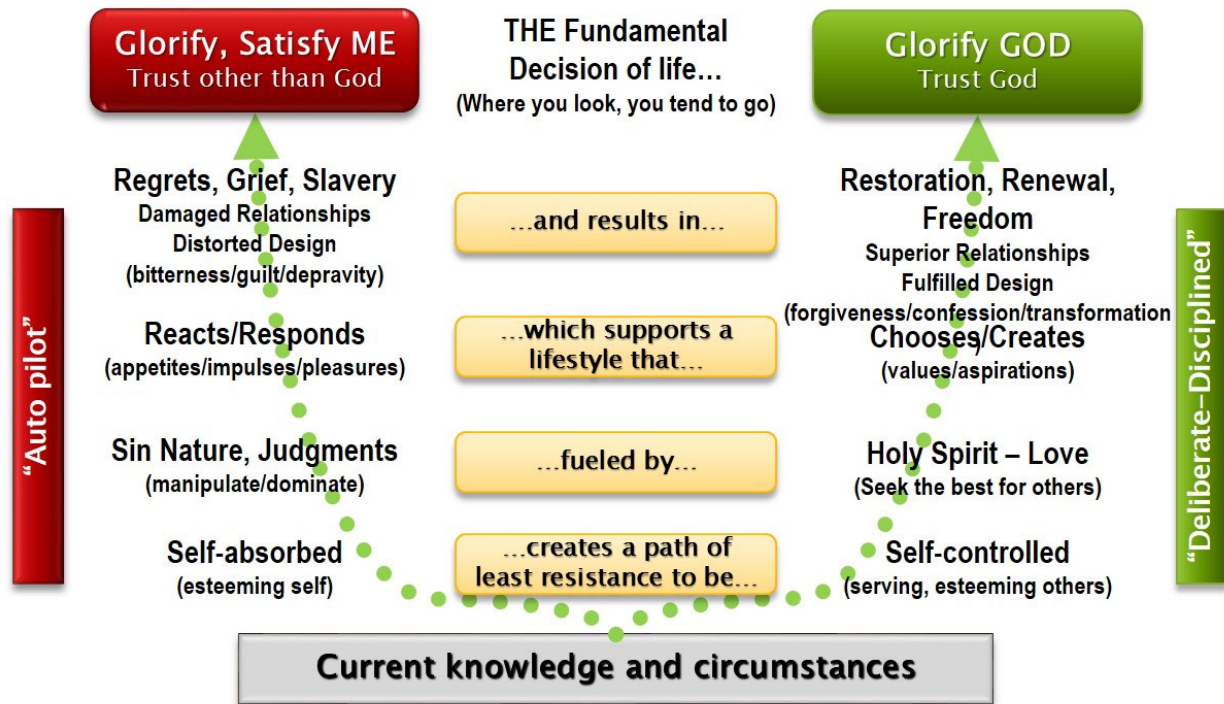


Two Ways to Live



You are designed in the image of God. You only need to depend upon God to allow your design to reflect the image of God. The natural tendency, though, is to rely upon yourself, which will hide or distort your design. It is automatic (Auto Pilot) to depend on and trust YOURSELF, which follows the Self-absorbed and Judgment path. It requires a Deliberate choice to trust God.

When you look at your current reality, some things are known, and others aren't. Part of your current reality is that you either know what God is asking you to do in this current circumstance or don't. You either know God's Word, or you don't. God's Word is all about reality and how things work. If you did an objective report on your life right now, that would be a good picture of your **Current knowledge and circumstances** or, as you have learned, your current reality. Right now, you are standing in the current knowledge and circumstances rectangle.

As you stand in current reality, you have two choices or places to look. Remember, "Where you look, you tend to go?" God asks you where you are looking when He asks The Fundamental Question, "Do you trust God or something other than God?" God continually asks you that one question. It comes in two critical forms, one for eternal life ("Do you trust Me for your eternity?") and one for daily life ("Do you trust Me now?"). If you accepted God's gift of Salvation and eternal life with Him, He asks you the second question. If you haven't, you get the first and often the second question to drive you back to the first one. Everyone faces these two questions. If you are blind to them, then you are depending on yourself, not God. Looking at God and trusting Him provides the best results.

If you look at, **Satisfy ME** or *Trust other than God*, you create a path of least resistance to being self-absorbed and self-dependent. That is the natural tendency of the sin nature to esteem yourself rather than others. When temptation comes, there is a greater chance to sin because of your self-absorbed, satisfy ME attitude. You will be less willing to endure short-term pain; therefore, there will be long-term pain from the regrets of your self-absorbed actions. On the other hand, if you look at **Glorify and Trust**

God, He provides the energy of the Holy Spirit and His fruit of self-control. He gives you the strength to endure pain and reap eternal rewards and results. That helps you see any temptation for what it is, the slippery slope to sin. Temptation is always an opportunity to operate with or without input from God or Godly sources. It is not a sin when you are tempted. It is a sin to do what the temptation prompts you to do. The only effective way to handle temptation is to trust God and His power, not your own.

If you move up the **Satisfy ME** path, the **Judgments** provide more fuel for a self-absorbed focus. They fuel a desire in a woman to make her relationships meet her needs and a man's desire for work and activities to meet his needs. Women will act in ways to remove pain in relationships but will end up manipulating or dominating the relationship and creating more pain. On the other hand, men will act in ways to remove pain in work and try to control work and activities, and “rule” their wives, but will be left with pain at work and home. Both men and women will focus on controlling to meet their needs.

But, the path to **Glorify God** means an entirely different approach and attitude. It is not about ME; it is about others. Therefore, your actions and life are fueled by the **Holy Spirit** and His fruit of **Love**, *pursuing their best patiently, kindly, sacrificially, and unconditionally.*

And the situation gets worse when on the **Satisfy ME** path. The Judgments fuel your self-absorbed tendencies and further support a **React/Respond** lifestyle focused on short-term appetites, impulses, and pleasures. This lifestyle leads to statements like, “You made me mad,” “I’m tired of you doing that,” or “I’m getting a divorce because she/he did...” That contrasts with a life that depends on and **Glorifies God**. Fueled by the Holy Spirit, **Choose/Create** becomes your life. Choosing Godly values and aspirations is a life that aligns your thinking with God’s thinking which changes your feelings and actions. Good thinking drives the right feelings and actions. Flawed thinking drives bad feelings and actions that you rationalize.

The result of each path is drastically different. Depending upon yourself (**Satisfy ME**) leads to **Regrets, Grief, and Slavery**, and the cycle continues with short periods of less grief that masquerades as Peace and Joy. On the other hand, if you **Glorify God** and desire to trust Him, you live from the inside out, not the outside in like the react/respond life. The result is **Restoration, Renewal, and Freedom** despite the people or circumstances around you. You focus on your PERFECT Father God, who is in control of life and alone can make sense out of life for you.

So, which path are you on? Trusting self—leading to regrets, grief, and slavery? Or trusting God—leading to restoration, renewal, and freedom? **All it requires is one Fundamental Decision.**

***Romans 6:13** – And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*