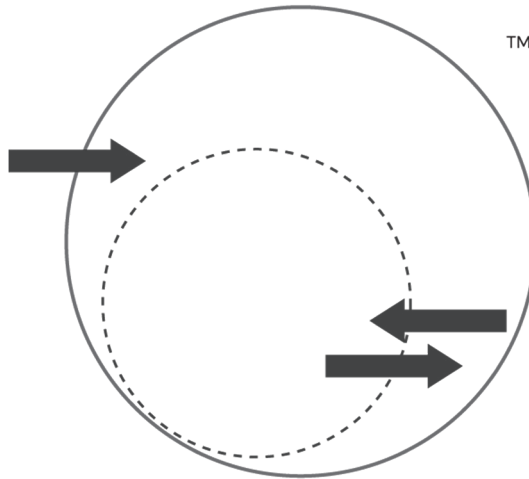


The
Abiding
Room

The Abiding Room™

*Experiencing the Abiding,
Spirit-Filled Life*



Questions Included for
Individual Reflection / Small Group Discussion

KEVIN SEACAT

The Abiding Room™

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To my wife, Juli; my parents,
Dale and Bert; and my brother, Kent

The four of you made it easy to see that
God's love is unconditional,
because your love always is as well

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I am deeply grateful for the following people who God brought along at exactly the right time to help with this book:

Kara Rozendaal has worked with me since 1989. She is like the little sister I never had. Her tireless and patient constructions and reconstructions of PowerPoint slides and presentations since 2001 have been essential, and her friendship and the laughs we shared along the way have made the work a pleasure. Without her, the Abiding Room teaching would not exist.

Russ Heptinstall recorded video and spent hundreds of hours editing the first Abiding Room classes in 2004, the transcripts of which became the initial text of this book. He did early review and edits on the manuscript, and authored the reflection questions at the end of each chapter. In addition, his wife Jen was a great encouragement in the first classes and a great help in choosing the Suggested Songs.

My dear daughter Rachel was the first to see each chapter. Her suggestions and editing dramatically improved the content of this book. And my other dear daughter Abby joined in later and offered essential insights.

Sheryl Moon patiently guided me through multiple stages of greatly needed editing. The fingerprints of her wisdom and expertise are on every page of this book. Jean Bloom's editing smoothed and polished my mechanical writing style.

Ethan Pope, DJ Mullaney, Greg Parker, and Al Fadi reviewed the manuscript and made important contributions.

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Bill Sellner, who God put in my life years ago to show me what God's grace and walking in the Spirit looks like. And his wife Elaine and her

women's group, who gave valuable feedback as they went through *The Abiding Room* study.

Larry Winhold, whose reading and suggestions on an early version of the manuscript led to a chapter being discarded and a better one being written.

Bert Harned and Barry Seifert, my mentors, whose wisdom and guidance in my life have played a role beyond what can be calculated.

Nina Taylor, Judy Duncan, Sue Southern, and Jerry and Jean Anne Powers, true prayer warriors, whose prayers have encouraged and protected me and my family for over two decades.

Welcome to *The Abiding Room*

My wife looked at me pleasantly perplexed. “What’s happened to your anger? You’re not tense with me anymore. Something’s happening to you. You’re not the same.”

Her words took me by surprise. I’d been unaware that any change had taken place in me since I’d spun into yet another rage a few months earlier. This time my anger had reached a new level. I’d really lost it, smashing a dish to pieces on the tile floor in front of Juli and our four-year-old son, Daniel. My action shocked her and sent him into hysterics.

This dish-smashing incident had opened my eyes to the damage my anger was causing, and I’d been fearful of what my future held. But I had no idea how to change the way I’d been living for forty years.

What I didn’t know was that God had already begun doing a major work in my heart. After ten years as a Christian, I was starting to experience a life-changing, spiritual transformation—and Juli had noticed even though I hadn’t. God had initiated a miracle, and our lives would never be the same. By God’s grace and Juli’s prayers, I discovered the abiding, Spirit-filled life.

As I learned to live by the power of the Holy Spirit over the next few years, I transformed from a husband whose bullying caused my wife to cry herself to sleep on many occasions to one whose marriage became a joyful experience for us both. Our family environment today is one our adult children enjoy coming home to.

Unfortunately, too few Christians are experiencing this abiding, Spirit-filled life. When God first opened my eyes to this new way of living, I asked a few long-term Jesus-followers I respect a question: “What percentage of the Christians you know do you believe are living in the power

of the Holy Spirit?” They all estimated only about 5 percent. While there’s no way to know the exact figure, their viewpoint that a very small minority of Christians experience the abiding life God has planned for us has been repeatedly confirmed to me over the past two decades. That’s both unfortunate and unnecessary.

