

David Stockwell Evangelistic Association

Champ Camp

*An 8-Lesson Personal Bible Study Series ~
Training Disciples to Become Champions for Christ!*

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Preface

Jesus Christ is Lord!

⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,
¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth,
and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
Philippians 2:9-11

Dear Friend,

It is with tremendous joy that we introduce to you this material. We are overjoyed by your commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Life truly begins when we accept Christ as Lord and Savior, but living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ requires growth. You must grow in your Christian life in order to enjoy all the wondrous blessings God has in store for you.

We have asked God to allow us to help you grow as a new Christian. Our ministry has developed this series of eight personal Bible study lessons for you to work through on your own. It is vitally important that you use your Bible, God's Word, to help you understand the Lordship of Christ. It's like a "training camp;" we want to become strong, fit **Champions for Christ**, trained and ready in our walk under the Lordship of Christ, ready to meet everyday challenges, ready for spiritual battle against the enemy, and learning what it means to live abundant life in Christ!

Starting with this first lesson, we will focus our attention on what the Word of God says about your growth as a Christian. Never forget that the Bible is your primary tool for learning to be a disciplined follower of Jesus Christ. Each of these eight lessons will encourage you in the use of your Bible.

As the Lordship of Christ was proclaimed in your community, many like you responded. You began a new life as a result of receiving Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. Growing as a Christian involves obedience in several essential areas of your life. John 14:21 says, "*The one who obeys Me is the one who loves Me.*" Therefore, let us encourage you to diligently obey God as you study His Word.

Yours Because Jesus is Alive!

David Stockwell

David Stockwell

Introduction

CHAMP CAMP

A Training Camp Manual for Abundant Life

Whether you have recently made the commitment to follow Jesus Christ, or you have been a Christian for many years, this eight-lesson personal discipleship series will give you all the tools necessary to have a deep, meaningful, life-altering, abundant, and growing relationship with Jesus Christ. Growing under the Lordship of Jesus Christ is a vital part of every believer's life. Simply put, this study will show you how to set Jesus Christ firmly as the foundation of your life.

As Jesus says in Matthew 7:24-25,

²⁴ "So then, everyone who hears My words and puts them into practice is like a wise man. He builds his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain comes down. The water rises. The winds blow and beat against that house. But it does not fall. It is built on the rock."

It is vitally important that you begin using the Bible to help you understand the Lordship of Christ. As mentioned earlier, the Bible, God's Word, is your primary tool for learning to be a disciplined follower of Jesus Christ. You will need to purchase or acquire a complete Bible, with Old and New Testaments to use as you study. Bibles are now also readily available in digital format, online and through computer applications and can easily be downloaded to computers and mobile phones. We suggest www.biblegateway.com as a terrific online resource, and it is totally free.

Remember as we begin this study that your goal in life should be to seek, trust, love, and follow Jesus every day. If you do this, He will reveal Himself to you. Let this promise from God found in Jeremiah 29:11-13 encourage you as you study:

"¹¹ 'For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,' says the LORD, 'thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.'"

MAXIMIZE THE BENEFITS

As you study, you can maximize the benefits of this Bible study by adopting several effective strategies:

1. Keep trusting and following Jesus every day.
2. Begin each study session in a quiet place, away from interruption and distraction, with a pen or pencil in hand, and a Bible that is easy to read.
3. Pray and ask God to help you and allow you to understand His Word; also ask Him for power to obey His Word.

4. Read the verses carefully and answer the questions in the blank lines provided. Let the scriptures speak for themselves, but answer in your own words. Take time to consider the deeper meaning of these questions and their answers.
5. Study the verses in context; read several verses before and after the verse specifically mentioned in the lesson, so that you can better understand the “who, what, when, where, how and why” of each topic and focus. This will help you gain an even greater understanding of what God is saying through His Word.
6. Memorize verses which particularly impress you.
7. Remember that your adversary, the devil, will try to keep you from completing this Bible study. Take as much time you need, but be sure to continue until you finish every lesson!

FOUR ESSENTIAL PRACTICES

God’s Word describes four essential practices or disciplines for Christians which can transform your life and greatly impact the people around you. This Bible study will help you build proper life-long habits in the following areas:

Daily Bible Study

The Bible is God’s own Word, written down and passed from generation to generation, and is inspired by the Holy Spirit. God’s Word helps us learn about His nature, His character, and His attributes; His Word also shows us how to live our lives. The primary way God communicates with us is through the study of His Word. Psalm 119:9 states that the way to live a pure life is to guard ourselves according to God’s Word. Reading the Bible is vital to achieving a life that pleases God. Remember also that Jesus says in Matthew 4:4:

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”

The scripture also tells us in 1 John 2:14:

“...you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.”

When we study God’s Word, and it takes root in our hearts, then we become strong in the power of His might, and we are able to overcome Satan! Read your Bible consistently every day and keep on reading! Lesson Seven will help you further in this essential spiritual discipline.

Prayer

God is your Heavenly Father. He cares for you and desires to have fellowship with you. We experience this fellowship through prayer. Prayer is our primary method of communication with God. There are many aspects of prayer to study and understand,

but simply put, prayer is carrying on a conversation with God. Jesus says in Luke 18:1,

“Men should always pray and keep praying until the answer comes.

Since we are His children, He wants to meet our needs. Prayer is asking God to provide answers to these needs and the needs of those around you. Through prayer, we allow God to talk to us as we talk to Him. Begin praying every day for your friends and family, and for those who need a relationship with Christ as Lord and Savior. Find a fellow believer soon who is willing to be your prayer partner. Remember, just as with any other relationship, communication is vital in our relationship with God. It is important to have an attitude of prayer – an ongoing conversation with God – as we study His Word. Lesson Six will provide a detailed study of prayer.

Christian Fellowship

Very simply, fellowship is “two fellows in the same ship going to the same place.” As Christians, one of the most important needs, and also joys, in our lives is Christian fellowship. One way a person knows that he has been saved is that he loves his Christian brothers and sisters (1 John 3:10). You can enjoy Christian fellowship through regular church attendance, small group Bible study, praise and worship services, and community outreaches organized through the church. It is important that you become active right away in a solid, Bible-believing Christian church. Hebrews 10:25 says,

“...²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another...”

In Lesson Four, we will study together about the church and fellowship.

Sharing Your Faith

It is of utmost importance that you not only live the Christian life before others, but that you also tell them how Jesus wonderfully changed your life. Acts 1:8 says that you will have the power to tell others verbally what Christ can do for them. Share with others your personal story of what Christ has done for you, how your relationship with Christ has changed your life, and share with them what scripture says about how Jesus can transform their lives as well. Lesson Five teaches about effectively sharing your faith.

Lesson One

ASSURANCE OF THE ABUNDANT LIFE

Your decision to follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is the greatest step you will ever make in your life. Remember that Jesus' own words in John 10:10 are,

"...I came that you may have life, and have it more abundantly."

The Bible calls this wonderful experience of knowing Jesus "the abundant life." Thank God that now you yourself have understood the Lord's purpose, and have entered into life in all its fullness!

If knowing Jesus is indeed having abundant life, then you can count on His enemy, the devil, trying to rob you of absolute assurance of this abundant life. Therefore, you need to be fully convinced from God's Word about what actually happens when a person commits his life totally to Jesus Christ.

As you answer the following questions, focus your attention on the Word of God. What God says in His Word about your new life in Christ is the sole authority on which you must stand for assurance. Remember that God saved you, and He has said some very definite things about your new abundant life in Christ.

Let's begin by reviewing two scriptures:

1. Revelation 4:8
2. I Peter 1:16.

According to these two scriptures, what can you say about God? _____

In fact, God is of such goodness that *Habakkuk 1:13* says that He cannot even look upon evil!

FOUR VERY IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT GOD AND US

Fact No. 1: We have all sinned against a Holy God!

Read Leviticus 19:2, I Samuel 2:2, and Isaiah 43:15. These verses tell us that God is Holy; meaning that He is "set above." In light of God's holiness and goodness, what does the Bible say about you and me?

1. Romans 3:10-12 _____

2. Romans 3:23 _____

3. Ephesians 4:17-18 _____

Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever stolen anything? Have you ever had an impure thought? Yes, you have, and that means you have broken God’s Law and are a sinner!

1. Read Psalm 14:2-3, and Romans 3:23. Describe what these verses say about who has sinned.
2. Read James 2:10. Is anyone less of a sinner depending upon which specific sins they’ve committed?

Fact No. 2: We all deserve to go to hell for our sins!

1. Read Isaiah 59:2-3. What does our sin do to us? _____

2. Read II Corinthians 5:10. What happens to us when we die? _____

Fact No. 3: Jesus is the Only Way to Heaven!

But remember that you can believe all of these facts that the Bible reveals, and still miss God’s salvation and forgiveness. From the very beginning, Jesus stressed what important fact?

1. Matthew 4:17 _____

 - a. The words *faith* and *believe* in the New Testament really mean to turn from your sins, to trust completely in Jesus Christ, and to commit your life to Him.

2. What is the result in Heaven when you turn to Christ?
 Luke 15:10 _____

3. What does Jesus say in John 14:6? _____

4. According to 2 Peter 3:8-9, and Romans 1:16, to whom is God’s salvation available? _____

5. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. Can anybody be saved by doing good work? _____

 - a. Jesus lived a perfect life, and willingly died the perfect death to pay our penalty so that our sin could be forgiven. Read Colossians 2:13-14, II Corinthians 5:21, John 10:14-15, and Romans 5-8.
 - b. What do these scriptures mean to you?

Fact No. 4: You must turn from your sins and trust in Christ to be saved!

To escape from perishing, we must do what?

1. Luke 13:3 _____

2. What does Romans 10:9-10 say? _____

Jesus says in John 3:3, “*Unless you are born-again, you will not see the Kingdom of God.*” This means that we must die to our selfish thoughts and desires, and be reborn as followers of Jesus.

