Cross.

If you answer yes, you will be acknowledging that you have violated your relationship with Christ in that specific area. It is important then, that you walk through the following five-steps of dealing with that specific sin before God.

Freedom in Five Glorious Steps

- 1) **Humbly tell God about the specific sin** that comes to your mind. (Yes, He already knows, but speaking it to God brings it to the surface so that He is able to remove it from your sanctuary. Acknowledging your specific sin to God is like saying, “God, I finally get it! I agree with You! This *was* wrong!”)
- 2) **Ask forgiveness from God.** It’s only when we first acknowledge the sin and then ask Him to wash us clean, based on the merits of His shed blood, that the cleaning really can take place. It is at the moment that we ask and receive His forgiveness that we really are washed clean.
- 3) **Turn and walk a new and different way.** The Bible calls it repentance. It simply means deciding to no longer do that sin again. This is not just a feeling of remorse for our sin, it’s a practical change of our life so that we don’t allow that sin to find its way back into our soul again.
- 4) **Ask God to show you if anything else needs to be done about your specific sin.** If your wrongdoing affected someone else, it is possible that God may want you to go to them and make things right. If you stole, you may need to repay with interest. If you lied, you may need to set the record straight by telling the truth and attempting to undo the effects of your lie as much as possible. If you were playing with the occult, then you maybe need to burn the items associated with your activities. *IMPORTANT: There are a few exceptions to this principle. If your specific sin involved something that you harbored in your mind like lust, jealousy, or anger – then it typically is NOT an appropriate thing to confess those particular sins to the person who was the target of your wrong thoughts.* Remember though, that there isn’t a formula for making things that are wrong right. That is why we must go to God and say, “God I’m willing to do whatever I need to do to make this right – so please show me what I need to do.” It’s a hard prayer to pray, but if we willingly allow God to direct us, it is amazing how radically our life can be changed in even a short period of time. Sometimes God may want you to do something large to make right what you wronged, but other times His requests may be as simple as beginning to show the love of Christ to someone in a practical way.
- 5) **Obey what God leads you to do.** When you say to God that you are willing to do whatever it takes to make things right, then when He communicates that You need to do something – *do it!*

NOTE: If you sense that God wants you to deal with an individual who was impacted by your sin and/or that He desires you to confess your sin to a Christian teammate, then read the following two “Freedom Tools” below, for some assistance in the process.

Freedom Tool #1

Dealing with those impacted by your sin

If God asks you to personally interact with the individual you wronged, there are three things that are important to remember. First, **express sincere regret over your wrongdoing when you acknowledge it to them.** Second, **sincerely and humbly apologize and ask their forgiveness for what you did** (and don’t make your request for forgiveness conditional upon them forgiving you – it is possible that they may not.) Third, **do whatever it takes to make right what you have done wrong.** It is not always possible to right what you have wronged, but often times there are things you can do (whether small or large) to express the love of Christ in a situation or a relationship where you originally displayed the absence of Christ, such as the “Penny Wheelchair” story from chapter nine.

Freedom Tool #2

Dealing with a Christian Teammate

If God leads you to confess your sin(s) to a Christian teammate, there are two things that are important to remember. First, **if other people participated in your wrongdoing, then be careful not to dishonor them or injure them in your personal confession of sin.** You are responsible for your behavior and the other participants are responsible for theirs. Second, **be willing to appear weak in your teammate’s eyes.** Often your example of honesty and weakness can be a heavenly invitation for them to follow so that they too are able to gain ground in their spiritual life. It can be

extremely difficult to admit to those we want to admire us that we have sin in our life, but the process of overcoming and being freed from the sin, often times demands that we do. *NOTE: If you don't yet have a person, or a small group, in your life to whom you are accountable, I would encourage you to begin asking God to provide you with a Christian teammate or a Christian team whom you can come to with your struggles and victories. To be spiritually successful we need teammates.*

Removing the Smelly Garbage

Let's get started. Remember to take this process slowly. Even if it takes you a week to work through this - it is better to have "quality" in this experience than "quickness."