Since 2000, I’ve discipled young men and taught classes about the Abiding Room to people of all ages at my local church. I’ve found that regardless of where people are in their spiritual journey, the illustrations and diagrams I’ve developed can help them understand and experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit in new ways. And in this book, the biblical lessons I’m continuing to learn so I can live them out on a daily basis are explained, laying out the secrets to truths that can lead you to spiritual breakthrough as well.

We’ll examine the three separate and distinct ways to live—or as we’ll call it, The 3 Levels of Life. These three levels are described throughout the Bible in both the Old and New Testaments. Our hope is to live in the third level, in the Abiding Room, experiencing the abiding, Spirit-filled life.

At the end of each chapter you’ll find these sections:

- *Abiding Truth*—These statements summarize the core message from each chapter.
- *Reflection Questions*—These questions and prompts are designed to help you think deeply about what you’ve just read and how to apply it to your life. Don’t skip over this section. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you how you can experience him in a new way. Take time to let him show you how the principles of each chapter are relevant to you and your life situations, and make notes in the space provided.
- *Song Suggestions*—These selected contemporary songs can help you further reflect on the application of each chapter’s lessons in your own life. The following QR codes include links to all of the songs in one single playlist.

Playlist Using Apple Music



Playlist Using Spotify



It's important for you to go through this book chapter by chapter. Understanding the connection *between* each chapter is almost as important as understanding the content *within* each chapter. You'll likely find many of the questions that arise are answered in subsequent chapters.

In appendix 5 you'll find a Suggested 12-Week Group Schedule. This outline provides a practical way for you to go through the entire book with a small group or class with a 12-week timeframe.

God's intention is for every follower of Jesus to experience the fruit of the Holy Spirit described in Galatians 5—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These are the wonderful blessings of Spirit-filled living we're about to explore. You can also come to know God's will for your life even better as you experience the presence of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

I'm confident the information and diagrams you're about to encounter will bless you with a fresh understanding of these wonderful truths.

And I pray they will allow you to experience the joy and peace of living by the power of the Holy Spirit on a daily basis—in your family, in your work, and in your church.

May the God of hope fill you with
all joy and peace in believing, so that by the
power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.
(Romans 15:13)



Before you go any further, please visit the Abiding Room website at abidingroom.com and watch my chocolate milk video where I illustrate The 3 Levels of Life on the home page. This short video has been very popular with students. It will help you to quickly understand The 3 Levels of Life and provide the foundation for the upcoming instruction on them.

Part One

THE 3 LEVELS OF LIFE



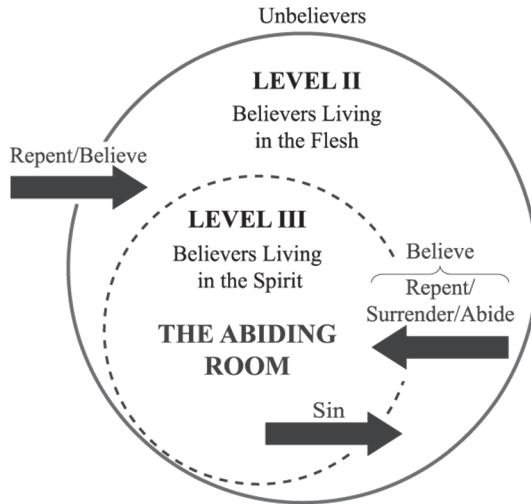


CHAPTER 1

The 3 Levels of Life in the Old Testament

Throughout the Bible, God has given us stories and instruction to show us that, at any particular moment, our relationship with him is at one of three levels. But it is only when we are in Level III, the Abiding Room, that we experience God in the fullness he intends for us.

Throughout this book, you will see your relationship with God illustrated in the Abiding Room diagram below and several variations of it. This will be explained in greater detail as we proceed through the book.

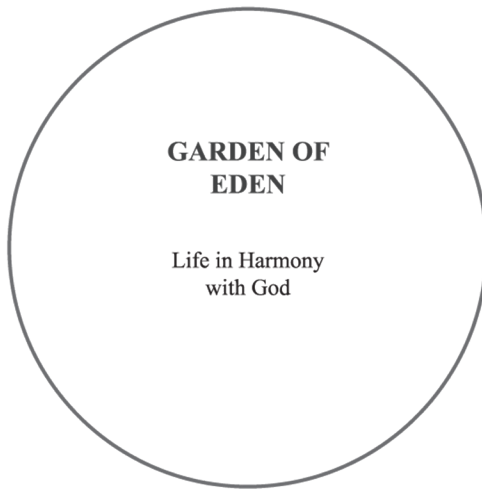


In this chapter, we will look at two Old Testament illustrations of The 3 Levels of Life: the garden of Eden and the journey of the Israelites.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

The 3 Levels of Life first became a reality in the garden of Eden. In the beginning, mankind—the first being Adam and Eve—was sinless and walked in a harmonious relationship with God in the garden. God provided everything Adam and Eve needed. There was no death or separation between God and mankind because there was no sin.