Read Galatians 2:20. How can we live after we die to ourselves?

Therefore, we must turn from our sins and ask Jesus Christ to become the Lord of our lives. He is to be our only Leader, Boss, and Master. The Bible consistently refers to Him as the LORD Jesus Christ. He is the same LORD Who said in the Old Testament that He would have no other gods before Him.

In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says, “*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in.*” In order to receive God’s salvation and abundant life, we must willingly open the door of our hearts and invite Him to come in, to rule and reign in our hearts forever as LORD.

If you have never received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, ask God to save you by speaking to Him in prayer, like this:

“Father God, I know that I am a sinner, and I know that I deserve to go to hell for my sins. But You love me so much that You were willing to take my place. I believe that You died on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins. And on the third day, You rose from the grave to win victory over death. I accept Your gift of salvation, and I know that I could never earn it on my own. Lord Jesus, come into my heart; I give You my life. Forgive me. Change me. Save me. Thank you, Jesus, for saving me. Lord Jesus, I will follow You for the rest of my life. In Your Name I pray, Amen.”

The Bible says that several things happen when a person realizes and acts upon these four important Biblical facts. The following are wonderful truths about your new life in Christ.

SEVERAL THINGS THAT HAPPEN WHEN YOU TURN TO CHRIST:

1. What does Luke 15:10 say happens in heaven when you turn to Christ? _____

2. Jesus Himself said in John 5:24 that something wonderful happens to one who turns to Him. What is it? _____

3. What else happened to you when you became a believer in Christ?
II Corinthians 5:17 _____

4. John 1:12 explains that what amazing relationship is ours? _____

5. What does John 8:12 say we will NOT happen if we follow Jesus? _____

6. According to Galatians 5:22, what is the fruit of having the Holy Spirit in your life? _____

7. Very simply, 1 John 5:12 says that God's abundant life is found in possessing...? _____

8. Whose power is responsible for our continual possession of eternal life?
I Peter 1:3-5 _____

9. I John 5:13 says that if you have trusted Jesus Christ you can _____
that you have eternal life! (This does not mean just to "hope," "wish," or "think!")
10. How does God let you know that you are His child?
Romans 8:16 _____

11. Romans 8:1 says: _____

12. Why will you never perish after becoming a Christian?
John 10:27-29 _____

13. According to John 6:38-40, is it possible for you to lose your salvation? _____

14. What does God promise in Hebrews 13:5? _____

15. The Apostle Paul was confident of what great truth in Philippians 1:6? _____

16. According to Romans 8:38-39, can anything ever separate us from God's love and our abundant
life in Christ? _____

Once you have received Christ as Lord and Savior, there is nothing that can separate you from Christ or take away your salvation! We are filled with indescribable joy knowing that heaven is waiting for us when we die; let's also remember that God has plans for us here on earth, and work for us to do! Our duty, calling, and joy in life is to grow closer to Christ every day, to worship Him, and to share with other people every day how they can have a relationship with Him as well.

Lesson Two

DEVELOPING YOUR DEVOTIONAL LIFE AND QUIET TIME

A Word from David...

Dear Friend,

I hope things are going well for you since you committed your life to Jesus Christ. I trust that you are daily reading the Bible and praying as we suggested in your first lesson. I also hope you are sharing Jesus Christ consistently with others and consistently attending church where the Bible is preached and Jesus Christ is honored.

Let me ask you some questions. Do you ever feel like quitting or just giving up? Do you ever feel as though no one loves you? Do you ever wonder why your life has not changed as much as you would like it to change?

Allow me to share with you some things that I have found to be very helpful. The greatest emotional/psychological drive that we humans have is the drive for acceptance; that is, to be approved and liked by others. All of us want to be liked and accepted. This is a good drive that was given to us by God. Even God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit express Their love and approval of one another. Since the Bible says that we are created in the likeness of God, we are no different in wanting acceptance. The words *love, praise, glorify, honor, magnify, and please* are “approval” words used in the Bible. For instance, when Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus as a dove, and God the Father said, *“This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased.”* (Matthew 3:16-17.)

However, even though this drive was given to us by God, it has been perverted by our sin nature. In Matthew 22:37, Jesus said the greatest commandment is that we should *“love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”* We have been created to enjoy God’s love and to return our love to Him, but because we are selfish and sinful, we seek the approval and acceptance of other people rather than the approval of God. Many times, rather than doing what pleases God, we do what we think will allow us to gain the approval of someone else. But if we really believe that God loves us and that He wants the best for us and that He is to be the boss, then we should make sure that everything we do is pleasing to God (1 Corinthians 10:31). You see, when you understand that God loves you and accepts you, you will be free to really love other people and care for them, rather than having to compromise your commitment to Christ. Therefore, it is very important that you put God first, and that you take time to be alone with Him.

Many people say that they just don’t have time to spend with God, but everyone has exactly twenty-four hours in a day. Now obviously, there are several things that occupy one’s time. Everyone needs to sleep between five and nine hours a day. Most people must either go to school or work a major portion of the day, and some time must be used for eating. But you must make absolutely sure that you commit some time every day to God, spending quality time reading the Bible and praying. If you are too busy to read God’s Word and pray, then you are too busy! You need to get your priorities straight and put God first in your life, even if it means turning off the television, getting away from the phone,

logging off of the computer, or even waking up earlier in the morning. I cannot emphasize enough that you must set aside some time each day to spend with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 1:9, “*God is faithful, by Whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*” In other words, the very reason you were saved was to have fellowship with Jesus!

There is probably no other area as important and vital to your spiritual growth as the establishment of a consistent daily time alone with God. We only come to love God more as we get to know Him more. This is exactly what a quiet time provides for every believer. This time alone with God is simply fellowship with your Heavenly Father. Through prayer we wait on His presence and talk to Him. Through His Word, He speaks to us.

You must remember that although you need this quiet time for your spiritual growth, God waits and wants to meet with you! Don’t forget that your Heavenly Father desires your fellowship much more than you do His. Therefore, your quiet time is not merely a duty, but it is a privilege and an honor.

This lesson will introduce you to the importance of maintaining a daily devotional time with God. The answers you write in the blanks will show the value of having a quiet time. Also, at the end of the questions, there is a guide to daily prayer that will help you plan this important area of your Christian life.

Only by spending time with God can you get to know God and therefore love Him more. If you really love someone, you want to spend time with that person. Because you love God, you will want to spend time with Him. The following lesson will help you to learn how to spend time with God. Please study it very carefully and open your Bible and answer these questions prayerfully. Remember that God loves you and that He is working all things together for your good (Romans 8:20) and that His purpose is to make you become just like Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29).

In Christ Victorious,

David Stockwell

YOUR QUIET TIME - PRAYER

1. In Luke 18:1-8, what did Jesus say about persistence in prayer? _____

2. According to Proverbs 15:8, what does your Heavenly Father think about prayer? _____

3. What does James 1:5 say about wisdom? _____

4. What should you do to prepare for Satan's temptations?
Matthew 26:41 _____

1 Corinthians 10:13 _____

James 1:14 _____

5. What has God instructed you to do about praying for others?
1 Timothy 2:1-4 _____

James 5:16 _____

6. Is there ever a time when you should stop praying?
Ephesians 6:18 1 Thess. 5:17 _____

7. Hebrews 4:14-16 explains why Jesus understands our need of prayer. Why can we have confidence in Him? _____

YOUR QUIET TIME – THE WORD

1. What does Matthew 4:4, and 1 Peter 2:2 say is the diet of every believer? _____

2. According to Psalm 119:11; John 17:17; Psalm 119:9, how does a Christian continue to live a clean life before the Lord? _____

3. What does 2 Timothy 3:16 say should be your guide in right living as a Christian? _____

4. Ephesians 6:10-20 describes the full armor of God; Your enemy, the devil, is fought by what weapon? _____

5. Read Hebrews 4:12; how can you find out if your thoughts are right in God's sight? _____

YOUR QUIET TIME – PLAN AND PROCEDURE

1. When does Psalm 5:3 say is a great time to meet with God? _____

2. Where does Jesus say we should pray in Matthew 6:6? _____

3. What was Jesus' example in Mark 1:35? _____

4. Moses was told to prepare for a quiet time with God. What did God tell him to do in Exodus 34:1-3? _____

5. Read Acts 4:13. What will spending time with Jesus do in your life before others? _____

Therefore, you will need to find a definite time and place to meet, a good-sized Bible, a notebook to write down insights you receive from the Word, and a prayer list or prayer cycle.

Start a reading plan by selecting a book in the New Testament; we suggest the Gospel of John. As you are reading, ask these three simple questions:

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What has the Holy Spirit told me to do from this passage?

Here is an example of a prayer guide that is helpful in maintaining specific daily prayer. Every day, begin your quiet time by thanking God for:

1. Saving you.
2. Someone (family, friend, etc.)
3. A physical blessing (eyes, hands, etc.)
4. A spiritual blessing (forgiveness, love, etc.)

Each day of the week is for a particular area of prayer. For example:

1. Monday: “M” is for missionaries.
2. Tuesday: “T” is for thanksgiving.
3. Wednesday: “W” is for workers – your pastor and church leaders.
4. Thursday: “T” is for your personal troubles – pray for God to answer specific needs.
5. Friday: “F” is for your family and other families.
6. Saturday: “S” is for saints – your Christian friends.
7. Sunday: “S” is for services at your church and for sinners. Write down the names of five people who need Christ and pray that God will show them their need of Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Lesson Three

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

When you turned from your sins and gave your life to Jesus Christ, some fantastic things happened to you. Immediately, your sins were forgiven and you became part of God's family as His child. One of the greatest things that happened to you is that God's son, Jesus Christ, Who created this universe, has come to live inside you. All the power that He possesses is available to you to be used for the glory of God. You never have to walk in defeat again. 1 John 4:4 says, ". . . *He Who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*" You *can* have victory over your flesh and over the devil.