Trash lingering within our soul takes on four different appearances. They are as follows:

- 1) Sinful acts you committed**
- 2) Christ-like acts you did not commit**
- 3) Sinful thoughts/attitudes you had**
- 4) Christ-like thoughts/attitudes you did not have**

Let's work through each of these separately:

1) Sinful acts you committed:

For each of these questions it is important that you write down every incident that comes to your mind so that you can deal with each incident individually. Since each sin was committed individually, each sin must also be dealt with individually. Throughout the process, allow the Holy Spirit to bring back to your mind even things that happened when you were a child. NOTE: For each sin the Holy Spirit brings to your attention, be sure to walk through the "Freedom in Five Glorious Steps" process detailed above.

Question #1

Have you ever deliberately passed around lies about someone in order to injure them?

Question #2

Have you ever exposed someone's faults for the pure enjoyment of seeing them look bad or odd in someone else's eyes?

Question #3

Have you ever made someone feel less important because of how they dressed, how they spoke, how little money they had, the color of their skin, or because you found out that they were unable to help you?

Question #4

Have you ever made someone feel more important simply because of how they dressed, how they spoke, how much money they had, the color of their skin, or because of their ability to help you?

Question #5

Have you ever hurt someone by the way you spoke to them or by the way you treated them? Have you ever, whether verbally or physically, harmed someone out of anger or frustration?

Question #6

Have you ever taken revenge on someone for something they did to you? Have you ever "evened the score" by harming someone's life or reputation in some way?

Question #7

Have you ever fought with someone – whether it be verbally or physically, with the intent to hurt them?

Question #8

Have you ever participated in the taking of life – whether through pressuring someone to have an abortion, consenting to an abortion, counseling someone towards suicide, or through the act of deliberately (or accidentally) committing murder?

Question #9

Have you ever cheated on a test? Have you ever passed on false information about yourself to look better in someone's eyes?

Question #10

Have you ever counted something incorrectly, or measured something inaccurately for the purpose of personal gain?

Question #11

Have you ever participated in sexual banter, flirtation, or dirty talk? Have you ever attempted to sexually arouse another person with your speech or physical behavior outside the confines of marriage?

Question #12

Outside of marriage, have you ever willfully participated in any mode of sexual touch with another person? Have you ever willfully allowed someone to sexually arouse you? Have you ever touched or observed someone else for the purpose of your own sexual arousal? Have you ever touched or observed someone else for the purpose of sexually arousing them?

Question #13

Outside of marriage, have you ever willfully been aroused – by yourself or another person – to the point of sexual climax? Have you ever aroused another person to the point of sexual climax outside of marriage?

Question #14

Have you ever willingly looked at pornography of any kind – whether in print, on the internet, or on television or film? Have you ever participated in creating pornography, or in making pornography available to others?

Question #15

Have you ever looked at someone else lustfully? Have you ever created sexual fantasies in your mind?

Question #16

Have you ever used force, coercion or violence toward someone else for the purpose of your own sexual gratification?

Question #17

Have you ever willfully engaged sexually with anyone or anything outside of the opposite sex? Have you ever willfully engaged sexually with a member of your same sex?

Question #18

Outside of marriage, have you ever allowed sensuous portions of your body to be seen by a woman? Have you ever deliberately dressed in a manner that you knew would cause a woman to be sexually aroused? Have you allowed your body to be viewed in a manner that would make your future wife jealous?

Question #19

Have you ever broken a trust? Have you ever (knowingly or unknowingly) shared something that you promised never to reveal? Have you ever violated a person's trust by doing something that you were asked (or you promised) not to?

Question #20

Have you ever deliberately said, written, or implied something that was not true, for your own selfish gain or for the selfish gain of someone else? Have you ever exaggerated the truth or diminished the truth for your own selfish gain or for the selfish gain of someone else?

Question #21

Have you ever lied to your parents or to anyone else, for the purpose of covering up your sinful behavior or for the purpose of protecting your image?

