by Dr. Fred Wittman

The Wheel Card is an invaluable tool for both evangelism and discipleship. In evangelism, it aids in elucidating the 5th step of salvation and in ensuring that person's Salvation through the parable of the sower. In discipleship, it presents the four essential areas of spiritual growth, the role of The Church in a regenerated disciple's life, and Satan's strategy with the way to combat him and how to gain renewed fellowship with The God if the professing child of God does yield to the enemy rather than yielding to The God.

The title on the wheel card introduces the analogy of a wheel as depicting the type of life that the unregenerated one has before Salvation, the life that the regenerated one now has as newborn in Christ, the life that could be if one does not keep Christ on the throne and in the center of one's life, and the life that will be if one keeps Christ enthroned and in the center of one's life. The quote, "John 10:10" is particularly appropriate because it introduces the fact that Christ came to give us **abundant** life, not just life. Abundant means bountiful, full, teeming, rich, and plentiful. It is important for the newborn in Christ to see that The God has a great interest in his or her life and He wants him or her to live life to the fullest. These four wheels represent the four ways people live in relation to Christ: pre-conversion, newly converted, disobedient but believing, and Christ-centered and God-honoring.

Circle 1 - life without Christ.

The first is a circle, hoop, or rim of a wheel with nothing in the center. Life is a veritable "**NOTHING**" - no hub, no stabilizing center around which to revolve. Boys play with tires without rims. They roll them down the street. The tire spins and rolls straight until it begins to wobble, then it veers off, wibble-wobbling and soon falls flat. This wheel connotes life without Christ. Just as a wheel without a center has no aim, no direction, nor purpose, so, too, the soul who has not persistently committed trust to The Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, is heading aimlessly through life without direction, without purpose, and without a stabilizing center around which to revolve.

Circle 2 - Newborn life with Christ.

When a person first commits trust to The Lord Jesus Christ, his life is indicative of the second wheel. Christ is in the center of the life. But it is up to the newborn one to keep Him in the center. Though the newborn convert desires Christ to be in the center of his life, yet he does not have the ability on his own to insure that He will remain there. Christ does not stay there automatically. However God has provided a means for the true disciple to keep Him there. In order for a wheel to remain true with the hub in the center, it must have spokes with equal tension. We too, need stabilizing spokes or factors to be sure The Lord Jesus Christ remains in the center of our lives.

Circle 3 - a life that has professed Christ, but not made Him Lord.

Life in a disobedient believer is represented by the third wheel where Christ has been pushed from His rightful position as Lord, therefore He is not in the center giving direction, aim, and purpose in that life. On one hand this wheel is like a locomotive engine wheel, with the center off-set, creating an "up-down-up-down" motion like some professing believers, often called "elevator Christians." On another hand this wheel is like a car with a flat tire. The ride becomes bumpy and the passengers are jolted. Likewise, if a believer pushes Christ from the center of his life, he or she will be going nowhere fast and will not progress toward the abundant life which is rightly his or hers in Christ.

Circle 4 - life that insures Christ remains in the center.

In the fourth wheel, there are spokes or factors to stabilize the hub. In order to ensure that Christ remains in the center of our lives, God has given us four spokes or supporting factors to insure life revolves around Christ and that He remains in control of our lives. To aid remembrance, these supports have been labeled

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with the letters G, R, O, and W. These four letters stand for the four essential elements for growth in the Christian life.

"G" stands for "Go to God in Prayer."

When a baby is born into the world, before the doctor counts all the fingers and toes he makes sure the baby is breathing. Air is essential to life. Without oxygen, the baby will suffocate and perish. Prayer is for the Christian what air is for the baby. The Christian's air is prayer. Prayer is essential in the Christian life. It is the first stabilizing factor in the Christian life and the first essential to growth in Christ. Without prayer the new life in Christ will seriously suffer. A believer must communicate with God.

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6,7).

This passage implies that nothing should be allowed to worry us. As soon as anything comes into the regenerated disciple's life, he or she can and should commit that and yes, **everything** to The Lord in prayer. The city of Philippi was a colony of Rome surrounded by a wall on which a garrison of sentinels were placed around the top on watch duty both day and night, thus ensuring that the city would be protected from any outside force and kept in peace. At any time the people needed only to look up in any direction and check that the sentinels were still there. By doing so they would find assurance of their safety in the city and it would put their hearts to rest in peace. As long as the garrison could be seen there was no threat of war. Peace prevailed. If we are concerned for any reason, we have but to look to God. The very peace, which characterizes God continuously and surpasses all understanding, will garrison our hearts if we take **everything** to God in prayer. He will never fail us nor forsake us. 1 Peter 5:7 is a command based on the imperative of verse 6, "Humble yourselves!" "Cast **all** your care upon Him because He continually cares about you!"