As you learn how to be dead to yourself and allow Christ to live in you, every day becomes more and more exciting. Paul said in Galatians 2:20, "*I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.*" But not only does Christ live in you, but God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, all three in one, live in you. Jesus said in Acts 1:8, "*You shall receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me.*" You can be a witness for Christ as His Spirit gives you the power.

You *cannot* live the Christian life on your own, but with Jesus Christ living in you, you can be all that God created you to be. This is the way God gives us that abundant Christian life that He speaks about in John 10:10. The questions and answers from this lesson will help you to understand more and more of what it means that Jesus Christ now lives His life in you.

God never intended for *you* to live the Christian life. Only Jesus Christ can live that life. You must realize this fact, if you have not already. The sooner you do, the better things will be. Only Christ can live the Christian life. However, there are some great discoveries that you can make as a new Christian.

The Holy Spirit is God's power in producing the very life of Christ in you before others. Imagine the potential of God Himself living in you in the Person of the Holy Spirit to reproduce Christ to a lost and unbelieving world. Prayerfully answer every question and allow God's Word to bring this realization to you.

How to walk in the Spirit can be explained through four "P" words described in the Bible. God has given us a **PROMISE**, **POSITION**, **PROVISION**, and **PLAN** for being like Christ.

I. A FULFILLED PROMISE

1. The second half of John 10:10 explains the reason for Jesus' coming to the world. Why did He come? _____

2. Before leaving His early followers, Jesus made a startling statement in John 16:7. What promise was made? _____

3. Who is the one Jesus is speaking of in question #2? See John 16:13. _____

4. What were Jesus' words to His disciples in Acts 1:4-5? _____

5. Acts 2 describes the events on the Day of Pentecost; list some of the things that happened when the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit. _____

6. Romans 8:9 says: _____

7. Since Christ indwells every believer in the Person of His Spirit, we need to have a better understanding of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is described several ways in the Bible. He is called:
- In John 14:16: _____
 - In John 16:13: _____
 - In Romans 8:2: _____
 - In Romans 8:9: _____
 - In Hebrews 9:14: _____
 - In Hebrews 10:29: _____
8. The Holy Spirit has done several things for believers. Match the Scripture with the correct answer:
- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| _____ John 3:5-6 | A. We are baptized into the Body of Christ. |
| _____ 1 Corinthians 12:13 | B. He has sealed our salvation. |
| _____ Ephesians 1:13-14 | C. We are born of the Spirit. |
| _____ 1 Corinthians 6:19 | D. He lives in us. |
9. How was Jesus characterized?
In Luke 4:1: _____
In Acts 10:38: _____
10. According to Romans 8:16, what does the Holy Spirit tell us? _____

II. A FIXED POSITION

1. According to Colossians 1:27, where is Christ? _____

2. According to Colossians 2:6-7, where are you? _____

3. Turn to Galatians 2:20. Substitute your name for the personal pronouns “I” and “me.”
 - a. What happened to your old life? _____

 - b. Who now lives in you? _____

4. According to Romans 6:6, what great fact happened when Jesus was crucified? _____

5. According to Colossians 3:1-3, we have been raised with Christ; therefore, where should we set our mind? _____
6. Why is your position in Christ so important? Romans 6:11-13 says: _____

III. A FUNDAMENTAL PROVISION

1. What does Luke 9:23 say? _____

2. What must you understand about your walk before God? 1 John 1: _____

3. What does 1 John 1:8 reveal about those who claim to never sin? _____

4. Your walk is determined by where your mind is set. What two options does Paul describe in Romans 8:4-6? _____

5. According to Ephesians 4:30-32, what happens to the Holy Spirit when we obey our sinful nature? _____

6. The wonderful fact of 1 John 1:7 is constantly available. What does the verse say? _____

7. Never forget the warning of Proverbs 28:13. What does it say? _____

8. What does 1 John 1:9 say will happen when we confess our sin? _____

Allow God to show you any sin in your life right now. If you confess it and ask God to forgive you, He will!

IV. A FAITHFUL PLAN

Once you have confessed your sins, you have been emptied. Now you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit according to Ephesians 5:18. Since this is a command, you know it is God's will for you. 1 John 5:14-15 says that if you ask for anything according to God's will in Jesus' name, He will respond. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit, and by faith, thank Him that He has done so.

1. Although our position is fixed and we are in Christ, we must learn to experience this fact in our lives daily. In John 15:5, Jesus refers to Himself as a vine and a Christian as a branch.

So, the key to a fruitful life is:

_____ in Him.

2. According to John 15:4, can we produce any fruit without Christ? _____

3. According to John 15:7, what promise is ours if we faithfully abide in Christ? _____

4. What does John 15:8 say about producing fruit? _____

5. If you are abiding in Christ, and the Holy Spirit is in control, what fruit will be evidenced in your life?

Galatians 5:22-23: _____

6. According to 1 John 3:24, how can you be assured that you are in Christ and He is in you?

7. What does 1 John 2:6 say we should do if we claim to be Christians? _____

8. We should always be aware of what fruit our life is producing; what does Matthew 7:19 say will happen to those who don't produce good fruit? _____

9. What does Galatians 5:16-17 show about overcoming our worldly desires? _____

10. We are absolutely dependent upon the Holy Spirit to live in us and reproduce Christ's life.
In 1 Corinthians 15:57, what does Paul say our response should be? _____

11. Romans 12:1-2 should be a reality in your life every day.
"You are to present _____ as a _____."

12. Conformity to the world will break your fellowship with God, but never forget the
fundamental provision of 1 John 1:9: _____

13. According to Acts 1:8, what happens when you receive the Holy Spirit? _____

Remember that the wonderful life Christ promised is available to you only as you walk in the Spirit.
You must realize several factors to live the life of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." You must:

- **DESIRE** to live a life pleasing to God. Matthew 5:6
- **BE WILLING** to give Him your life in obedience to His command. Romans 12:1-2
- **CONFESS** and turn from every sin which the Holy Spirit will bring to your remembrance and rely upon God's promise. 1 John 1:9
- **BELIEVE** God for cleansing and forgiving you. Hebrews 11:6
- **ASK AND THANK HIM** for the infilling of His Spirit and for continually leading you as you walk in the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18

Lesson Four

THE CHURCH – GOD’S FAMILY

One of the great blessings in being a Christian is sharing our lives with one another in the family of God. When the word *church* is mentioned, most people begin to think about buildings. However, a building is not the church, just the place where the church gathers.

The two primary New Testament words used for “church” in the Greek (the language in which the New Testament was written) are *ecclesia* and *koinonia*. *Ecclesia* means “called out ones” or simply an assembly of born-again believers. *Koinonia* is the word for fellowship.

Factually, it is true that every genuinely saved individual is a member of God’s universal Church; that is, those who have been, are being, and shall be saved. However, the Bible also refers to local assemblies of believers as churches. About 80% of the time when *ecclesia* is used in the New Testament, it speaks of a local assembly (or church) of “called out ones.” To keep things simple in this study, the word “church” will be capitalized when referring to the God’s Church/all believers, and lower case when referring to the local church.

Sociologists and psychologists tell us that all men and women need close relationships with others in order to be healthy, mature, and functioning human beings. Likewise, you cannot live a healthy and fruitful Christian life without fellowship with other born-again believers.

According to I Corinthians 12:12-31, the New Testament Church is designed to be a body of believers united for a single purpose. Just as the human body has many different parts united to work together, the Church is composed of people with unique abilities, passions, and callings. The Scripture refers to this as the Body of Christ (Romans 12.5, I Corinthians 12:12, Ephesians 4:12.) There is nothing more beautiful than when a diverse group of believers unite as one to serve God and impact the world for His glory!

The Bible says nothing about being a solitary Christian. God’s provision for every believer is to be a strong participant in His church. This “Church” is made up of all Holy Spirit-indwelt believers who have been saved in generations past, those saved in our present time, and those who will be saved in the future. The Bible calls local gatherings of these believers the “church.” As a Christian, you and the local church go together. A charcoal fire will continue burning and produce heat for a very long time. However, a single piece of coal that has been separated from the fire will burn out and become cold very quickly. In the same way, your fire for the Lord will almost certainly grow cold unless you are surrounded by other believers.

When deciding what church to attend, make sure they believe these two points:

- 1) The Bible is the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God and the source for all church doctrine.
- 2) Jesus Christ is God come to earth in human form, and believing in His perfect and sinless life, death, burial and resurrection is the only way we can be saved. If a church doesn’t agree 100% with these points, MOVE ON!

All Three Persons of the Godhead (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) are involved in the Church. Jesus Christ died for the Church (Ephesians 5:25). The Holy Spirit was sent to empower the Church (Acts 1:8). God The Father extends to us the right to become children of His family, the Church, when we receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (John 1:12). We must never forget the solemn admonition of Hebrews 10:24-25: *“Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*

This lesson is designed to help you understand what it means to be part of God’s “called out ones,” and the vitally important matter of fellowshiping with other believers. May God’s Spirit enlighten His Word as you answer each question.

JESUS AND THE CHURCH

When you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, and committed your life to following Him, you became a member of a marvelous family. The Bible explains this glorious family in many different ways, but all are connected with Jesus Christ.

1. How and on whose authority did you become a child of God?
John 1:12 _____

2. Who is the Owner and Builder of the Church?
Matthew 16:18 _____
3. The Bible teaches that the Church belongs to Christ because He purchased it. How did He pay for the Church? Acts 20:28 _____
4. According to Ephesians 1:22-23 and Colossians 1:18, the Church is called The _____ of Christ. In turn, Jesus is referred to as The _____ of the Church.
5. In Colossians 1:24, reference is made to Christ’s body being the _____.
6. In Ephesians 2:21, the church is also referred to as the _____.
7. How is Christ related to this “temple”? Ephesians 2:20: _____
8. Not only is Christ the Cornerstone, but in 1 Corinthians 3:11, He is called the _____.