So, there was only one level of life, as depicted in this diagram:



Life with God was how he intended it to be, but he gave Adam a command and a warning:

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**” (Genesis 2:16–17)

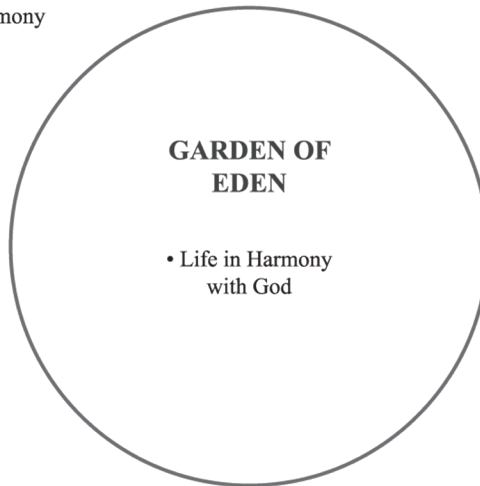
Then Satan deceived Adam and Eve, and they disobeyed God by eating from the one tree forbidden to them. The perfect, harmonious relationship between God, who was and is perfect and holy, and mankind, who was now sinful, was broken. And because God is holy, he gave mankind consequences for sin.

One of those consequences was Adam and Eve could no longer live in the garden of Eden:

So, the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden Cherubim and a flaming sword slashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3:23–24 NIV)

So, then there were two levels of life, as shown in the next diagram:

- Separation from God
- Disharmony



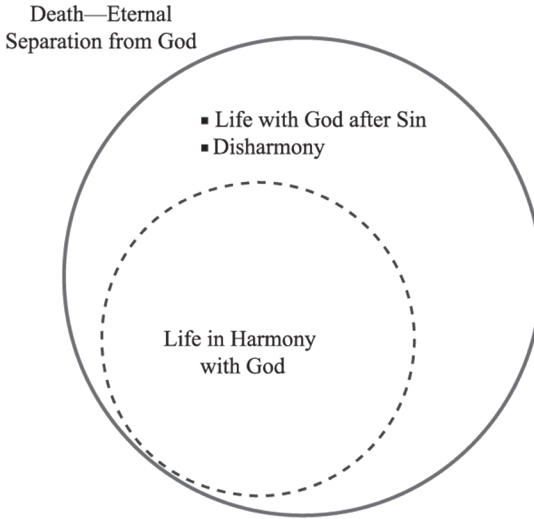
Ultimately, Adam and Eve’s sin led to another consequence: an end to life itself for every person.

And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” (Genesis 3:22 NIV)

Altogether, Adam lived a total of 930 years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:5 NIV)

The Abiding Room

So, there became The 3 Levels of Life, as the diagram below illustrates.



The Bible tells us sin still impacts *all* humankind today:

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to **all men** because all sinned. (Romans 5:12)

The entire Bible shows us our relationship with God is at one of three levels. As we shall see, only one of the three levels of life is truly pleasing to God—when we live in harmony with him. Unfortunately, few people are consistently living this way.

THE JOURNEY OF THE ISRAELITES

Perhaps you're familiar with the story of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt that is found in the book of Exodus, chapters 1–14.

Egypt had held the Israelites captive and worked them as slaves for over 400 years. But God heard the cries of his people and instructed Moses to confront Pharaoh. After ten plagues, Pharaoh let God's people go.

Once the Israelites departed, however, Pharaoh changed his mind and pursued them with his army. In one of the greatest miracles in history, God

parted the Red Sea, allowing his people to walk through it on dry ground with walls of water on either side. Pharaoh's army chased after them onto the dry floor of the Red Sea, but after the Israelites had safely crossed to the other side, God caused the waters to flow back, drowning all those in pursuit.

Having saved the Israelites from slavery under Pharaoh, God's intention was to take them into the Holy Land as he had promised. But they chose to not trust him, and because of their sin of unbelief, they spent forty years wandering in the desert. Then God appointed Joshua to finally lead them into the Holy Land, and once again he had them cross a body of water—the Jordan River.

The Israelites' journey took them through three distinct pieces of land: Egypt, the desert, and the Holy Land. As we'll now see, these three pieces of land represent The 3 Levels of Life in our relationship with God.