Two Old Testament saints are excellent examples of going to God in prayer: David and Daniel. **David** wrote, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice" (Psalm 55:17). The Psalms are The Old Testament saints' Hymnbook. Thus this was what they often sang. It is sin to sing lies unto The Lord. So David and others who sang this Psalm were promising God they would pray three times a day. A study of the life of David reveals that many times he found himself in difficult circumstances which he could not control. Prayer was his only answer and solution to manifold problems. But he did not wait for the problems to come before he prayed, but he developed the habit of praying three times daily. This greatly benefited him when the problems came. He called upon The God Who cares and answers prayer for those who are on praying ground by keeping short accounts with God and by confessing their sins shortly after sinning (1 John 1:9). You too, will benefit greatly by praying three times a day as you proceed through your new life with Christ at the helm and center of your life. This will assist you to reach the ability and practice, which Paul commanded in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray without ceasing!" Be constantly in the attitude of prayer so you can instantly call upon God at any time, anywhere.

Daniel also prayed three times a day. His enemies used this known fact about him to cause him to be thrown to the lions in their den. His enemies in strategic positions in the kingdom of Media-Persia deceived the king who favored Daniel by appealing to his pride to establish a statute and seal it according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be altered, requiring that no one in the kingdom should pray to any God or human except the king for thirty days at the consequence of being cast into the den of lions. The king forgot about Daniel's faithfulness in prayer and signed the decree. Aware of the decree, Daniel went to God in prayer three times a day with his window open to Jerusalem as he always did. Then those wicked enemies accused him before the king and insisted the king enforce the statute. All day until sundown the king labored

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to find a way to deliver Daniel. At sundown those wicked enemies came back to remind the king that no statute which the king establishes may be changed. So Daniel was cast into the den of lions after the king told Daniel that The God Whom he serves continually will deliver him. After a sleepless night the king ran to the lions' den to find that God had delivered Daniel from the lions by shutting their mouths because He believed in his God and prayed three times a day.

This world in which we live is a den of lions. Peter wrote, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). And the devil has many fallen angels working for him. Therefore we need to be prepared for our adversary and his emissaries by following Daniel's example and pray three times a day.

"R" stands for "Read The Bible."

The second stabilizing factor and essential to growth in the Christian life is daily reading The Bible. Not only must a new believer communicate to God, but he must allow God to communicate to him. This is done by reading The Bible. After the doctor attends to breathing of the newborn baby, he examines the tiny body and then he gives the baby to the mother for milk. In the physical life, food is of the utmost importance if we are to grow in a natural and healthy manner. In Matthew 4:4 Jesus declared to Satan, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." This presents a vital spiritual truth to us that much more is needed than just physical food. The Word of The God must feed our lives if we are to grow as a Christian. Just as the newborn baby needs milk, the newborn child of God needs milk too. Our spiritual milk is The Word of God. The Word of God is sincere, i.e. it is pure, unadulterated, and therefore nourishing and by it we can grow spiritually even as an infant. Therefore we are commanded to crave it (1 Peter 2:2). "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of The Word, that ye may grow thereby!" It is an act of the will to crave the milk of The God's Word and form the habit of reading it daily. Otherwise we soon slip back to our old ways and starve our spiritual life in Christ.

The mother feeds her baby frequently in small doses. A new believer also must feed on The Word of God frequently, in small doses at first. Since we eat food at least three times a day to care for our bodies, we should read God's Word at least three times a day to care for our souls. The spiritual life must be fed on The Word of God. I encourage you to go through The Bible in your reading in the following order:

Mark -- records the works of Christ;

John -- records the words of Christ;

Acts -- deals with The Church of Christ;

Romans -- explains The **Salvation** in Christ; then read Matthew through Revelation: The whole New Testament; then read

The Whole Bible: Genesis through Revelation.

Read ten to fifteen verses at a time three times a day and after each reading make sure to ask God to show you what you are to **do** as a result of this reading. Ask yourself, "What does The God want me to do as a result of this reading?" Then put that into practice in your life!

"O" stands for "Obey."