9. How stable is this foundation? Hebrews 13:8, Luke 6:47-48: _____

10. In the tremendous passage of John 15, Jesus speaks of our relationship with Him in a different light. In John 15:5, Jesus calls Himself the _____
_____ and believers, the _____.
So intimate and important is our constant faithful union to Him, that failing to “abide” in the Vine with the other branches will bring fruitlessness and decaying of our Christian lives.

11. Jesus’ relationship with the Church is depicted how in Ephesians 5:23-30? _____

As you can see, the Church and Jesus Christ are inseparable. You cannot be a “Jesus person” and not be affiliated with His Church.

- How can you love the Head and not the Body? (Colossians 1:18)
- How can you love the Builder and not His structure (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)?
- How can you love the Cross and not what it purchased (Eph. 5:25)?
- How can you love the true Vine and not the branches (John 15)?

You should never take your membership and involvement in the local church lightly.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

The Church is not an organization, but an organism. With Christ as the Head, the Body should pulsate with vitality and strength. The Holy Spirit plays a preeminent part in the role of the Church today. Since its “birth” at Pentecost (Acts 2), the Church has had a definite power and purpose to a lost world.

1. Where does the Church gain its power to be God’s witness?
Acts 1:8 _____

2. What is church’s purpose in Matthew 28:19-20? _____

3. How could Christ make such a tremendous demand of the church? Matthew 28:18: _____

4. Why did Christ give spiritual gifts to men?
Ephesians 4:11-13: _____

5. Although the church is like a body with many different members, we have all had a common experience. What is it? 1 Corinthians 12:13: _____

6. Acts 2:42 states at least three things that the first century church continually did. List three:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
7. When a church is united as the early church was in Acts 2, what will result?
Acts 2:43-45:

8. There should always be three results when a local church is being led by the Spirit. From Acts 2:47, what are these results?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
9. One of the greatest passages of scripture is Ephesians 3:20-21. What great declaration does the Apostle Paul make concerning God's power and purpose for the church in these verses?

YOU AND THE CHURCH

The other word used for "church" in the New Testament was *koinonia*, or fellowship. As a Christian, you need to experience the joy of belonging to a New Testament fellowship of believers. Becoming part of the local body of Christ and learning your role is vital in having a growing relationship with Christ.

1. What are the two qualifications for church membership? Acts 2:41:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
2. What is your purpose in relationship to God's plan for the church as found in 1 Peter 2:5?

3. Who called you into the fellowship of Jesus Christ our Lord? I Corinthians 1:9: _____

4. When you belong to a vibrant church after the order of the New Testament, Who can you boldly and honestly say your fellowship is with? 1 John 1:3 _____

5. How should you treat other Christians? 1 Corinthians 12:25 _____

6. In light of the fact that we are members of one body, how should we react to another brother or sister's hardships and honors? 1 Corinthians 12:26 _____

7. Instead of fellowshiping in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, what should we do about them? Ephesians 5:11: _____

8. How should we respond to the sin of believers? Matthew 18:15-17 _____

9. What are the requirements and benefits of staying in fellowship with other believers? I John 1:7 _____

10. What do these verses say regarding your relationship with other believers?
 - a. Colossians 3:13 _____
 - b. 1 Corinthians 1:10 _____
 - c. Philippians 2:3 _____
 - d. James 5:1 _____
 - e. Galatians 6:2 _____
11. What characteristic is the supreme evidence that we are truly a part of God's family? 1 John 3:14: _____

12. How far should our love toward our Christian brothers and sisters extend? 1 John 3:16-19 _____

13. What should determine your participation toward the local church? 1 Corinthians 4:2 _____

14. What should you do about your material possessions in relation to the church?

1 Corinthians 16:2 _____

15. What are the two ordinances of the church?

a. Acts 2:41, Acts 10:48, Matthew 28:19 _____

b. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 _____

16. What are the officers of a New Testament church?

a. 1 Timothy 3:1, Titus 1:5-7 _____

b. Acts 21:8, 1 Timothy 3:10-13 _____

17. Your response to the local church should always be viewed in light of Hebrews 10:24-25.

What does this passage say? _____

As a new Christian, you must realize your need to be a faithful member of a local New Testament church. This church should believe that the Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God and should depend on the Bible for development of its doctrines. Jesus Christ should be the center of worship.

True, there is no perfect church. If there were, it would become imperfect when you joined! As long as people comprise the membership, there will be problems. But always look to Jesus. He is the One on Whom we must focus (Hebrews 12:1-2.) He will never let you down. It is the local body of believers following New Testament teachings that will bring glory to God. There you will join evangelization – reaching the lost for Christ – and edification – the process of bringing His people to maturity. Only then can we, the family of God, storm the gates of hell in Christ’s power (Matthew 16:18). It is important for you to commit to the Lord that you will join and attend a Bible-believing church. Consider the statement below, and then sign your name as a vow before the Lord.

Under God’s leadership, I will prayerfully find, join, and faithfully attend a local New Testament Church.

Signed (Your Name)

Additional Notes on Tithes, Offerings, Church Organization, and Spiritual Gifts
by Steven Stockwell

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

As believers, we are called to live by faith. However, money is generally required for the Church to operate on a day to day basis. There are many different views concerning how much a believer should give and to whom tithes and offerings should be given.

1. The Old Testament law was that 10% of our income goes to God (Leviticus 27:30). How should we decide what to give now?

II Corinthians 9:6-8 _____

2. According to Philippians 4:17, what happens for us when we give? _____

3. How generous should we be when other believers are in need?

Acts 2:44-45 _____

4. What does Matthew 6:25-34 say regarding worrying about material things? _____

CHURCH ORGANIZATION

The Bible shows us how a New Testament church should be organized and what is required for someone to be placed in each leadership position. Following is a quick summary:

- Deacons: Bold, faithful men; servants who do what needs to be done for the church.
- Elders: Mature believers who guide others with wisdom due to experience.
- Overseers: Shepherds, leaders; a group of people who lead and guide the Church.
- Pastors: Main shepherd and preacher, who teaches, guides and cares for the Church.
- Evangelists: Special calling as ministers of the Gospel, who reach the lost and bring them to faith in Christ.
- Prophets: Hear from God and share with the Church what they have heard.
- Apostles: Sent out on mission, reaching the world with God's Word.
- Teachers: Share deep biblical and spiritual knowledge with other believers.

Several of these church positions overlap. For example, deacons and overseers can also be elders; apostles and pastors should also focus on evangelism, etc. Along with these "offices," people can also help the Church through their gifting in encouraging others, showing mercy, and giving financially.

One of the keys to having a strong relationship with Christ is figuring out where you belong in His church. Please complete this quick Spiritual Gifts Inventory¹ to determine in which areas of service God has gifted you.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY

INSTRUCTIONS:

Write a “3” if the statement is mostly true of you, a “2” if the statement is sometimes true, and a “1” if it is rarely true. In order to receive an accurate result, be sure to answer based on how you truly are, not how you want to be.

1. ___ I really want to help lost people get to know Christ.
2. ___ I like to make people think.
3. ___ I love to study the Bible.
4. ___ When I complete a task, I love to have a visible end-result.
5. ___ I am a people-person. Being around people energizes me.
6. ___ I am usually soft-spoken.
7. ___ I am usually drawn to and involved in activities that help people.
8. ___ I believe that I have been blessed so that I can be a blessing to others.
9. ___ I make decisions based strictly on facts and things that are proven.
10. ___ I feel a spiritual connection with a people from other countries or cultures.
11. ___ It bothers me to think about people who have rejected Christ.
12. ___ When I know people are sinning, I feel it should be exposed.
13. ___ I am constantly thinking of better ways to communicate things.
14. ___ I am good at thinking about and finding solutions to problems.
15. ___ I spend a lot of time praying for other people.
16. ___ I have a passion for comforting those who need it.
17. ___ I like to work behind the scenes more than in the spotlight.
18. ___ I am sensitive to the needs of others.
19. ___ I often set goals and seek to meet them.
20. ___ I love to travel and experience different cultures.
21. ___ I would rather share the gospel than do anything else.
22. ___ It really bothers me when other people do things that are wrong.
23. ___ I am more task-oriented than people-oriented.
24. ___ When I read Scripture, I look for practical things that I can apply to my life.
25. ___ I have a great desire to see others grow and learn.
26. ___ I find that I often think of myself “in someone else’s shoes.”
27. ___ I enjoy working with my hands.
28. ___ If a need exists, I am always ready to meet it.
29. ___ I do things on time.
30. ___ I frequently think about people around the world who have never heard of Jesus.
31. ___ I am socially active and get along with people easily.
32. ___ I would rather speak about something than write it.
33. ___ I feel that I need to teach people things so that they are taught correctly.
34. ___ I don’t like deep doctrinal and deep theological studies.

35. ___ I am very protective of my friends and family.
36. ___ I act on my emotions more than on logic/thinking.
37. ___ I feel encouraged when I serve others.
38. ___ When I give, I always like to give my best.
39. ___ I am willing to attempt impossible tasks for God.
40. ___ I would be willing to risk my life to reach others with God's Word.

DETERMINE YOUR TOTALS:

Go back through your answers and add up the totals for the following groups of questions.

- Numbers 1, 11, 21, 31 = _____ *Evangelism*
- Numbers 2, 12, 22, 32 = _____ *Prophecy*
- Numbers 3, 13, 23, 33 = _____ *Teaching*
- Numbers 4, 14, 24, 34 = _____ *Encouraging*
- Numbers 5, 15, 25, 35 = _____ *Pastoral*
- Numbers 6, 16, 26, 36 = _____ *Mercy*
- Numbers 7, 17, 27, 37 = _____ *Deacon/Servant*
- Numbers 8, 18, 28, 38 = _____ *Giving*
- Numbers 9, 19, 29, 39 = _____ *Overseeing/Administrative*
- Numbers 10, 20, 30, 40 = _____ *Apostle/Missionary*

Highest Gift Areas: _____, _____
 Lowest Gift Areas: _____, _____

- If you have a score of 9-12 in an area, you are highly inclined in that area.
- If you have a score of 5-8, you are moderately gifted in that area.
- If you have a score of 1-4, you are probably not gifted in that area.