Leaving Egypt

Let's begin with God bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, across the Red Sea, and into the desert.

God paints a picture for us, with Moses representing a type of Christ, and Pharaoh representing a type of Satan. Egypt depicts a separation from God. The crossing of the Red Sea indicates God's love for us by sending Christ to save us from our sins.

Think for a moment about the name: the Red Sea. When you think of a body of water, what colors do you think of? I usually think of blue or gray or maybe green, but certainly not red!

I believe God created the Red Sea as a unique body of water to remind us of Jesus' blood on the cross. Jesus came into the world to save us, and he saved us by his blood. He saved us by his sacrificial death on the cross and resurrection. The Israelites going down into the Red Sea depicts death. But their coming through the Red Sea depicts rising up into life—separated and safe from Satan (Pharaoh).

The Red Sea is also quite large. It is about 1,400 miles long with a width of about 100 miles. The depth can range between 426 feet, to over 9,000 feet. In other words, it is such a vast and deep body of water that no one can cross it on foot unless God makes it possible.

The Abiding Room

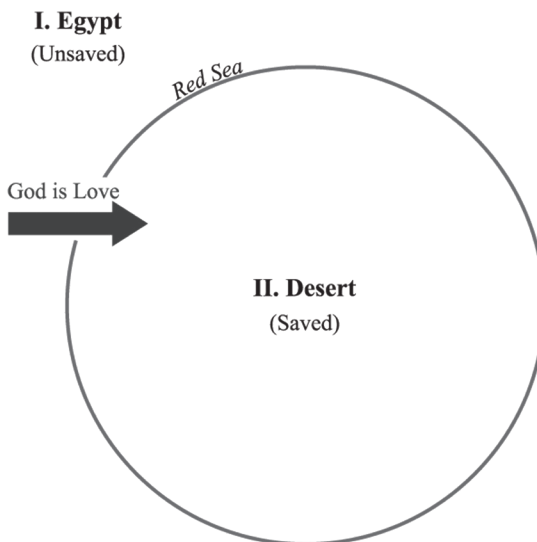
I think God created the Red Sea enormous to illustrate his enormous love for us. The Red Sea, like God's love, is so wide and deep that people can never cross back over it on foot.

Once a person puts their faith in Jesus and becomes a child of God, they can never do anything to cross back over the Red Sea into Egypt with the unsaved; that is, back unto death. To allow anyone to cross back over or to force them back over the Red Sea would violate God's very nature because God is love.

Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. (1 John 4:8)

You can never lose your salvation, even when you sin. When you become a Christian, heaven is your home regardless of your subsequent behavior. There's nothing you can do to separate yourself from God's love. It is absolute and permanent regardless of your actions or behavior.

As you can see in the next diagram, the outer circle has just one arrow crossing over the Red Sea from Egypt into the desert. It's a one-way arrow because Christians have eternal security and can never go back. This illustrates God's *unconditional* love. And God's love is unconditional because God *is* love.

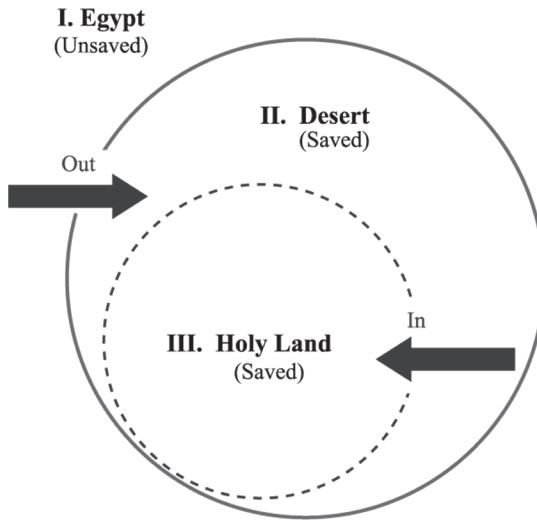


The Desert and the Holy Land

When the Israelites crossed through the Red Sea and into the desert, God did not intend for them to remain there. He intended for them to enter the Holy Land he had promised them.

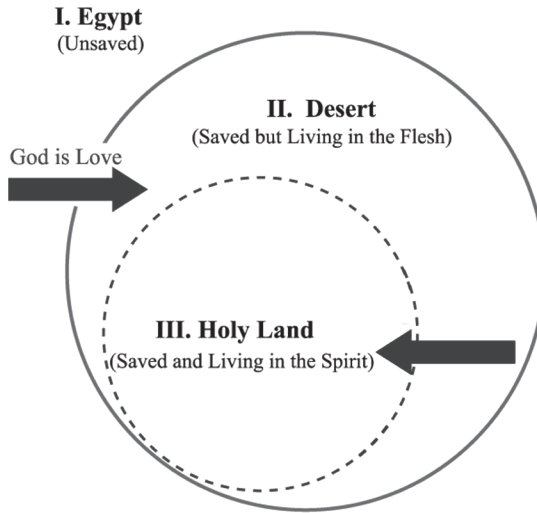
“And he brought us **out** from there, that he might bring us **in** and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers.” (Deuteronomy 6:23)

The next diagram illustrates this entire movement.