Question #22

Have you ever dishonored your parents? Have you ever shared something about your parents with the intent to lower their reputation in someone else's eyes? Have you ever diminished their good character by behaving poorly in public?

Question #23

Have you ever dishonored an authority figure (teacher, police officer, coach, pastor/youth pastor, political official, etc.)? Have you ever shared something about an authority figure with the intent to lower their reputation in someone else's eyes? Have you ever diminished their good character by behaving poorly in public while you were representing them?

Question #24

Have you ever been disobedient to your parents? Has there ever been a time when your parents asked you to do something and you either did not obey or you were slow to obey?

Question #25

Have you ever been disobedient to God? Has there ever been a time when God was asking you to do something and you either did not obey or you were slow to obey?

Question #26

Have you ever stolen? Have you ever taken something from someone else's possession (whether large or small) that you did not buy, were not given, or had not temporarily borrowed with the owner's permission?

Question #27

Have you ever willfully consumed a substance, be it alcohol or a drug, making yourself subservient to its mind-controlling powers for the purpose of social acceptance or personal pleasure?

Question #28

Have you ever bragged about yourself? Have you ever made mention of your personal accomplishments or your abilities to others for the purpose of looking better in their eyes?

Question #29

Have you ever participated in any evil practices or rituals that honored any other power other than Jesus Christ, the God of the Bible? Have you ever allowed another power, outside that of the Holy Spirit, to work through you, speak to you, direct you, or inform you in any way?

Question #30

Have you ever misused God's name? Have you ever behaved in public in any way that would disgrace the name of Jesus Christ? Have you ever spoken in such a manner that the person of Jesus Christ was lessened in other's eyes?

2) Christ-like acts you did not commit:

For some of these questions it is not possible to write down each individual incident. For the ones you answer "yes" to but are unable to remember individual incidents, follow steps 1,2, and 3 from the "Freedom in Five Glorious Steps" process detailed earlier. When you are able to remember individual incidents, be sure to write each of the individual incidents down and walk through each of the "Five Steps."

Question #31

Have you not allowed Christ (God's Word) to be the determining factor in how you make decisions and live your life, and have you trusted in your own reasoning abilities?

Question #32

Have you ever been ungrateful? Has there ever been anything that you have been given, by either another person or by God, throughout your lifetime for which you did not properly show or express gratitude?

Question #33

Have you ever been stingy with your possessions? Have you ever been exposed to a person's need, had the resources to help them, but chose not to?

Question #34

Have you ever been unhelpful? Have you ever been exposed to someone in need of assistance, been in a position to help them, but chose not to?

Question #35

Have you ever given in to unbelief? Have you ever been in a situation where you allowed your mind to be controlled by fear, anxiety, and foreboding, rather than turning to God, asking for His assistance, and trusting that He is faithful to supply everything we need?

Question #36

Have you ever given in to impatience? Have you ever "given-up" on something you were asked to do, simply because the process was either too difficult or not going fast enough? Have you ever complained about a wait being too long?

Question #37

Have you ever been unkind? Have you ever been in a situation where you noticed someone that was in need of kindness, but for the sake of your own comfort or reputation, you ignored them?

Question #38

Have you ever had the opportunity to share the Truth of Jesus Christ, but for the sake of your own comfort or reputation, you ignored it?

Question #39

Have you failed to honor your future wife in the way you have chosen to live your life? If your future spouse was able to watch your life, know your every thought, and see how you protect your heart and/or

body, would she feel jealous, hurt, and unloved by your actions? If she were able to see you interact with other girls, would she feel like you were “giving away” something that was meant to be only hers?

Question #40

Have you been unwilling to give your every possession over to Jesus, so that no longer are you an owner, but now you are a steward of them? Have you been unwilling to allow Him to reconstruct your daily schedule to make time with Him the most important thing on the agenda? Have you been unwilling to give Him complete access to your bank account? Have you been unwilling to fully entrust Him with Your future? Have you been unwilling to give Him all your rights (i.e. - the right to be married, the right to be comfortable and happy, and the right to do things your way)?