Hopefully, this test will help you determine which part of the Body of Christ you are called to be. We encourage you to begin serving in the church in a way that corresponds to your spiritual gifting. Also, our strengths and giftings can change over time as we grow in our relationship with Christ. Therefore, be sure to take tests like this regularly to make sure you are serving God in the most effective way possible.

As we go through life, we must remember the fact that there is no such thing as a perfect church. All people are imperfect; only Jesus is Perfect. As long as human beings comprise the membership, there will be problems. One of the primary hindrances to proper church function is lack of unity. Let's pray and ask God to help us be unified by His love. God tells us He wants us to walk in unity and love, using our gifts to glorify Him.

Ephesians 4:4-6:

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

Ephesians 4:11-16

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

Acts 2:42-47:

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

I Spiritual gifts inventory test adapted from Teen Sunday School Place ©

Lesson Five

WITNESSING – SHARING THE ABUNDANT LIFE

We live in a lost world. There are more than 2.5 billion people who have never heard the Name of Jesus Christ, and may have never even met a Christian. There is also a disturbing lack of biblical knowledge among many Christians around the world. Many people claim to be Christians, but do not know what the Bible says regarding the most fundamental aspects of salvation. It is our duty, calling, and privilege to intentionally share our faith with as many people as possible. God did not design the Church so that ministry and evangelism are to be done just by pastors and staff. God wants to use all of us. God wants to use you!

The last thing that Jesus said before He ascended into heaven was, *“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”* (Matthew 28:19-20) In Mark 5:19, Jesus told the man that He healed to go home and tell his friends the great things the Lord had done for him. Have you begun telling people about Jesus?

In Mark 8:38, Jesus said, *“If you are ashamed of me and my words, when I come back I will be ashamed of you.”* Romans 10:11 says, *“Whosoever believes in Jesus will not be ashamed.”* It is amazing how many people can talk about football, clothes, cars, money, politics, sex, church, and every other subject, yet they are ashamed of Jesus Christ. Why in the world should you be ashamed of Jesus Christ? He is the greatest Person that ever lived. He is God’s Son. He saved you from hell and is going to take you to heaven. Right now, you are trusting Him and should be studying His word and praying daily. He has given you an abundant life just as He promised in John 10:10.

As you ask God to fill you with His Spirit, you will realize what Luke 6:45 means as it says, *“Out of the abundance of a man’s heart he will speak.”* When Jesus is the Center of your life, you can’t help but want to talk about Him to others.

You might be thinking, “I don’t know enough about the Bible, so I can’t share the Gospel with others.” Or, “What if they ask me a question that I can’t answer?” We must believe that once we have been saved, we already know enough to help someone else become saved as well. We will never understand everything in God’s Word; there will always be spiritual principles we don’t fully understand, but the Holy Spirit will guide our words as we share with others. (Luke 21:15)

Acts 1:8 says, *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses.”* A witness is defined as someone who has personally experienced something, and is capable of giving firsthand evidence of this experience. Witnessing is as simple as sharing how Jesus has changed your life, and how He can change any life.

Jesus said, “You shall be witnesses unto me.” He told His disciples, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.” (Matthew 4:19.) The example of these early followers of Jesus points to the reality of Jesus’ promise. Andrew brought Peter to Christ (John 1:41.) It was Philip who told Nathaniel about the Messiah (John 1:45.)

In this lesson, you will discover the vast importance and responsibility of being a witness for Christ to a lost and dying world. From the questions, you will gain insight to this wonderful experience of pointing others to Jesus, the only Lord and Savior.

GOD'S CALL: THE REASONS FOR WITNESSING

1. God has commanded believers to witness numerous times in the Bible. What do the following verses say?
Acts 1:8: _____

II Corinthians 5:20: _____

Mark 16:15: _____

Luke 24:47-48: _____

2. What was Jesus' purpose in coming to earth?
Luke 19:10: _____

3. There is no greater reason for our witnessing to those around us than the Biblical truth that all mankind is lost without Jesus. What do these verses say?
John 3:36: _____

Ezekiel 33:8: _____

Psalm 9:17: _____

Revelation 20:15: _____

4. What was the example of the early Christians?
Acts 5:40-42, 8:4: _____

5. Probably the greatest Christian who ever lived was the Apostle Paul. What do these verses say about his view of witnessing?

Acts 20:20-21: _____

1 Corinthians 9:22: _____

6. What is God's desire for all men everywhere?

2 Peter 3:9: _____

7. Why tell others about Jesus Christ?

John 14:6: _____

Acts 4:12: _____

8. Your ultimate motivation for winning others to Christ should be what?

John 15:8: _____

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR WITNESSING

An effective witness will need to have several characteristics true about his life.

1. What is the fundamental requirement as seen in 2 Corinthians 5:17-18? _____

2. What other requirement is necessary in being a witness?

1 John 1:3 _____

3. No true Christian should be ashamed of telling others about Christ. Why?

Romans 1:16 _____

4. What does Mark 8:38 warn about those who never witness? _____

5. You must be burdened over the lostness of people without Christ. How did Paul explain his burden for the lost in Romans 9:13? _____

6. What does Psalm 126:5-6 say about the kind of burden that produces results? _____

7. To be like Jesus, what should characterize our lives toward others? Matthew 9:36? _____

8. You must see that God "needs" you in His work of winning men and women to His Son. Look closely at Romans 10:13-15. Remember that *preach* means simply proclaim or tell. What does

this passage say? _____

9. Witnessing requires action. Jesus told us to GO. 1 Peter 3:15 should be your attitude every moment of every day. What does this verse say? _____

THE RESULTS OF WITNESSING

Several things happen when you consistently avail yourself to be God's witness.

1. What does James 5:19-20 say? _____

2. Your life will be enriched in what way?
Proverbs 11:30: _____

3. What happens in heaven when someone is won to Jesus?
Luke 15:7,10: _____

4. The early believers in Thessalonica were faithful witnesses. What resulted?
1 Thessalonians 1:7-8: _____

THE RESOURCES FOR WITNESSING

God has not left you alone in this important task. You have everything you need to be a determined and consistent witness.

1. Who chose you?

John 15:16: _____

2. What does 1 Corinthians 3:9 point out? _____

3. Who brings conviction to those to whom we witness?

John 16:7-8: _____

4. Knowledge of the Word of God is supremely important when witnessing to others. Why?

Hebrews 4:12: _____

5. Why can you overcome fear?

2 Timothy 1:7: _____

1 John 4:18: _____

6. God The Father is very much involved in bringing men to a saving knowledge of Christ through your witness. What does John 6:44 say? _____

7. As Paul said, what should be our central subject?

1 Corinthians 2:2: _____

8. What did Philip tell the Ethiopian? 1 Corinthians 2:2 _____

9. Why is it so important to concentrate upon the Lord Jesus when witnessing?

John 12:32 _____

10. Never forget the promise revealed in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. What are we promised in this passage? _____

11. We have the same message as did the early disciples. Very simply, what is the Gospel?

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 _____

12. You are a special person on an important mission while you live on this earth. What authority is yours, as found in 2 Corinthians 5:20? _____

13. God will use you more effectively when your life is true to the fact of Matthew 5:16. This verse says: _____

14. Paul used his testimony as a witness in Acts 26:1-29. As you read this portion of scripture, remember that you have a testimony also. Like Paul, you have no greater tool than your own personal testimony in telling others about the Good News of Jesus Christ. Every testimony includes at least main three parts – what our life was like before Christ, how we came to know Christ, and what life has been like since accepting Christ as our Lord and Savior.

Write your own testimony in the space provided in this section of the lesson.

a. What was your life like before you accepted Christ as Lord and Savior? _____

b. How did you accept Christ? Where were you? Did someone help you? What had to happen in order for you to become a Christian? _____

c. What has your life been like since you became a Christian? How has it changed? _____

THE SHOT METHOD OF WITNESSING BY STEVEN STOCKWELL

In the very simplest form, the Gospel includes four main facts every person must believe and act on in order to be saved. Here is a system to help you remember these four facts we learned in Lesson One. “**SHOT**” is an easy way to remember the truth of the Gospel. If you had a “shot” that would permanently cure AIDS, would you share it with others? We have a “**SHOT**” that cures death for all eternity. Let’s share it with everyone!

All people have **S**inned against a Holy God.

Sinners deserve **H**ell.

Jesus is the **O**nly Way of salvation.

We must **T**rust in Christ, and turn from sin to be saved.

Please review the beginning of Lesson One and take some time during these next few days to memorize these four Biblical facts in order to reinforce your witness for Christ. Also, you should continuously do the following in order to make yourself available to God for His use as a witness.

- **CONFESS** the known sins in your life (1 John 1:9).
- **GIVE** the Holy Spirit every area of your life (Romans 12:1-2). Remember Lesson Three.
- **BE PREPARED** to witness (2 Timothy 2:15).
- **PRAY** for results (John 16:24).
- **GO** and tell others about Jesus (Mark 16:15).

Write down the names of five people you know who need Jesus Christ, and begin sharing Jesus with them.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Remember this definition: **Witnessing is sharing Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.**

As we have learned earlier in these Bible studies, you do not have the power on your own to witness, but the Holy Spirit will give you the power if you ask. It is not up to you to produce results; your responsibility is to share Christ and allow God to produce results as He sees fit.

You need to realize as you witness that even if people reject the message, God is working in their hearts. God says in Isaiah 55:11, “*My Word shall not return void, it shall accomplish God’s purpose.*” Always remember, we are not responsible for the fruit produced by our labor, rather, we are accountable for our faithfulness to continue in the harvest.

It is important to make a commitment to the Lord that you will be a faithful, consistent witness for Jesus Christ.

I pledge to consistently share Jesus Christ with people in the power of the Holy Spirit, and leave the results to God.