The desert illustrates Level II: saved but living in the flesh. Again, God didn’t intend for the Israelites to wander in the desert but intended for them to enter the Holy Land. Likewise, God doesn’t intend for us to live in the flesh. He intends for us to enter the next, and best, level of life—living by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The movement from Level II to Level III is shown in the next diagram.



In the desert, God fed his children with water and manna, but he described the Holy Land as a land flowing with milk and honey. As the Israelites found out, it was no picnic living in the desert while drinking and eating nothing but water and manna. While God continually provided for their needs regardless of the extent of their daily faithfulness or unfaithfulness (just as he does for ours today), his people longed for something more.

How many followers of Jesus today are longing for something more as well? That longing is our desire to live filled, led, and empowered by the Holy Spirit! God has blessed us with this desire so we will never stop seeking him.

What allows us to enter into and remain in the Holy Land? That is, how can we enter into God's presence and experience the power of the Holy Spirit? Again, God shows us what is required of us through the journey of the Israelites.

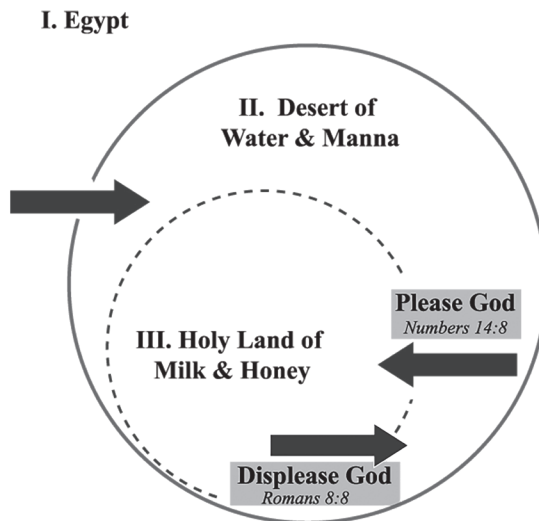
“If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us.” (Numbers 14:8 NIV)

God is pleased with us when we are living by the power of the Holy Spirit, rather than in our flesh. In the New Testament, the apostle Paul tells us that, “Those who are in the **flesh cannot please God.**” (Romans 8:8)

Why can't the flesh please God? The apostle Paul answers that question: “For I know that **nothing good** dwells in me, that is, **in my flesh**. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out” (Romans 7:18).

As we see in Numbers 14:8, what was necessary for the Israelites to enter the Holy Land was to be pleasing to God. But as we also see in Romans 8:8, since there's nothing good in our flesh, when we are operating in the flesh, we are not completely pleasing to our Holy God.

We see this illustrated in the following diagram:

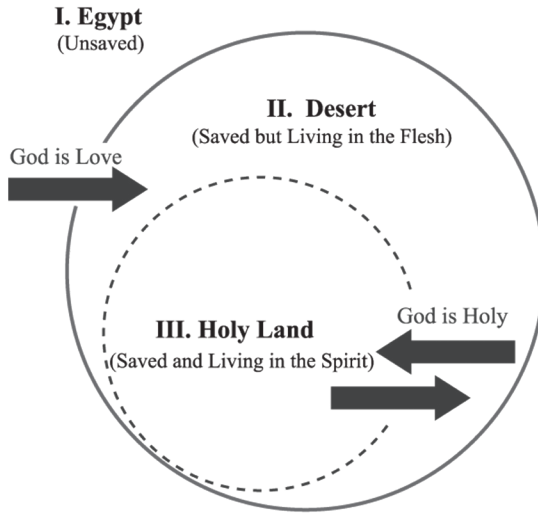


So, while God's love is unconditional, his pleasure is conditional. Why is God's pleasure conditional? Because God is holy. We'll explore the importance of God's holiness in greater detail in chapter 13, but for now we'll focus on the fact that, though God's love is constant and permanent, his pleasure with us is conditionally based on the choices we make.

That is what the Israelites discovered when God explained to them:

“For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy for I am holy ... for I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.” (Leviticus 11:44–45)

God’s love and holiness are illustrated in the next diagram.