The third stabilizing factor to keep Christ in the center of life around which your new life in Christ revolves is obey. Just as air and food are essential for proper growth, so too is rest. After the baby breathes properly and mother feeds him, she puts him down to rest. We need to rest too. But we rest by obeying. Disobedience causes restlessness and uneasiness, but obedience produces rest, peace and assurance that The Lord is pleased. If you do not obey Christ then you will become restless and out of love, The God must discipline you if you really are His child (Hebrews 12:5-8). Proverbs 3:5-6 commands us to trust The God

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with **ALL** of your heart and thus obey Him totally. In addition, we must acknowledge Him in every way we take. To do this requires recognition of His Lordship in prayer and request for guidance. All our lives we are taught and encouraged to lean on our own understanding. In school as we learn, we are tested with more and more difficult problems. If our grades slip and we inquire what we need to do to bring them up, we are told to think. When we get a job, we cannot keep asking the boss what each step of procedure is. He will tell us to think. He is paying us to do a job. So we are expected to lean on our own understanding. Now we come to Christ and told to stop leaning on our own understanding but to acknowledge Christ and His lordship in all our ways. Every time you must make a choice, you are to stop, and look to Christ, acknowledge His lordship, and seek direction from Him. Then we must repeatedly each day yield our members to The Holy Spirit's control to be obedient servants of righteousness and no longer disobedient servants of sin (Romans 6:16,17).

"W" stands for "Witness."

The fourth essential to physical growth and the fourth stabilizing factor to keep Christ in the center of life is exercise. When a baby wakes up from resting, he naturally moves his arms and legs around. If this did not occur, he would never develop the muscles needed for crawling, and later walking and running. We must exercise spiritually as well. Spiritual exercise is witnessing or openly confessing your new (and ongoing) relationship to The Lord Jesus Christ. In Matthew 10:32,33 The Lord Jesus Christ emphasized the importance of confessing a relationship with Him before humans. Jesus was addressing His disciples in the context of warning against fear when he contrasted confessing Him before humans with denying Him. He said, "Therefore everyone whoever shall confess to be in Me before the face of the humans, I Myself also shall confess to be in him before the face of My Father Who is in Heavens. But whoever ever deny Me before the face of the humans, I Myself also shall deny him before the face of My Father Who is in Heavens." Confessing to be in Christ before humans determines whether or not The Lord Jesus Christ will confess that he has such a relationship with that one before His Father and the angels in Heaven. If you want The Lord Jesus Christ to confess that you are in Him before His Father and the angels in Heaven when you stand before God in Heaven, then you must confess to be in Him here and now before humans on Earth. For failure to openly confess Him is equal to denying Him. It also determines whether or not one loves The Lord Jesus Christ. This statement that Christ gave concerning confessing or denying Him in the context of warning against fear indicates that denial may be due to fear or being ashamed of Him. Paul also mentioned shame in relation to confessing Christ and indicated that it is due to a lack of committing trust.

This matter of witnessing to, or confessing that one has a relationship with Christ is not only the fourth essential to spiritual growth, but it is the fifth step which is essential to salvation (Romans 10:8-11).

"This is the declaration of the faith which we proclaim as an herald: If (and it may be) you confess Jesus, Lord with your mouth and you commit trust in your heart that God raised Him up out of dead ones, you shall be saved. For with heart He is continually being trusted unto righteousness and with mouth He is repeatedly being confessed in regard to salvation. For The Scripture is saying, Everyone who continually commits trust upon Him shall not be utterly ashamed" (Rom. 10:8-11)

Confession is so vitally important to your faith in Christ and to your relationship to Him. Because if you do not confess your relationship to Him before humans, He will not confess your relationship to Him before The God, His Father in Heaven. Thus failure to confess Christ not only indicates denial, but also it indicates that trust has not been committed to Him. While on Earth The Lord Jesus Christ said,

"When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and

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drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:25-28).

"I never knew you" is an awesome statement to those who thought they knew Him. Don't let it be said to you! Confess that you are in Christ and belong to Him repeatedly before humans.

While on the one hand The God's righteousness is imputed by committing trust unto Christ with the heart, on the other hand Salvation is reinforced and evidence is given to the Salvation by confession of Christ with the mouth. Public confession is essential to Salvation. It is through confession that The Lord Jesus Christ is made known to others. In addition to the fact that through confession, God uses you and others who are committing trust unto The Lord Jesus Christ to witness for Christ and thus make Him known, you yourself benefit from confession as well, because every time you identify with Christ you reinforce your own assurance. You remind yourself that you belong to Christ, thereby affirming your relationship with Christ. Conversely, Jesus said that failure to confess Him before the humans is equal to denial. Read again what He said is the consequence of not confessing Him before humans.

"Therefore everyone whoever shall confess to be in Me before the face of the humans, I Myself also shall confess to be in him before the face of My Father Who is in Heavens. But whoever ever deny Me before the face of the humans, I Myself also shall deny him before the face of My Father Who is in Heavens" (Matthew 10:32,33).