Signed (Your Name)

Date

Lesson Six

PRAYER – COMMUNION WITH GOD

Prayer is the mightiest force available to us, because it unleashes the power of God. There is no more important aspect of spiritual growth and personal godliness than prayer. God has chosen to move and work in answer to our prayers. God loves you, and He wants you to talk with Him, and He wants to speak quietly to your heart. This means that you will need to consistently give God time in prayer daily. The Bible says that we are to pray all the time (Luke 18:1). We can pray everywhere we go, but we also need to give God some time in prayer when no one else is around. Also, the Bible is clear that we should pray together with other believers as well.

Prayer is simply talking with and listening to God. Your conversation with God is not dependent upon fancy words or complicated ritual. God desires for us to talk with Him, but not with empty words. The words must be an expression of our heart. Without this, our prayers can become empty and meaningless.

There are different kinds of prayer. The one that is most often neglected, yet probably the most important, is **PRAISE**. As we praise Him, we acknowledge His greatness and we praise God for Who He is, for how powerful, holy, and great He is. Psalms 145-150 are great praise chapters in the Bible that you can just take and read out loud to the Lord in praise to Him. Praise honors God, defeats Satan, and lifts us up. Right now, say out loud three times, “PRAISE GOD!” It is really hard to do without smiling!

One of the simplest and most effective ways to lift God up in praise is to call Him by any of His wonderful Hebrew names:

- El Shaddai ~ *God Almighty*
- El Elyon ~ *The Most High God*
- Elohim ~ *Creator*
- El Olam ~ *The Everlasting God*
- Adonai ~ *Lord, Master*
- Yahweh ~ *I AM, Unchanging God*
- Jehovah-Nissi ~ *The Lord My Banner*
- Jehovah-Raah ~ *The Lord My Shepherd*
- Jehovah-Rapha ~ *The Lord That Heals*
- Jehovah-Shammah ~ *The Lord Is There*
- Jehovah-Tsidkenu ~ *The Lord Our Righteousness*
- Jehovah-Mekoddishkem ~ *The Lord Who Sanctifies You*
- Jehovah-Jireh ~ *The Lord Will Provide*
- Jehovah-Shalom ~ *The Lord Is Peace*

All of these names highlight a different aspect of God’s greatness, His character, and His attributes, and including them in prayer is a powerful way to praise Him, and also to get to know Him according to Who He is.

Another aspect of prayer similar to praise is **THANKSGIVING**. This is simply saying “thank you” to God for all that He has given us. It is natural for us to focus on the future and everything we need from God, but it is vital for us to realize everything He has already done for us and to take some time to thank Him. Thanksgiving should include answered prayers and continuous blessings which God has given us.

We shouldn't only express our gratitude toward God when He answers our prayers! I challenge you to take some time every day to thank God for some of the countless blessings He has put in your life. Thank God for a physical blessing, such as your hands, eyes, or mind; a spiritual blessing, such as love, forgiveness, or joy; an aesthetic blessing, like a sunset, flowers, or the stars in the sky; for people in your life, such as your parents and friends. Above all, we should be thankful to God for giving His Only Son to die on the cross for our sins.

Another form of prayer is **CONFESSION**. Confession includes admitting our sins to God, asking forgiveness, and praying for power to permanently overcome the temptation of this sin. When we sin against God, our fellowship with Him is broken. 1 John 1:9 says, *“When we confess our sins, God is perfectly just and righteous and He forgives us of all our sins and cleanses us with His blood from unrighteousness.”* We must confess but also forsake our sin (Proverbs 28:13.) Remember, we are not capable of overcoming sin on our own. It is only through confession and God granting us repentance that we can “escape from this snare of the Devil.” (II Timothy 2:25-26)

INTERCESSION is another form of prayer. Intercession is praying for God to intercede in the lives of others. We should always spend more time asking God to help others than we spend asking things for ourselves. This type of prayer can be for an individual, or a group of any size. We should pray for our family, friends, other believers, our church, our country, and our world. Intercessory prayer is especially powerful when we come together as a group to pray. Finally, we need to consistently pray for people who need to know Jesus Christ.

The last form of prayer is **SUPPLICATION**. This means to ask God for things for yourself. If you need food, pray for it. If you need shelter or clothing, pray for it. If you need spiritual power, pray for it. If you are not getting along with your family, pray about it. Ask God for the things that you need in your life. He loves you and wants to give you the things that you need to make you more like Christ.

In Matthew 6:9-13, Jesus Himself shows us a simple and effective example of how we should pray. Let's take a moment to look at the Lord's Prayer and how Jesus quickly covered these five types of prayer.

<i>Our Father Who is in Heaven,</i>	Praise God that He is Our Father, and we are His children. Praise Him for Creation, for heaven and earth, for His spiritual nature, for His power and greatness.
<i>hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.</i>	God's Name is holy and worthy to be praised above all other names. Pray that His will will be done and that all things past, present and future will be brought into alignment with His will. Pray that His will be done, not our will!
<i>Give us this day our daily bread,</i>	Ask Him to provide everything that you need, including food!
<i>and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.</i>	Ask His forgiveness for specific sins; confess to Him the things that you have done that go against His Word; ask His help to forgive others who have hurt you and sinned against you; ask His help to live in grace with those around you.
<i>And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever.</i>	Ask His help to overcome sin and temptation. Ask His mercy in delivering you from evil and the evil one (Satan.) Surrender to Him and declare that everything belongs to Him...your life, this world and everything in it, and everything to come. Declare that all power, glory, honor and worship belongs to Him, forever and that it will never change! Say to Him, "Father, You are my Lord and Master, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Creator of everything, the Almighty, All-Powerful, Most High God, forever!"

As you answer the questions of this lesson, remember that prayer is more “caught” than taught. Praying from your heart with sincerity and love is the most effective way to communicate with God. God loves you, and He wants you to communicate with Him. Strive with all that is in you to discover God’s precious gift of prayer.

PURPOSES OF PRAYER

God’s Word points out that our involvement in prayer fulfills important needs in our lives.

1. Read Psalm 81:1, 41:1-2, and 63:1. Explain how prayer meets this deep need of the human heart. _____

2. How do you find guidance to live as God desires?
Matthew 7:7-11 _____

3. What do Philippians 4:6-7 and 1 Peter 5:6-7 reveal about the work of prayer? _____

4. What great truth about prayer do Hebrews 4:16 and John 16:23-27 teach? _____

5. What need is met by prayer as seen in Matthew 6:13, 26:41, and 2 Thessalonians 3:1-3? _____

Therefore, God has given us prayer to satisfy the heart’s deepest need for God’s fellowship, discover God’s will, deal effectively with anxiety and worry, communicate our needs to Him, and help us overcome sin and temptation.

POSSIBLE HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

1. What hindrance is seen in James 1:5-8? _____

2. Psalm 66:18 points out another barrier. What is it? _____

3. What does James 4:3 point out as another hindrance? _____

PEOPLE OF PRAYER

A great motivation in becoming a faithful fervent prayer warrior is the Bible. We have several examples of how God’s people were people of prayer.

1. The greatest example of all was the Lord Jesus Himself. What do these verses show about the prayer life of our Lord?

Mark 1:35: _____

Luke 6:12: _____

Luke 22:44: _____

2. What kind of example did the early church set in Acts 1:13-15, and 4:24-31? _____

3. What was most important to the apostles?

Acts 6:4: _____

4. The Apostle Paul's request for prayer was indeed strong. What does 1 Timothy 2:8 say? _

5. In his letter, James brought out the example of the Old Testament prophet Elijah. How powerful was the prayer of this godly man?

James 5:17-18 _____

PATTERN FOR PRAYER

Prayer can be divided into five different types. These are prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confession, intercession, and supplication.

PRAYER OF PRAISE – *Our response to the character of God.*

1. Why should we praise the Lord?

Revelation 4:11 _____

2. Hebrews 13:15 says: _____

3. What does Psalm 34:1-3 tell us? _____

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING – *Our response to the acts of God.*

1. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says we should be thankful in which circumstances? _____

2. What has God done that should produce thankfulness in our hearts?
Colossians 1:12 _____

3. How are we to approach God when we pray?
Psalm 100:4, Colossians 1:3, _____

PRAYER OF CONFESSION – *Our response to the holiness of God.*

1. Why is it so important to not let sin remain in your life?
Isaiah 59:1-2. _____

2. What should your attitude be before God when sin is present in your life?
Isaiah 6:5 _____

3. The blessed truth of 1 John 1:9 and Proverbs 28:13 is always available. What is this
promise? _____

4. Read Matthew 18:23-35. What should you always remember when others sin against you?

5. Read Luke 18:10-14 and explain the difference in these two men's attitude toward sin. ____

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION – *Our response to the compassion of God.*

1. What does 1 Timothy 2:1 command us to do? _____

2. James 5:16 says: _____

3. Not only should we pray for our Christian friends, but what does Luke 6:27-28 say? _____

Paul was a constant intercessor in prayer for other believers. Read his prayers found in Colossians 1:9-12, Ephesians 1:16-19, and Philippians 1:9-12.

PRAYER OF SUPPLICATION – *Our response to the faithfulness of God.*

1. What does Matthew 7:11 tell us about God? _____

2. Hebrews 4:14-16 says: _____

3. Remember to ask God for your needs in light of the promise of John 15:7. What does this verse say? _____

4. According to Luke 11:13, what is the ultimate “good gift” we should ask for? _____

POWER IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Prayer is also a means of bringing to personal reality the victory which the Lord Jesus has over the devil. We are more than conquerors through Him (Romans 8:37) and our victorious praying lets the devil know that we know it.

1. What does James 4:7 promise? _____

2. According to 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, how powerful are our weapons? _____

3. It is by prayer through faith that we put on God’s armor to fight the devil. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. In verses 14-17, five pieces of armor are mentioned. They are:

4. In verse 17, your offensive weapon is the _____.

5. Ephesians 6:18 explains how we use our armor. It says we are to: _____

When Satan attacks you in your thought life, through circumstances, or by using other people, remember to **STAND YOUR GROUND**. Address the devil in audible prayer and say, “In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power of His shed blood, and on the authority of the Word of God, I command you to leave me alone.”