Crossing the Jordan River

Similar to how God illustrated his *love* in saving us through the Israelites’ crossing of the Red Sea, he illustrated his *holiness* using the Jordan River. After wandering in the desert for forty years, and Moses’ death, God instructed Joshua to lead the Israelites into the Holy Land by crossing the Jordan River.

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses assistant, “Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.” (Joshua 1:1–2)

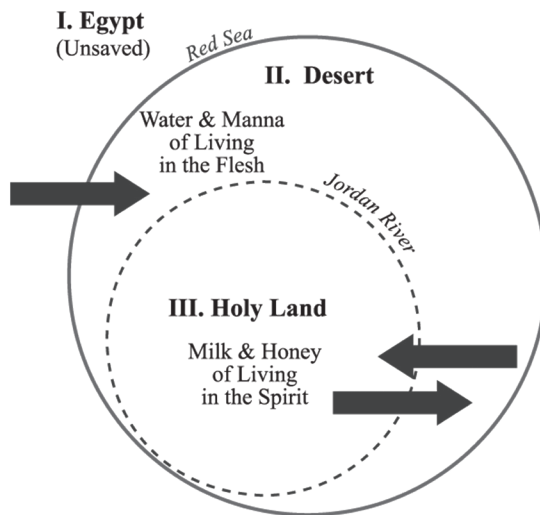
The Jordan River is about 200 miles long with a width of about 90 to 100 feet. Depending on where you stand, the depth can range from three to ten feet. In other words, the Jordan River is nothing like the Red Sea. It's shallow and narrow enough so that, unlike the Red Sea, a person can wade across it.

The Israelites' crossing the Jordan River into the Holy Land is symbolic of our entering God's most intimate presence—when we are abiding in Christ and walking in the Spirit.

Unlike the Red Sea however, the Jordan River *can* be crossed back over into the desert by anyone if they so choose. God gave us a shallow, narrow, physical Jordan River that we can choose to cross back over into the desert, to illustrate that in our spiritual life we may choose to go our own way through sin.

But this means moving out of God's intimate presence and living in the flesh. For God to allow us to continue in sin and still remain in his intimate presence would violate God's very nature, because God is holy.

Still, God's grace remains. He continues to be merciful and shower his grace upon us even in our shortcomings.



And so, through the journey of the Israelites, we again see the illustration of The 3 Levels of Life. We see we have the assurance of our salvation (one-way arrow) because God is love. But we also see the depth of our relationship with God is conditional upon our life choices (two-way arrow) because God is holy.



ABIDING TRUTH

The Old Testament establishes and illustrates
The 3 Levels of Life.

NOTE: If you do not have the peace of knowing you will spend eternity with God in heaven, I invite you to read appendix 1 now to learn how you can have that assurance.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

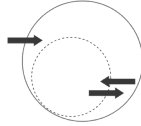
1. What do you think the story of Adam and Eve tells us about ourselves as people, about the enemy and his schemes, and about God?
2. How do we fall prey to the same type of temptations as Adam and Eve when we seek to live in harmony with God?
3. Where is the folly in thinking, *If I had God right in front of me as the Israelites did, this whole thing would be a lot easier?*

SONG SUGGESTIONS

“Egypt” by Bethel Music, featuring Cory Asbury

“No Longer Slaves” by Bethel Music, featuring Jonathan David
and Melissa Helser

“Perfectly Loved” by Rachel Lampa, featuring Toby Mac





CHAPTER 2

The 3 Levels of Life in the New Testament

In chapter 1, we saw how the Old Testament illustrated The 3 Levels of Life. The New Testament also illustrates The 3 Levels of Life. Let's look at two examples found in Romans and 1 Corinthians.

ROMANS 7 AND 8

How did you become a Christian? You repented and believed.

Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; **repent and believe** in the gospel." (Mark 1:14–15)

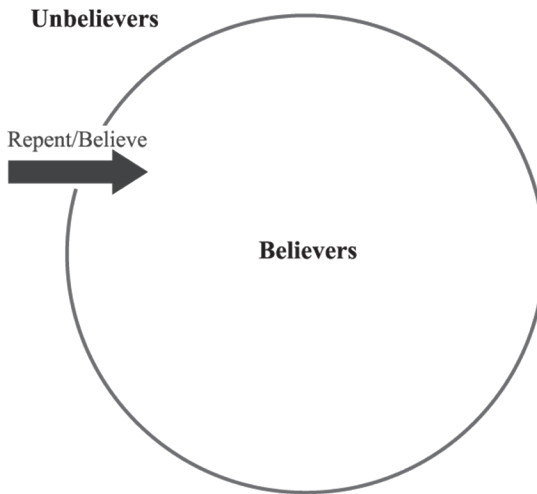
You were an unbeliever, accepted Jesus' invitation, and became a believer. As we discussed in chapter 1, your salvation is a one-way trip! You never have to fear losing your salvation. It is a done deal. Jesus says you have eternal security because he and God the Father have you securely in their grip.