3) Sinful attitudes/thoughts you did have:

Similar to the last section, for some of these questions it is not possible to write down each individual incident. For the ones you answer “yes” to but are unable to remember individual incidents, follow steps 1,2, and 3 from the “Freedom in Five Glorious Steps” process detailed earlier. When you are able to remember individual incidents, be sure to write each of the individual incidents down and walk through each of the “Five Steps.”

Question #41

Have you ever had jealous thoughts? Have you ever wanted something all for yourself that really wasn’t yours, and were jealous when someone else enjoyed it?

Question #42

Have you ever wanted to switch lives with someone else? Have you ever been mentally consumed by the longing to have something of material value that belongs to someone else?

Question #43

Have you ever complained? Have you ever given in to self-pity?

Question #44

Have you ever been fearful of the future? Have you ever convinced yourself that bad things will take place in the next weeks, months, years of your life?

Question #45

Have you been unforgiving? Do you have anyone in your life that you have either never forgiven or refused to forgive?

Question #46

Have you allowed resentment and bitterness into your heart and mind?

Question #47

Have you ever allowed your mind to dwell on thoughts that were untrue, perverted, impure, proud, or selfish? Have you allowed your mind to be unguarded, where your thoughts are not checked and filtered, but free to infect your inner command center?

Question #48

Have you ever had hateful thoughts toward either God or another person?

Question #49

Have you ever given in to anger and entertained thoughts of destruction toward someone you were angry with?

Question #50

Have you ever felt more important than others? Have you ever thought of anyone as being less important than you?

4) Christ-like attitudes/thoughts you did not have:

Similar to the last two sections, for some of these questions it is not possible to write down each individual incident. For the ones you answer “yes” to but are unable to remember individual incidents, follow steps 1,2, and 3 from the “Freedom in Five Glorious Steps” process detailed earlier. When you are able to remember individual incidents, be sure to write each of the individual incidents down and walk through each of the “Five Steps.”

Question #51

Have you ever felt apathetic, uninterested, unloving towards those who do not yet know Jesus Christ?

Question #52

Have you ever felt apathetic, uninterested, unloving towards those who are your Christian brothers and sisters?

Question #53

Have you been unwilling to sacrifice out of your personal resources to support those less fortunate than you?

Question #54

Have you been unwilling to look like a fool in order to serve the Lord Jesus Christ?

Question #55

Have you been unwilling to be mistreated, ridiculed, mocked, and falsely accused in order to serve the Lord Jesus Christ?

Question #56

Have you been unwilling to make God’s opinion of you more important than the world’s opinion?

Preparation for Covenant, continued

Kicking out all “other masters”

Whenever we have surrendered to a master other than our King – such as an ungodly attachment or an addiction – we must remove its grip on our inner command center. Some of these “other masters” can be yanked out like a weed, but there may be others that will take some time, and potentially some help from some mature Christians on the outside, to fully remove them from the soil of your heart (I call these “tree stump” issues).

There are five categories of “other masters” that may have taken control of your inner command center. They are the following:

- 1) Romantic attachments**
- 2) Addictive behaviors**
- 3) Unforgiveness**
- 4) Inordinate affections**
- 5) Ungodly allurements.**

Let’s work through each of these separately:

1) Romantic Attachments

Romantic attachments are an insidious thing. We derive tremendous pleasure from them for a season, but long after the fling is over we find that these “romantic attachments” have glued themselves to our souls and refuse to leave our heart and imagination. For years they can toy with our emotions, pluck at our heartstrings, distract us from our Heavenly Master, as well as hinder our ability to give ourselves completely to our earthly wife. If you have ever participated in any of the following emotionally based activities outside of marriage then it is very possible that you have a romantic attachment taking up space within your sacred sanctuary and you need to kick it out:

“Weed Level” Attachments

If you have participated in any of the three following activities then carefully walk through steps 1,2, and 3 of the “Freedom in Five Glorious Steps” process detailed earlier. Ask the Holy Spirit to remove any existing attachments and free you from their hold.

