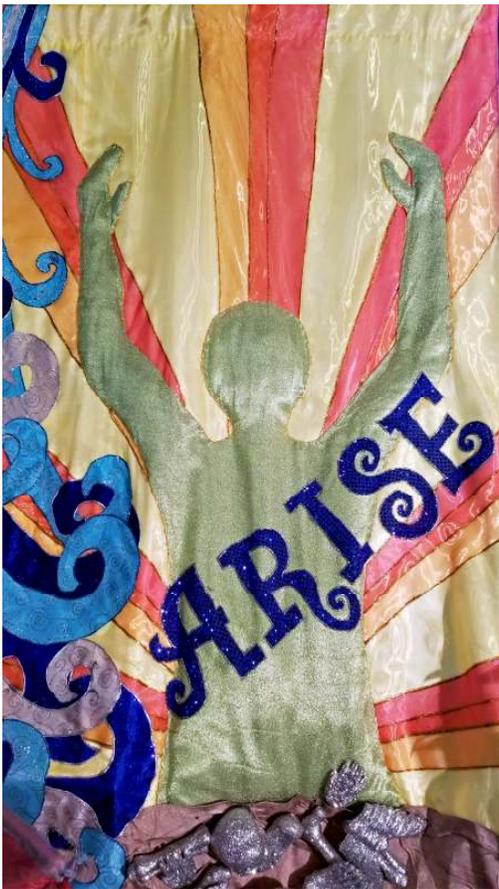


# FirstFruits Gathering At Harvest Christian Church

**Choosing Life**  
**May 21, 2019**  
**Suzi Armstrong**

The Bible tells us that life and death are put before us; and we choose which to follow after. This choice is before us in our thoughts, beliefs, actions and words. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to take captive every thought and to pull down strongholds. Strongholds are thought patterns that war against the knowledge of God. Strongholds are ideas, ideals and philosophies that oppose the life God has given us as believers in Christ. The enemy actually inhabits the realm of thoughts that oppose the knowledge of God. From this place to enemy works to kill, steal and destroy. Every thought pattern that opposes the knowledge of God is filled with death and chaos. When we entertain and think thoughts that do not agree with what God says, we are entertaining a lie that opposes the life God has for us. We war against ourselves. The mind set on the flesh is death – it cannot obey God. The mind set on the flesh keeps us incapable of doing the very thing we want to do.



In Mark 8, Jesus is teaching His disciples about negative influences in life. He says be careful of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod – the religious system where God is impersonal and powerless and the political system that is humanistic in its nature. The disciples reasoned that Jesus was talking about having enough food – they didn't get what Jesus was teaching. In fact, Jesus asked them why they were reasoning or speculating. They had been with Jesus when He multiplied the fish and loaves. Jesus was challenging *the process of their thinking*. Why does your imagination start with what you don't have? God wants us to change how we think because we have been with Him – we have experienced and encountered His goodness, faithfulness and life. He is ALWAYS the life giver. So why would we choose death?

Miracles are not temporary interventions to solve a problem but they reveal the nature of God. He is the life giver all of the time. God is all in, all the time. Through the acts of God we discover His nature. We discover He is the life giver all of the time. So why would we reason whether God will heal me or provide for me this time, in this circumstance. This says we have not fully understood the nature of God. God is good ALL OF THE TIME. Don't allow the absence of an immediate breakthrough change or challenge who you know God is. That is reasoning contrary to the knowledge of God. Reasons are imaginations that the enemy exalts to be in competition with

God. Jesus rebukes Peter and says, get behind me Satan because Peter's mind was SET on the interests of man without Jesus being the center. Peter didn't set his mind on things above. Peter didn't seek the life giver to find out where life was.

There are always two trees in the garden – one you eat from and one you don't eat from. One is the Tree of Life and the other is the Tree of Knowledge of God and evil (this tree can lead to death). There is always a choice because God has given us free will.

God is the God of peace that will soon crush Satan underneath our feet. God gives us peace – shalom. The Hebrew pictorial symbol for shalom literally reads, “Destroy the authority that binds to chaos.” Shalom is used to describe those who have been provided life and all authority to bind all chaos leading to death. Chaos is anything not of God’s divine order. So chaos is sickness, disease, confusion, unholy disruption, direction and utterance that is not congruent with the word of God. We have been set free from everything that disrupts and is against the knowledge of God and the finished work of the cross. Hebrews 10 says, do not throw away our confidence in Christ, for our confidence will be richly rewarded. We need only preserve in doing the will of God and receive His promise.

### **Ephesians 4.17-18, 22-24** NIV

<sup>17</sup> So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must **no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.** <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding and **separated from the life of God** because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

<sup>22</sup> You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; <sup>23</sup> to be **made new in the attitude of your minds;** <sup>24</sup> **and to put on the new self, created to be like God** in true righteousness and holiness.

### **Colossians 2.6-10** NIV

<sup>6</sup> So then, **just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him,** <sup>7</sup> **rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith** as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

<sup>8</sup> **See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.**

<sup>9</sup> For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, <sup>10</sup> and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.



### **Colossians 3.2** NIV

<sup>2</sup> **Set your minds on things above,** not on earthly things.

- Think on these things.
- Have the mind of Christ.
- The door for the power of God and His promise to come through.



### **Psalm 24.7-8** NIV

<sup>7</sup> **Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors,** that the King of glory may come in.

<sup>8</sup> Who is this King of glory?  
The LORD strong and mighty,  
**the LORD mighty in battle.**

**To Detroit we declare:**

**Deuteronomy 8.3** NASB Reworded

<sup>3</sup> He humbled you, Detroit, and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that you, **Detroit, will not live by bread alone, but you will live by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.**

**2 Timothy 1.12b-13** NKJV Reworded

...nevertheless **Detroit, do not be ashamed, but know whom you have believed and be persuaded that He is able** to keep what you have committed to Him until that Day.

<sup>13</sup> **Hold fast Detroit, to the pattern of sound words which you have heard from God.**

**Hebrews 10.35-39** NKJV Reworded

<sup>35</sup> Therefore **Detroit, do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.** <sup>36</sup> For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

<sup>37</sup> "For yet a little while,

*And* He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

<sup>38</sup> Now the just shall live by faith;

But if *anyone* draws back,

My soul has no pleasure in him."

<sup>39</sup> **But Detroit, you are not of those who draw back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and are saved.**