"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; **no one will snatch them out of my hand**. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; **no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand**." (John 10:28–29 NIV)

The Bible also tells us you can know with absolute certainty you have eternal security through the Holy Spirit. Upon conversion, you received the Holy Spirit to indwell you forever. He will never be taken away from you.

When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the **promised Holy Spirit**, who is a deposit **guaranteeing our inheritance** until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13–14 NIV)

The one-way arrow in the following diagram illustrates the assurance of your salvation.



Living in the Flesh

With full confidence in our salvation, we then choose moment-by-moment to live in either the flesh or the Spirit. The apostle Paul tells us in the book of Romans about his own spiritual journey. He confides that it can be a difficult process, even for him. In Romans 7, Paul describes his struggles when he is living in the flesh.

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. (Romans 7:15)

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. (Romans 7:18–19)

Paul even cries out in desperation, in Romans 7:24, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” Have you ever felt like that? I know I have!

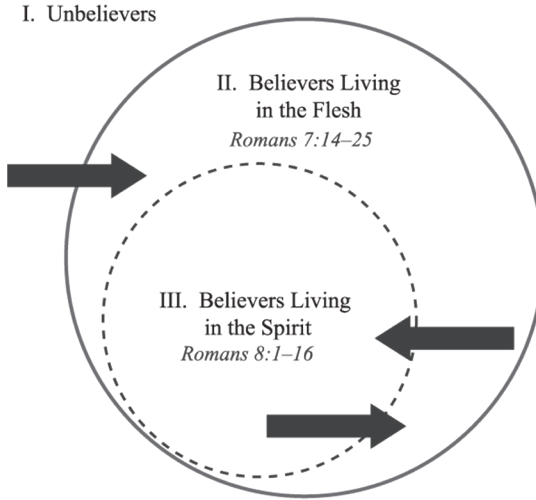
Living in the Spirit

However, in Romans 8, Paul enthusiastically describes the life of freedom and victory you, too, can experience as you live by the power of the Holy Spirit. When you are living in the Spirit, you can live free of sin and experience peace.

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of **the Spirit of life has set you free** in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:1–2)

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on **the Spirit is life and peace**. (Romans 8:5–6)

Through the apostle Paul’s personal testimony, we can see The 3 Levels of Life. The following diagram illustrates Romans 7 and 8:



1 CORINTHIANS 2 AND 3

Have you ever wondered if you can really know what God desires you to do? You can! When you are living in the Abiding Room, it is possible for you to know what he is instructing you to do.

God illustrates The 3 Levels of Life through the words of Paul in the book of 1 Corinthians as he describes the three types of people in the world. Let's look at Paul's words to the Corinthian church.

Level I—The Natural Person

The **natural person** does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is **not able to understand** them because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

Level II—The Fleshly Person

But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as **people of the flesh**, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were **not ready** for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? (1 Corinthians 3:1-4)

Level III—The Spiritual Person

The **spiritual person** judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we **have the mind of Christ**. (1 Corinthians 2:15–16)

In 1 Corinthians 2 and 3, Paul writes to the church at Corinth, recounting his previous visit and teachings there. He very clearly describes three types of people in terms of their spiritual state. His explanations are relevant and important to us today.

In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul first distinguishes between the two extremes: The unbeliever (Level I), whom he calls the natural person, and the believer living in the Spirit, whom he calls the spiritual person (Level III).

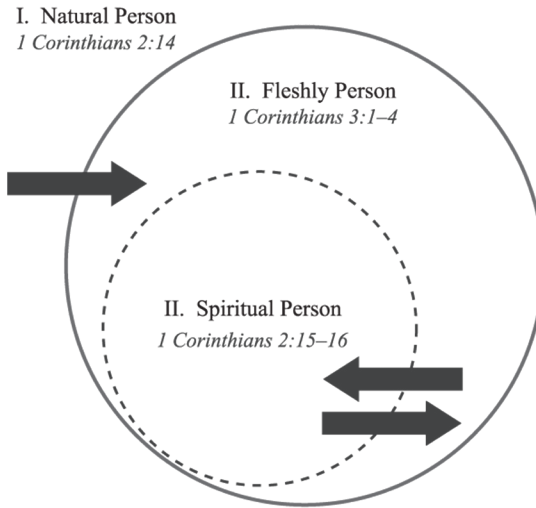
The unbelieving, Level I natural person cannot understand the things of God because they do not have the Holy Spirit. The things of God are foolishness to them. The spiritual, Level III person however, *can* understand the things of God because the Holy Spirit reveals them to them.