1. If you ever cultivated a mental infatuation toward another person
2. If you ever nurtured romantic affections toward another person other than a fiancé or wife
3. If you were ever sexually aroused by another person’s words or physical touch outside of marriage

“Tree Stump” Level Attachments

If you have participated in any of the four following activities then it may be necessary to involve a Biblical counselor in the process of removing these “other lovers” from the soil of your heart. The more that is given of yourself in a sensually-based relationship, the stronger the hold the romantic attachment

can have on your heart. First walk through steps 1,2, and 3 of the “Freedom in Five Glorious Steps” process detailed earlier, then if you sense that a more aggressive tact is necessary, seek out someone who can help walk you through the removal process on a deeper more personalized level. NOTE: In some situations God may lead you to walk also through steps 4 and 5 to deal with the Romantic Attachment. If so, it may be important to gain advice from a professional Biblical counselor before you do.

4. If you ever spoke words of commitment towards another person who was not your fiancé or wife
5. If you ever had words of commitment spoken towards you by another person who was not your fiancé or wife
6. If you ever reached sexual climax with the assistance of another person outside of marriage
7. If you participated in repeatable sexual encounters with another person outside of marriage

2) Addictive Behaviors

Addictive behaviors provide us with comfort and security, and therefore can be a challenge to remove. When you develop an addictive behavior, you often don’t even realize it. You justify its presence in your life with makeshift rationalizations. You tell yourself things like “this is something that everyone does” or “I could give it up anytime I want to” or “after all, doesn’t God want me to be happy and/or successful?” *The tell tale sign of an addictive behavior is that it is nearly impossible to let go of it.* Addictive behaviors take up space in our soul because they provide a false sense of comfort and security, causing us to not allow Christ to provide us with the real thing. Anything that attempts to replace the work of Christ within your life is a hindrance from you discovering the fullness of an intimate love relationship with Him. Addictive behaviors, even the seemingly small and insignificant ones, must be kicked out. You will find that some of the things listed below are not sinful in and of themselves. It is the unhealthy and controlling craving for them that is.

“Weed Level” Addictions

If you answer “yes” to any of the five following questions then carefully walk through steps 1,2,3, and 5 of the “Freedom in Five Glorious Steps” process detailed earlier. When you pray both individually and/or with your Christian teammate, ask the Holy Spirit to powerfully break the unhealthy and controlling hold that the addiction has over your life.

8. Has your personal sense of need for energy and alertness created an unhealthy and controlling craving for any form of caffeine, painkillers, diet supplements, or performance enhancers?
9. Has your personal sense of need to look perfect physically created an unhealthy and controlling craving for any of the following activities: Excessive physical exercise, daily weight observance, inordinate amounts of time in front of the mirror, or a mental preoccupation with what is wrong with your body and how it could possibly be improved?
10. Has your personal sense of need for a “break from reality” created an unhealthy and controlling craving for any of the following activities: television watching, movie watching, excessive sleeping, book/magazine reading, daydreaming or music listening?

11. Has your personal sense of need for being “popular” and for being “a part of the action” created an unhealthy and controlling craving for any of the following activities: being where the party is, always being around friends, always being active, always being the center of attention, or doing whatever it takes to be considered popular?
12. Has your personal sense of need for physical comforts created an unhealthy and controlling craving for any of the following items: Money, clothes, cars, expensive brand names, expensive gadgets, or the unwise use of credit card debt to obtain them?

“Tree Stump” Level Addictions

If you answer “yes” to any of the following five questions then it may be necessary to involve a professional Biblical counselor in the process of removing these “other masters” from the terrain of your soul. First walk through steps 1,2,3 and 5 of the “Freedom in Five Glorious Steps” process detailed earlier, then if you sense that a more aggressive tact is necessary, seek out someone who can help walk you through the removal process on a deeper more personalized level.