Therefore this matter of confessing or denying Christ determines three things:

- 1. your reality of your relationship to Christ;
- 2. whether Christ will confess that you belong to Him in Heaven; and
- 3. whether you are ashamed of Christ or not.

When Paul concluded the statement concerning the need to confess Christ *to be* Lord as being essential to salvation in Romans 10:9,10, He added, "The Scripture is saying, Everyone who continually commits trust upon Him shall not be utterly ashamed." Thus, failure to confess Him reflects that one is ashamed of Him (Romans 10:11) and indicates the lack of true belief and committal of trust to Him. So failure to confess Him indicates denial of a true relationship of Him, reflects that one is ashamed of Him, and indicates a lack of true belief and committal of trust to Him.

By the way, did you know that The Lord Jesus Christ prayed for you before He went to the Cross? In His High Priestly prayer recorded in John 17, He prayed for His disciples, but not for the world (John 17:9).

"And they committed trust that You Yourself sent Me. I Myself am asking concerning them. I am asking not concerning the world but on the contrary concerning |those| whom You permanently gave to Me because they are continuously Yours."

Then He prayed for all those who would commit trust unto Him through their word (John 17:20).

"And I am asking not concerning these alone, but also concerning the ones committing trust unto Me through their word."

Since you believed on Him because some one, who was witnessed to by someone else, witnessed to you, and that person was witnessed to by someone else, and so on down through the ages, therefore He prayed for you. He prayed for you in two ways: one, for you to commit trust unto Him, and two, for your witness unto some one else who shall commit trust unto Him. It is a foregone conclusion with God that everyone, who truly and completely commits trust in Christ, shall witness or confess himself or herself to be in Christ to other humans. The lack of such confession indicates lack of true and complete trust in Christ.

One might ask how do I go about making such a confession. When a young person falls in love he or she does not lack for words to express what the one being loved is like or what that one means to them. It is the

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same when one comes to know, love, and commit trust unto The Lord Jesus Christ. It is far easier when one first comes to Christ to begin witnessing about Him than it is if a period of time passes before openly confessing Him. Therefore we encourage new believers to begin confessing Him right away.

You might ask, But what should I say? Tell your family, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances,

"Something very important happened in my life (then indicate: today, last night, last week, or recently) and I would like you to know. I met the most important person that ever lived and He became my Savior. I received from Him the most valuable gift that anyone could receive. This Savior is The Lord Jesus Christ, Who died on Calvary's cross to pay the penalty in order to forgive my sins, He rose again the third day and ascended into Heaven to apply His Blood on The Mercyseat in Heaven to cleanse me from my sins and guilt and to give me eternal life. He has changed my life and I would like you to observe the changes taking place in my life. Christ is now living in me and I am alive in Him. If you would like to meet This One and receive His wonderful gift, please ask me and I will tell you how it came about."

Then when you are asked, you can use one of the tracts (such as **Do You Know**?, **Believe It or Not**, **Don't Risk Missing Out**, or **Is There an Answer?**) which are freely available through Happy Heralds, Inc. @ www.happyheralds.org or .com and go through the steps of Salvation with that one.

When The Lord Jesus taught His disciples, He indicated that there are four kinds of hearts represented by four kinds of soil upon which the seed of The God's Word will fall (Mark 4:1-8, 14-20. Read it now!). There are four kinds of people to whom you will witness. It is good to keep this in mind when you are witnessing so that you do not get discouraged, but repeatedly witness to others.

- **1. The <u>Hard-hearted</u>** are represented by the soil alongside the way, close to where people walk and the soil is packed hard. The hard-hearted are those who have such hard hearts that The God's Word cannot penetrate; therefore they will not respond to the message of Salvation, to The Blessed Gospel, and to your witness because Satan will snatch away The Word from their hearts.
- **2.** The <u>Heavy-hearted</u> are represented by the rocky ground where a thin layer of soil covers the large rocks. The heavy-hearted are those who do not have any depth and when you witness to them, they respond readily to The Gospel and to your witness, but when affliction, hard times, difficulties in life, and even when others laugh at them or poke fun at them, or ridicule, or persecute them for having received Christ, they are offended and wither away.
- 3. The <u>Half-hearted</u> are represented by the seed sown among thorns. The half-hearted are those who respond to your witness, accept The Gospel, receive Christ as Savior, and appear to begin to grow. But when the cares of this world press upon them, they give more attention to the cares than to their growth and relationship to Christ. Or, the deceitfulness of riches or the desire for material things takes precedence to the desire for Spiritual things and their growth and progress in Christ is stunted. Or, the lusts of other things or their pride in life (wanting to get ahead, enjoy popularity with the crowd, or higher position in the company, or the satisfaction of their passion, or some hunger or thirst in life such as gluttony for food, or alcohol, or drugs, or possessions will choke The Word so that they do not grow spiritually. Rather they find these things more important than the things of Christ and giving attention to the Spiritual life in Christ.
- **4.** The <u>Honest or Whole-hearted</u> are represented by the seed sown on intrinsically good soil which produces fruit abundantly. The honest or whole-hearted are those who respond to The Word of God and grow steadily in Christ until they become fruitful, some bearing fruit 3000%, some 6000%, and some 10,000% for God's glory by bringing others to Christ. So you see that according to The Lord Jesus at least seventy-five per cent of those to whom you witness will not be true to The Gospel call and the