Then in chapter 3, Paul places the Corinthian church squarely in the middle, at Level II. They’re undoubtedly saved, but they’re also definitely not spiritually minded, oriented, or discerning.

While Paul has acknowledged the Corinthians are believing brothers and sisters, he describes them as fleshly—mere infants. Since they’re more like worldly unbelievers in their hearts than Spirit-led believers, they’re unable to understand the richness and fullness of God’s message in their minds. As a result, Paul has to talk to them in Level II “baby” terms. Both individually and collectively, these worldly Level II believers are living at a lower spiritual level than they should be. Therefore, they’re unable to comprehend many of the things of God.

Not only are these Level II fleshly believers unable to comprehend spiritual truths, in addition, they’re also *acting* like unbelievers. Their chocolate syrup has settled to the bottom of the glass rather than being stirred up. Their actions are causing problems within the church itself, namely jealousy and quarreling. Their fleshly living is causing church conflict. Sound familiar?

Though he would rather be delving into the richness of the truths and wisdom of God with them, Paul instead has to go into church problem-solving mode in his teaching and address their misbehavior. He uses phrases like “not ready” and “still of the flesh,” implying this is not a permanent spiritual condition, but rather a matter of choice. Paul desires his listeners to cross over from Level II to Level III, as shown in the next diagram.



It’s not that the Corinthians are not equipped; it’s that they’re choosing not to utilize the “equipment” they have—the person of the Holy Spirit. It’s not that they’re not talented or gifted enough, it’s that they’re not appropriating what they’ve been gifted—the person of the Holy Spirit. It’s not that they don’t have what it takes, it’s that they aren’t taking advantage of who they already have—the person of the Holy Spirit!

Everything Paul said to the Corinthians applies to each of us today. Just as the Corinthians had a choice to live in the Spirit or in the flesh, so do you. You don’t have to live in Level II. When you enter into Level III, the Abiding Room, you, too, are spiritual, rather than fleshly. You are able to live in harmony with God and others. You are with Jesus, led by the Holy Spirit, and have the mind of Christ. Jesus gives you a clearer understanding of why you exist as he reveals to you his plan and purpose for your life!

So, through 1 Corinthians 2 and 3, we see once again The 3 Levels of Life.

A Word about the Limitations of Diagrams

In chapters 1 and 2, we've seen four separate biblical examples of The 3 Levels of Life and diagrams illustrating them. At this point, it's important to remember these diagrams are merely simple illustrations of the three distinct levels of life derived from the Bible. They depict the difference between living by the power of the Holy Spirit versus living in the weakness of the flesh.

The diagram has two circles. The outer circle is a solid line representing a spiritual boundary requiring an act of God to cross, while the innermost circle is a line of dashes representing a spiritual boundary only requiring the will of men and women to repeatedly cross over and back again.

But while the diagrams and terms used in the illustrations are based on the Bible, they are presentations that can only be shown as absolutes. That is, they depict our spiritual condition as all or nothing—as completely one way or the other. We are either completely in Level I, II, or III.

Let's examine this a bit further, so it doesn't impede our upcoming discussions.

With respect to Level I versus Level II—saved or not saved—the diagrams accurately depict a spiritual reality—everyone is either saved or not saved. We are either fully inside or fully outside of the larger circle. We are either children of God destined for heaven, or we are not.

Comparing whether we as followers of Jesus are in Level II or Level III at any moment, however, is a bit trickier. While the diagrams are instructive, they imply we are either living completely in the flesh, in Level II, or we are living completely in the Spirit, in Level III. In reality, most of life, including our spiritual walk, is not nearly as clear. We live in uncertain shades of gray.

When you think about it, though, the Bible *is* absolute in many places, including comparing life in the Spirit versus life in the flesh. For instance, the all-or-nothing phrase, “filled with the Spirit,” is used numerous times in the Bible. There's no instance where the Bible describes someone as

“partially filled” or “mostly filled.” Likewise, though the terms and illustrations used in *The Abiding Room* are biblically based, they will always fail to be completely adequate in describing our spiritual walk in this physical, fallen world. *The Abiding Room’s* instructions and diagrams are merely tools intended to open our eyes and guide us to a fuller relationship with God.

So while the words and diagrams attempt to convey the essential elements of the abiding, Spirit-filled life as completely as possible, we must acknowledge their capability of explaining the wonderful mysteries of these spiritual truths is limited.

Now, let’s move on and explore the wonderful truths of the Holy Spirit!



ABIDING TRUTH

The New Testament confirms and illustrates
The 3 Levels of Life.