13. Has your personal sense of need for “emotional validation” and “sensual expression” caused you to have a controlling craving for any of the following activities: sharing sexual body contact with another person, experiencing sexual arousal to a point of climax, having sexual imaginings, or viewing pornography?
14. Do you have a controlling craving for any of the following activities: personal harm through cutting or self-mutilation (if yes, professional Biblical counseling is essential, and medical attention is highly advised), or harm toward someone else through physical or verbal abuse? (if yes, professional Biblical counseling is essential).
15. Do you have a controlling craving for any of the following activities: displays of anger and/or violence, purposeful depression to allow self-pity to have its way, or deliberate physical sickness?
16. Do you have a controlling craving to participate in any of the following activities: excessive eating, nicotine intake, drug use (legal or illegal), or alcohol use.

3) Unforgiveness

Unforgiveness is our way as humans of punishing those that have hurt us. We reason that if we hate them, think evil thoughts about them, resent them, and turn bitter against them, that we will somehow get back at them for all the horrible things that they did to us. Ironically, unforgiveness rarely accomplishes what we think it accomplishes. Typically the only thing that happens is the disease of unforgiveness eats away at our insides and turns our souls black with hate. Unforgiveness works like a blockade against the work of Christ within our lives. It paralyzes us within almost like we have prison chains on our ankles and wrists. For a healthy spiritual life, it is essential that we learn how to walk through the process of forgiving someone that has hurt us. Forgiveness is the avenue by which Christ increases in our life. If we block off that avenue with unforgiveness it disables us from experiencing a true covenant life with our King. One of the reasons why many of us struggle with the forgiveness process is we have a misconception of what forgiveness really is. Most of us think that to forgive someone is to “forget” what he or she did, “excuse” their wrong, and “let them off God’s hook”. But forgiveness is a very different process than that. Instead of

“forgetting, excusing, and letting them off” it is rather a radical freeing of the soul involving three critical decisions of the will. The three critical decisions are as follows:

1. **Choosing to take their “hook” out of you.** *(Making a choice for peace instead of bitterness. Agreeing to live, from this point on, with the consequences of their sin – allowing God, in the way only He can, to turn what the enemy meant for evil into good.)*
2. **Choosing to let them off your “hook”.** *(Being willing to see God save, forgive, and heal them. And choosing to not hold it over them from that point on.)*
3. **Choosing to put them on God’s “hook.”** *(Allowing God to be the one to deal with them.)*

“Weed Level” Unforgiveness

If you answer “yes” to any of the four following questions then, for each of the instances and/or individuals involved, carefully walk through both the “Three Critical Decisions of the Will” (just mentioned above) and the “Freedom in Five Glorious Steps” process detailed earlier. As you walk through this emotionally charged process, allow yourself to be honest with your feelings. Ask the Holy Spirit to assist you in taking these super-important steps forward in your spiritual life.

17. Are you harboring unforgiveness against a family member for doing any of the following things to you? For stealing something of material value from you, for rudely treating you, for ignoring you, for causing you discomfort, for forgetting you, for accidentally injuring you, for lying to you, for gossiping about you, for making you wait, for embarrassing you, for not assisting you when you needed help, or for not showing gratitude to you for something you did to help them?
18. Are you harboring unforgiveness against anyone outside of your family for doing any of the following things to you? For stealing something of material value from you, for rudely treating you, for ignoring you, for forgetting you, for accidentally injuring you, for verbally abusing you, for lying to you, for gossiping about you, for making you wait, for embarrassing you, for cutting you off, for not assisting you when you needed help, or for not showing gratitude to you for something you did to help them?
19. Are you harboring unforgiveness against yourself for doing any of the following things? For not being good enough, for not being smart enough, for not being beautiful enough, for not being talented enough, for not being healthy enough, for not being likeable enough, or for not being confident enough?
20. Are you blaming God, and therefore harboring unforgiveness against Him, for doing any of the following things? For not making you smart enough, attractive enough, talented enough, healthy enough, likeable enough, or confident enough? Or for not giving you a better family or life circumstance?