PROVEN RULES OF PRAYER

The Bible obviously directs our lives toward effective and powerful prayer. Adhere to the following guidelines revealed in the answers, and you will be well on your way to a healthy prayer life.

1. God hears prayers that are in line with 2 Chronicles 7:14. This verse says: _____

2. According to Matthew 6:14-15, we must: _____

3. Our requests will be answered if 1 John 5:14-15 is true about our prayers. The scripture says:

4. Read Luke 18:1-8. Explain how God promises to respond to our continued prayer in verse 7.

5. We are promised great help in our praying. We must depend upon the Holy Spirit when we pray. What does Romans 8:26-27 say? _____

6. How should we always pray when approaching our Heavenly Father? John 14:13-14

It has been said many times that communication is the key to any healthy relationship; this is also very true about our relationship with God. If you ever feel like there is a separation between yourself and God, it might be due to a lack of communication. Of course, communication has to go both ways. We have to talk to God, and we have to hear from Him as well.

The primary way that we communicate to God is through prayer, and the primary way that God communicates to us is through His Word in the Bible. Therefore, spending time prayerfully studying the Bible is the most effective way to strengthen your relationship with God. The next lesson will give tips on how we can do this.

Lesson Seven

THE BIBLE – GOD’S HOLY WORD

To some people, the Bible is just another old book – only a piece of literature. However, for Christians it is not just another book, or even a great book. The Bible is God’s own Word. The Bible is God’s autobiography; it was written by Him and about Him. It is God revealing His glory, holiness, and goodness for the purpose of guiding sinful men and women, boys and girls to the Lord Jesus Christ, God’s Son and our only Savior.

It has been said that the Bible is the greatest love story ever written. The entire message of the Bible is summed up by John 3:16, *“God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”* There aren’t adequate words to describe how amazing it is that the God who spoke the universe into existence lowered Himself to our level and suffered a horrendous death on the cross for our sins. *“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”* John 15:13

The Bible shows us how to live, grow, and love as God intends. *“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”* 2 Timothy 3:16. Every problem we will ever face is dealt within its pages.

The central figure of the Bible is Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, one finds Jesus concealed; in the New Testament, He is revealed. Many Old Testament stories, characters, and principles are clearly designed to foreshadow how Jesus would come into the world and give Himself as a sacrifice for our sins.

The Word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12). It is our weapon against Satan (Ephesians 6:17). The devil hates God’s Word. He tries with all his might to prevent people from reading the Bible. As of 2008, there were fifty-two countries where it is illegal to publicly read the Bible. If you live in a country where it is legal to read God’s Word, you should take full advantage of it!

As you read the Bible, ask God to illuminate His Word, and He will speak directly to you. Through the Word of God, you receive encouragement, power and love. The following lesson will help instruct you on how to study, read, memorize, meditate, and even hear the Word of God more effectively as it is taught and preached. Be sure to complete the lesson.

Remember, God CAN speak to us many different ways, but the primary way God speaks to us is through the Bible. Too many believers go through life waiting to “hear” answers from God which are clearly stated in His Word! If you have an issue, tell God about it in prayer and study the Bible to find God’s solution to your trouble.

The Bible says in Colossians 3:16, *“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.”* So our prayer is that as you study the Word of God, you will get to know God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ better and better. If you do, you will discover more and more of the abundant life Jesus promised in John 10:10. Also, make sure that you are obedient to the Word of God. James 1:22 says, *“Be doers of the*

Word and not hearers only.” The Bible will not only tell you what to do, but it will explain how you can allow Jesus to become all that you need in order to live the Christian life.

THE MIRACLE OF THE BIBLE

The two major divisions of the Bible are the Old and New Testaments. *Testament* means “agreement,” “contract,” or “covenant.” The Old Testament is primarily God’s contract with His people, the Jews, and God’s call for their obedience to His Law. The New Testament is the historical account of the coming of Jesus, and reveals the new contract God has established with all people. This new contract calls men to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, without Whom there is only damnation.

1. Read 2 Peter 1:20-21, and 2 Timothy 3:16 and answer the following questions.

How did God’s Word come to us? _____

How much of it was given in this way? _____

On whose authority does the Bible stand? _____

2. How long will the Bible endure?

Isaiah 40:8, 1 Peter 1:25 _____

3. What did Jesus say about the Word of God?

Matthew 5:18, 24:35 _____

4. Many of the Old Testament prophets recorded the manner in which they got their message.

What do these verses say?

Ezekiel 1:3: _____

Isaiah 30:8: _____

Jeremiah 30:1-2: _____

The Bible’s miraculous content proving the authorship of God is probably seen best in the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies about Christ. These men recorded these prophecies hundreds and

hundreds of years before Christ was even born. Some scholars believe Jesus fulfilled more than 300 prophecies! Below are just a few of the prophecies and their fulfillments in the New Testament. Find them in your Bible.

EVENT IN JESUS' LIFE	PROPHECY	FULFILLMENT
a. Place of birth	Micah 5:2	Matt. 2:1
b. Virgin birth	Isaiah 7:14	Matt. 1:18
c. Would spend time in Egypt	Hosea 11:1	Matt. 2:14-15
d. Rejected by own people	Psalms 68:7-8	John 7:5
e. Crucified with sinners	Isaiah 53:12	Mark 15:27-28
f. Piercing of hands and feet	Psalms 22:16	John 20:27
g. Burial with the rich	Isaiah 53:9	Matt. 27:57-60

THE MINISTRY OF THE BIBLE

God had reasons for giving to man His Word. These questions will point out the primary purposes which the Word of God serves to those who read it.

1. What is the ultimate purpose of God's Word?
John 20:30-31: _____

2. In John 5:39, what does Jesus say about the Old Testament? _____

3. The Bible is primarily about what Person?
Luke 24:25-27: _____
4. Every Christian requires spiritual food. We must "eat" this good food in order to grow.
What does Matthew 4:4 say? _____

5. Another valuable purpose which God's Word provides is found in Psalm 119:9. What is it?

6. People are saved by repentance toward God and faith in Jesus. Read about this in Ephesians 2:8-9 and Hebrews 11:6. What part does God's Word play in salvation?
Romans 10:17 _____

7. What does Psalm 119:105 say about God's Word? _____

8. The ministry of God's Word is very important in our spiritual warfare against the devil and the powers of darkness. What is our weapon?

Ephesians 6:17 _____

9. How did Jesus fight the devil during His wilderness temptation?

Matthew 4:1-11 _____

MOTIVATIONS TO STUDY THE BIBLE

God's Word explains that there are benefits in studying the Word and applying it to our lives. These blessings strongly urge us to become devoted to the Word of God.

1. What is the mark of a true follower of Jesus?

John 8:31 _____

2. What happens to such a person?

John 8:32 _____

3. Romans 1:16 describes the Word of God as the _____
_____ for all who believe.

4. According to Acts 20:32, what can God's Word do to us? _____

5. We are not left alone to try to understand God's Word. What do John 14:26 and 16:13 promise? _____

6. Unbelievers cannot understand the Word of God. Why?
1 Corinthians 2:14 _____

7. How can Christians understand God's Word?
1 Corinthians 2:12 _____

8. We must pay heed to the admonition of James 1:22-24. This passage warns: _____

9. God wants you to know that you are His child. 1 John 5:13 points out another motivation for Bible study. This verse says: _____

METHODS OF PERSONAL BIBLE INTAKE

There are five methods of using the Bible to its fullest in our lives. If you utilize all five types, the chances of having a firmer grip on the Word of God are greatly enhanced. Never forget that God's Word was not written so we could gain mere knowledge, but was written in order to *change our lives*.

I. HEAR GOD'S WORD AS IT IS PREACHED AND TAUGHT

What does Romans 10:17 say about hearing the Word of God? _____

Helpful Hints:

- Listen in faith expecting a blessing.
- We forget 90-95% of what we hear within 72 hours.
- Therefore, write down valuable insights as you listen.
- Listen to God's Word through audio Bible if available.

II. READ GOD'S WORD

A. 1 Timothy 4:13 says: _____

B. Revelation 1:3 says: _____

C. Helpful Hints:

- Develop a daily Bible reading plan. For example:
 - Read five Psalms and one Proverb every day.
 - Read one chapter in the Old Testament and three chapters in the New Testament every day.
 - Find a plan that works for you and stick to it.
- Read aloud, when alone, for easier comprehension and remembrance.
- Write down valuable insights God will give you as you read.
- Read carefully and with alertness.
- Always pay attention to the context of the passage you are reading (portions of Scripture before and after selection).
- If possible, read from different translations of the Bible.

III. STUDY GOD'S WORD

A. How does God view us when we study and follow Scripture?

2 Timothy 2:15: _____

B. We have the example of the Berean believers of Acts 17:11-12. How often should we study God's Word? _____

- C. Helpful Hints:
- There are several ways you can study the Bible. You may wish to use the following ~
 - ✓ *Book Study*: Take one book of the Bible at a time and study it repeatedly.
 - ✓ *Subject Study*: Pick one subject and research all Scripture on that subject.
 - ✓ *Character Study*: Study all you can about a Biblical character. Find out how God used them, specific examples to follow from their life, etc.
 - ✓ *Word Study*: Find a word and search out its full meaning, usage in Scripture, and its Greek or Hebrew origin.
 - ✓ *Historical Study*: Discover backgrounds, settings and situations of particular portions of Scripture.
 - ✓ It may prove necessary to combine these different types on one particular passage of Scripture.
 - You will need to secure a few tools in doing these study methods. These are a Bible dictionary, a *Young's* or *Strong's Analytical Concordance*, other translations of the Bible, and any Bible software computer study tool.
 - Keep a notebook and pen or pencil ready to write down your study findings.