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message of the true Salvation in Christ. This is also illustrated by the answer He gave to the disciples question, "Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:23,24). Only approximately twenty-five percent of those to whom you witness will respond properly to The Word of God and become fruit-bearing disciples. Jesus said, "In this My Father is glorified that you bring much fruit and you shall become disciples to Me" (John 15:8).

By the way, which one of these soils or which kind of heart do you picture yourself as having? A hard heart, a heavy heart, a half heart, or an honest or whole heart? Often when I ask this question, there is silence and hesitation. Then many times the answer is, "I guess half hearted" or only occasionally, "heavy hearted." I respond with, "Do you hesitate to answer whole-hearted because life in Christ looms ahead like a steep mountain?" Their answer, "Yes, I don't know whether I can be that dedicated." But remember Jesus said, "I Myself came in order that they continually have absolute life and that they continually have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). The kind of life that Jesus gives enables the one committing trust unto Him to be fruitful. And you can be whole hearted if right now you determine by His grace to be a whole-hearted, fruitful disciple of His.

All four areas, Going to God in prayer, Reading The Bible, Obeying, and Witnessing, must be evident in a believer's life if he is to keep Christ in the center of his life.

Now notice **two words** in the lower center of the wheel card. You will meet two influences in your new life in Christ: The **Church** and **Satan**, one an influence for good and one an influence for evil.

"CHURCH"

Introduce "CHURCH" by asking this question, "What is between the two CH's (CH__CH) in this word?" The answer will come back "U-R." Then reply, "That's correct! That's where you belong and that's where you need to be--in the center of The Church"! The Church is the correct environment for a child of God to grow toward maturity. It is in church where we learn to grow. It is in church where we are helped to grow. Because it is in church where we read and study The Bible and learn what It says. In Church we feed on God's Word publicly. And it is in church where we learn what areas in our lives we need to obey. It is also in church where we learn how to and are exhorted to witness. Church exists so that believers can worship God and learn how to live more pleasing to The God and more effectively lead others to a saving knowledge of The Lord Jesus Christ. The Church will do everything in its power to help you to grow and to resist Satan.

"SATAN"

Satan is the enemy who will do everything in his power to keep you from growing. He will try to keep you from going to The God in prayer or he will try to interrupt prayer. He will try to keep you from reading The God's Word. He will try to keep you from obeying and will disturb you so that you do not rest in Christ. He will try to keep you from witnessing.

One of the first things Satan will do is to try to get the newborn disciple to doubt his salvation and to sin against The God. When hardships and trials come, and they will, Satan will come to you and say, "Look at all the trouble you have since trusting Christ. Nobody has as much temptation as you have."

NOTE THE VERSES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WHEEL CARD!

You can respond to such a thought by saying, "Satan, you are a liar. Some body in Europe, in Asia, in Hongkong or China, in Australia, in North or South America, or Africa is enduring the same temptation as I am. The God's Word says (point to 1 Corinthians 10:13 on wheel card), "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye

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are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13). When tempted, first look for a way to escape the temptation. If you cannot find it, look to The Lord to enable you to bear it.

However, if you do sin, fellowship with The God can be instantly restored by confessing your sin and claiming the promise of 1 John 1:9. Do not ask for forgiveness because that is acting as if you do not believe God's Word and are calling God a liar. Rather say. "Lord, I have sinned. I (name the sin, i.e. lied, cursed, had evil thoughts, etc.). Thank you for cleansing me with the blood of The Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for forgiving me. And the next time I am tempted, let me be prompted by and respond to Thy Holy Spirit." For God's Word promises instant restoration, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). So keep short accounts with The God! When you realize you have sinned, go before The God, confess and name the sin, and thank Him for the cleansing and the forgiveness.

May you persistently grow in His grace and in the knowledge of Him!

For the initial use of the Wheel Card, omit the portion on the four soils. On the next occasion of follow-up (preferably one week later), go over the whole Wheel Card including the four soils portion.

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