“Tree Stump” Level Unforgiveness

Due to the nature of “Tree Stump Unforgiveness”, if you answer “yes” to any of the four following questions then the assistance of a Biblical Counselor in the “forgiveness” process is highly advised. For each of the instances and/or individuals involved, carefully walk through both the “Three Critical Decisions of the Will” (just mentioned above) and the “Freedom in Five Glorious Steps” process detailed earlier. As you walk through this emotionally charged process, allow yourself to be honest with your feelings. Ask the Holy Spirit to assist you in taking these super-important steps forward in your spiritual life.

21. Are you harboring unforgiveness against anyone in your family for doing any of the following things to you? For intentionally injuring you, for verbally abusing you, for falsely accusing you, for abandoning you, for not protecting you, for betraying an intimate trust, or for sexually violating you (abuse, rape, touching, or looking)?
22. Are you harboring unforgiveness against anyone outside of your family for doing any of the following things to you? For intentionally injuring you, for falsely accusing you, for betraying an intimate trust, or for sexually violating you (abuse, rape, touching, looking, or taking advantage)?
23. Are you harboring unforgiveness against yourself for doing any of the following things? For participating in the taking of life (pressuring/counseling someone else to get an abortion, murder, assisting in a suicide), for injuring someone, for sexually violating someone, for being sexually violated, or for injuring the person of Jesus Christ?
24. Are you blaming God, and therefore harboring unforgiveness against Him, for doing any of the following things? For sickness or disease in your life or in the life of someone else, for the death of someone close to you, for extreme challenges you may have faced in life, or for the verbal, physical, or sexual abuse inflicted on you or someone else?

4) Inordinate Affections

If someone you knew was consumed with ham, you might think them a bit strange. If they always thought about ham, sang songs about ham, read books about ham, watched shows about ham, and then every time you were around them they talked about ham, you may conclude that they have an inordinate affection for ham. Ham, in and of itself is a harmless thing. Yet when it occupies someone's mind to an unhealthy degree, it becomes harmful to the soul of an individual. Inordinate affections usually surface when you lie down in bed at night. If, when you lie down, your mind always goes to the same old subject, then it's very possible that you have an inordinate affection toward that subject. Your covenant life with your King is the place where God designed your affections to be centered. He intended that you would find complete satisfaction in knowing, loving and adoring Him. Whenever something else captures your heart and your affections, it draws you very subtly out of your intimate relationship with Christ. Therefore, inordinate affections must be removed. After all, the first commandment given to Moses was "there should be no other gods before me." Nothing should ever be allowed to block your worship, love, and adoration from being fully expressed to your Heavenly Master.

Recognizing Inordinate Affections

If you answer "yes" to any of the seven following questions then carefully walk through steps 1, 2, and 3 of the "Freedom in Five Glorious Steps" process found detailed earlier. When you pray both individually and with your Christian teammate ask the Holy Spirit to powerfully break the unhealthy and controlling hold that the inordinate affection has over your mind. The key to freedom from inordinate affections is to first recognize that they are there. Then it becomes much easier to notice them, and therefore, fight them more effectively from this day forward.

25. Do you find that your mind spends far too much of its focus on any of the following? On your outward appearance? On your physical health? On what other people think about you, or about what you said or did? On being current with the most recent trends for dress, talk, and behavior?