IV. MEMORIZE GOD'S WORD

A. Why memorize God's Word?

Psalm 119:11 _____

B. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 says: _____

C. Helpful Hints:

- Many good memory systems are available. A few are:
 - ✓ The Navigators Topical Memory System
 - ✓ The Bible Memory Association's (BMA) Program
 - ✓ International Evangelism Association's (IEA) Program
- Any verse that has spoken to your heart from this eight-lesson Bible study would be great for you to memorize.
- Remember to review those you learn in order to retain God's Word in your heart.
- Pray about verses and ask God to help you memorize them.

V. MEDITATE ON GOD'S WORD

A. Success in life is promised on one condition according to Joshua 1:8. What does this verse say? _____

B. Psalm 1:1-2 says: _____

C. Several verses in Psalms speak of the joy of meditation.

Read Psalms 63:6, 104:34, 119:148 and 143:5.

Record your thoughts: _____

D. Helpful Hints:

- When you meditate upon Scripture, simply ponder or think over the verse again and again until your mind is saturated with God’s Word.
- Keys to good meditation upon any given Scripture:
 - ✓ *Picture it*: Visualize the scene in your mind.
 - ✓ *Pronounce it*: Emphasize and examine each word.
 - ✓ *Probe it*: Ask yourself the following questions about the verse(s):
 - In this passage, is there any...
 - Sin to confess?
 - Example to follow?
 - Promise to claim?
 - Truth or teaching to believe?
 - Command to obey?
 - Prayer to pray?
 - Attitude to change?
 - Reason to praise God?
 - ✓ *Personalize it*: Put verse in the first person.
 - ✓ *Pray it*: Pray verse back to God.
- Once again, use a notebook and pen or pencil and write down valuable insights for later reference.

PERSONAL APPLICATION – GOAL OF BIBLE STUDY

No matter which method you use in studying the Bible, the focal point should be this question: “How does this Scripture apply to my own life?” The secret of application is thorough meditation which usually includes memorization of Scripture.

Always write out a specific (not general) application and make it:

- ✓ *Personal*: Write it in first person – “I.”
- ✓ *Practical*: What “plan of action” will you take?
- ✓ *Possible*: Make it obtainable, or you may become discouraged.
- ✓ *Provable*: Make the application measurable by setting a time limit for check-up.

The primary reason for biblical intake is for personal application of Scripture to your life. The secret is “getting to know the God of the Word, rather than just the Word of God.” Always remember that you can rely on God’s Holy Word. Once you have discovered the joy of personal Bible study, and your life will never be the same!

Lesson Eight

OBEDIENCE – THE KEY TO DISCIPLESHIP

It isn't possible to overstate how important obedience is to your walk with Christ. Being 100% obedient to God is the only way to truly attain the abundant life that God has planned for you. All of your Biblical knowledge, human understanding, and spiritual gifts are rendered useless if you are not obedient. This eight-lesson study has been designed to equip you with all the tools that you need to have a meaningful, growing, and abundant relationship with Christ. However, everything you have learned will only be beneficial if you apply what you have learned to your everyday life.

Jesus said in John 14:21, *“He that has my commandments, and keeps them is the one that loves me, and he that loves me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”* There are countless people who claim that they love Jesus, but the Bible clearly shows us that the way to prove our love for Christ is to obey His commands. Also, Jesus promises that He will reveal Himself to us as we continue to love Him and keep His commandments.

This relationship of obedience, love, and growth is clearly shown in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30). A master gives his servants various amounts of money to take care of. After some time, those who were faithful and obedient were given greater responsibility, and those who proved to be disobedient were punished. It is the same way in our relationship with Christ; as we prove ourselves faithful and obedient with the blessings that God has given us, He will continue to reveal Himself to us and bless us more and more. However, God is obviously displeased when we waste what we have and are disobedient to His commands.

A Christian disciple is a “disciplined follower of Christ.” When you became a believer, you started on a life-changing journey. Many things were altered the moment you were saved, but there are other areas in your life which continuously require growth and development.

We must remember that it is God who gives us the power to overcome sin. Philippians 2:13 says, *“For it is God who is at work in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”* Philippians 4:13 says, *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* In Ephesians 1:19-20, the Scriptures acclaim that you have the same power living in you that it took for God to raise Christ from the dead! Therefore, the power to resist temptation and do what is right is already inside us. It is just up to us to decide to do what is right and to obey God's commands.

Freedom is a good thing, but poor choices have negative consequences. Eating too much will make us overweight and unhealthy, taking drugs will damage our brain, and sinning against God separates us from Him (Isaiah 59:2) and makes it impossible for us to have abundant life. It is true that all of us will disobey our heavenly Father at times. Don't quit when this happens. Remember that God forgives us and cleanses us according to the Lord Jesus' faithfulness (1 John 1:9). We must confess our sins and forsake them, and the Lord will fill us with His Spirit when we are clean vessels. As the Holy Spirit of God fills us upon our faithful request, He will control us and give us the power to be obedient unto God.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF OBEDIENCE

All the great believers of the Bible had one trait recognizable in their lives. Note what God’s Word says about each of the following:

1. Noah in Genesis 6:22 (also, Gen. 7:5,9, and 16.): _____

2. Read Genesis 22:1-3. What did God say to Abraham later in verse 18 of that same chapter?

3. Moses was used mightily by God. At least 19 times, a particular expression was said of Moses , in Exodus 38, 39 and 40. What marked this great believer?
Exodus 40:16 _____

4. What is said of Joshua in Joshua 11:15? _____

5. How was the life of Caleb explained in Deuteronomy 1:36? _____

IMPORTANCE OF OBEDIENCE

1. Man has always tried to please God by doing “religious acts.” What does God say about this in 1 Samuel 15:22? _____

2. What was God’s promise to the Jews in Exodus 19:5? _____

3. Read 1 John 2:3-5. What does this passage say about obedience? _____

4. Blessedness by God or happiness in our spiritual relationship to Him is explained very pointedly in the Psalms. Read Psalms 25:10, 103:17-18, 112:1, and 119:2. Record your thoughts: _____

6. What does John 15:10 say? _____

7. According to 1 John 3:22, how can we have confidence in prayer? _____

8. People everywhere want love. What does 2 John 6 say about love? _____

9. The importance of obedience is especially seen in these verses where God commands us to obey. What do they say?
- Deuteronomy 10:12-13 _____

 - 1 Timothy 6:13-14 _____

 - James 1:21-22 _____

10. What did Jesus say about a person who obeys Him? Matthew 7:24-25 _____

11. The Lord describes in Matthew 12:50 what being a true member of His family involves. What does this verse say? _____

IDEAL OBEDIENCE – JESUS CHRIST

Obedience was essential in securing salvation for you and me. The Scriptures explain Christ’s own obedience is regards to our right standing before God. There is no greater incentive for obeying God than understanding the obedience of Jesus Christ.

1. Romans 5:19 is one of the most profound verses in the entire Bible. What does it say? _____

2. How did Christ explain His life in John 6:38? _____

3. What did the Lord teach us that our attitude should be in prayer?
Matthew 6:9-10 _____

4. As Jesus realized the hour of His impending death was near, His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane became humanly unbearable. What were His words at this painful moment? Luke 22:42: _____

5. If you think that obedience is something too demanding to be placed upon you by God, consider Philippians 2:5-8. How obedient was the Lord Jesus for you? _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OBEDIENCE

Obedience is not just an outward conformity to the Lord’s commandments. True obedience comes from one’s heart. God’s commands aren’t designed to be a set of restrictions and rules; rather, God’s Word is a guide for how to achieve true happiness and purpose in life and how to overcome the lies of the enemy.

1. What does Philippians 2:13 say about God’s work in your obedient living? _____

2. Don’t forget the promise of Philippians 4:13. It says _____

3. Your attitude toward God should be the same as found in Psalm 40:8. What does this verse say? _____

4. How devoted should you be in submission to God? Deuteronomy 26:16 _____

5. What was God’s intended plan when He saved you? Ephesians 2:10 _____

6. Knowing what God’s Word says is vitally important for an obedient life. What results when we study God’s Word? 2 Timothy 3:16-17 _____

7. The choice is up to every Christian. There are only two courses of action. What does Romans 6:16-18 say? _____

8. Read Hebrews 11. Obedience is always obtained “by faith.” With God’s power available to use (Acts 1:8), and the Lord’s commission to us (Matthew 28:18-20), how should we then

live?

2 Corinthians 5:15: _____

9. When we continually choose to disobey God, a very important fact results in our lives. You can count on the reality of Hebrews 12:5-6 if you are really a child of God. What do these verses say? _____

Until we meet the Lord in final glory, there will be times when we disobey. Our desire should always be to obey God, but our old sin nature will always war against the Spirit. Review all your lessons and remember God's provision for His children when they sin.

- **DAILY** surrender yourself for service (Romans 12:1-2).
- **DEVOTE** all that you are and have to His Lordship (Luke 9:23).
- **DETERMINE** to be used of God through His power (Acts 1:8).
- **DECIDE** quickly to confess sin for cleansing (1 John 1:9).

Ultimately, the most effective way to avoid sin is to truly believe and trust that the promise Jesus gave us in John 10:10 is truth. *"The devil comes only to steal and kill and destroy, but I have come that you may have life and have it abundantly."* God loves us and wants what is best for us. He has given us the Bible because following His commands is truly the best way for us to live our lives. The devil hates us, and will do everything in his power to deceive us and trick us into believing that sinning is fun and good. It is much easier to follow God's commands when we truly believe that His way is best!

Our prayer is that God may give you His grace, power, and love as you continue to love, serve, and obey Him as you tell the Good News of Christ. God has wonderful things in store for you, as you allow Him to fill you, lead you, and use you for His glory. Truly, He has the most abundant life for you. But, remember, we must follow Him, serve Him, and love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Let us all joyfully serve Him, because of the great love He has shown us, and to reach people with the Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God bless you!
David Stockwell

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