26. Do you find that your mind spends far too much of its focus on any of the following? On looking for things that are wrong with others? On comparing yourself with the way others talk, dress, look, or behave? On looking for things that are wrong with you or with your life?
27. Do you find that your mind is enslaved to focus on the opposite sex in an unhealthy way? On pondering the opposite sex for unhealthy amounts of time? On wondering if you are liked by certain members of the opposite sex? On imagining you and certain members of the opposite sex together as an intimate couple? On imagining members of the opposite sex in a sexually explicit manner?
28. Do you find that your mind spends far too much of its focus on any of the following? Your personal success in some venture (a game, a competition, a performance, the taking of a test, the finishing of a project, etc.)? Someone else's success in some venture (a game, a competition, a performance, the taking of a test, the finishing of a project, etc.)?
29. Do you find that your mind is enslaved to focus on any of the following? On things that are imaginary? On things that "could be" but aren't? On "what could have been" but isn't? On things that have never happened "but could?" On things that did happen that you wish hadn't?
30. Do you find that your mind is enslaved to focus on things that bring you personal comfort? (i.e. – sexual closeness, drugs, alcohol, nicotine, other addictive behaviors, music, money, sports, movies, clothing, cars, expensive gadgets, etc.)
31. Do you find that your mind is enslaved to focus on things that are harmful to you and/or to others? (i.e. – on violence to others or on violence to yourself?) (If yes, then please confide with your Christian teammate and a professional Biblical Counselor as soon as possible so that you can more intimately and completely work through the removal of this inordinate affection.)

5) Ungodly Allurements

Ungodly allurements are the young soul's poison. If you think of the soul as a young puppy, then ungodly allurements would be like chicken bones. Little puppies are extremely attracted to both the smell and the taste of a chicken bone, but a chicken bone can be very dangerous, even deadly, to a young puppy. Ungodly allurements are extremely attractive to us as humans, but equally as dangerous to our souls. Ungodly allurements, if allowed into the life of a Christian, choke out the presence of Christ by over time, convincing us that building our lives completely around Christ is foolishness.

Ungodly allurements are things that we allow into our lives to entertain us, inform us, and bring comfort to us. But if these forms of entertainment, information, and comfort are contrary to the nature of Christ, they must be handled very carefully. When you were two years old, your parents told you to never touch the stove, not because the stove was a bad thing, but because as a two year old you weren't ready yet to know how to make it a useful instrument. As a two year old, a stove represented only one thing – a very bad burn! Ungodly allurements are somewhat similar. After many years of maturing in your covenant life with your King, it is possible to utilize these "allurements" as tools in your hand to help you more effectively reach the world around you for Christ. However, most of us are little

puppies choking on the chicken bones. We are toddlers who need to stay away from the stove until we are mature enough to make it useful to our lives. An ungodly allurements can be transformed into a godly tool only when your mind has been rebuilt by the Spirit of God. At that point, no longer do you look to this “input” as a means of understanding *what* to believe, but look to this “input” as a means of understanding how others are trained to believe and how to possibly reach them.

Recognizing Ungodly Allurements

Look over the following list of potential “allurements.” Ask the Spirit of God to show you if any of these inputs or entertainment devices have been an unhealthy influence upon your covenant life with your King. If so, then carefully walk through steps 1,2, and 3 of the “Freedom in Five Glorious Steps” process detailed earlier.

Potential Allurements:

- 32. Television** – have you allowed the television to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 33. Movies** – have you allowed movies to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 34. Music** – have you allowed music to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 35. Books** – have you allowed books to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 36. Magazines** – have you allowed magazines to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 37. Newspapers** – have you allowed newspapers to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 38. Internet** – have you allowed your activities on the internet to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 39. Friends** – have your allowed certain friendships in your life to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 40. People you admire** – have you allowed certain people that you admire to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 41. Romantic Relationships** – have you allowed romantic relationships in your life to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?
- 42. Cultural Norms** – have you allowed certain cultural norms (activities and behaviors that are acceptable to society – i.e. materialism, workaholism, premarital sexual activity, etc.) to negatively influence your behavior, your thinking patterns, your sense of right and wrong, or your attitude towards God, life, and others?

Final Thoughts:

Please keep in mind that the above guidelines are not a conclusive list of sins. Ask God's Holy Spirit to guide you throughout this process and bring to mind issues in your life that may not have been included in the above material. It is also important to be aware that this "house-cleaning" process is not just a one-time effort; we must give continual attention to the ongoing process of keeping our inner command center swept clean for our King. I highly recommend going through an internal examination processes like the one above repeatedly throughout your life.