

BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP

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Introduction

Matthew 28:18-20

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Matthew 28:18-20 is a cornerstone portion of Scripture for Bible-believing churches. It is foundational for Bible-believing churches because it is the commission that was given directly to the apostles and to the local church by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. At the center of the commission is the call to make disciples. This is extracted from the command to teach all nations. He was commanding the apostles and the church to make disciples of Him from all the ethnicities in the world.

The execution of that command starts with the preaching of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth (*Rom. 1:16*). No one can become a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ without first becoming a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. After receiving the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith (*Eph. 2:8-9*), discipleship must become the primary focus of the believer. That is, being conformed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ through the study of and obedience to His Word.

As much as this definition clarifies what discipleship is, it also clarifies what discipleship is not. It is not a:

- Class
- Curriculum
- Bible Study
- Program

Discipleship has a clear academic component to it, but the process of being conformed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ does not center on academics. It centers on the moment by moment, day by day walk with Christ through His Word (*John 8:31*). This goes far beyond any class, curriculum, Bible study or program. Through the process of faithful obedience to His Word, the believer grows in thinking, speaking and behaving like the Lord Jesus Christ (*1 John 2:6*).

Given that discipleship is to be the primary focus of the believer, it is imperative for the believer at this phase of discipleship to predetermine by the grace of God to come after Christ wholeheartedly and not relent (*Mark 1:17*). It is simple but will not always be easy. There WILL be trials, temptations and distractions. However, by determining in advance that the Lord Jesus Christ is and will always be preeminent, the believer decides beforehand that those things will not deter him or her from following the Lord Jesus Christ.

Being single-minded about discipleship safeguards the discipleship process from deteriorating into simply accelerating through material. It also ensures that the believer will be established in the Four Goals of Discipleship to the Glory of God.

Acts 20:24 - But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Discipleship

The immediate aim of these lessons is to establish believers in the foundational doctrines of the faith and achieve a few practical goals upon which they will continue to build for the rest of their lives. We selected a few values to guide us in deciding the content and structure of the lessons.

THE VALUES OF DISCIPLESHIP

1. Focus on making doctrine the priority.

The relationship between the disciple and the discipler will determine whether discipleship will take place or not; however, the ultimate goal of discipleship is to equip faithful believers with sound biblical doctrine. Biblical doctrine will always be centered around following Jesus.

“And the things...” – 2 Timothy 2:2

2. Focus on maintaining a teacher and student relationship.

There must be a disciple for it to be discipleship. This will normally happen one-on-one; however, it is possible to accomplish discipleship with two or three people, as long as there is only one teacher, and the rest are students. Discipleship is not simply a Bible study, or two individuals spending time together. It is focused on teachers pouring their lives and the Word of God into their students.

“...that thou hast heard of me...” – 2 Timothy 2:2

3. Focus on having accountability.

Discipleship requires the close relationship between the disciple and the discipler. However, discipleship should not be carried out in isolation. There must be accountability from others who are able to witness the process, and identify the goals being accomplished.

“...among many witnesses...” – 2 Timothy 2:2

4. Focus on teaching in a way that is repeatable.

Present biblical truth in a way that is simple to understand, and in a way that will be easy for your disciple to reproduce and present to their disciples.

“...the same commit thou...” – 2 Timothy 2:2

5. Focus on discipling faithful believers.

Discipleship is built upon one disciple of Jesus entering into a relationship with another believer who has been found to be faithful. Faithfulness is established over time. Therefore, discipleship cannot be fully applied to a new believer.

“...to faithful men...” – 2 Timothy 2:2

6. Focus on making disciples that are able to make more disciples.

The reason we commit “these things” unto faithful believers is so that they can teach others to do the same. Your main goal is to make a disciple that will make more disciples.

“...who shall be able to teach others also.” – 2 Timothy 2:2

THE STRUCTURE OF DISCIPLESHIP

1. Establish a list of Discipleship Goals

These goals should be easily defined and identifiable. When we put forth goals, the disciple has the opportunity to self-evaluate.

2. The order of the lessons should coincide with each goal

This can be a difficult task, but we should order the lessons in a way that will reinforce the goals that we are prayerfully trying to accomplish in each disciple.

3. Build in a series of “check-ups” within the lessons

We can have a discussion-based checkup and a section on how to put what we have learned into practice. A supporting lesson can also be included to help tie the section together.

4. Lessons should be concise, yet complete

Each lesson should include a Clear Main Point, a Memory Verse, Teachable Content, Deductive Bible Study, Review, and Action Steps. Each lesson should have the same format. The danger is to include too much content.

5. Discipleship should be universal

If this is to become available for use throughout the world, then we must avoid any cultural characterizations. We also need to avoid addressing issues that we might face in our specific cultures or churches. That is one of the reasons for keeping it to the core doctrines.

THE GOALS OF DISCIPLESHIP

1. Established in Worship: *The focus of your life*

Honor God by following Christ personally and passionately. Choose to know God as Savior and Lord.

2. Established in the Word of God: *The authority of your life*

Begin by learning the Bible, and see what God is saying to you. Your salvation, assurance, being filled with the Spirit and prayer are all based upon and experienced through God's Word.

3. Established in the Local Church: *The context of your life*

The local church is where you live out God's will for your life based upon the Word of God. Your identification with Christ, relationships, money and obeying God's plan for your life will be experienced within the context of the local church.

4. Established in the Ministry: *The purpose of your life*

God's will for your life, which is founded upon His Word and experienced with His local church, is for you to be a disciple (live a holy, Spirit-filled life apart from sin) and to make disciples (sharing the gospel and committing these things to faithful men). This is your mission whereby you will be judged upon His return.

LESSON 1 - SALVATION

Receiving Jesus Christ as your personal Savior is the most important decision you will ever make in your lifetime. This simple decision of childlike faith carries profound significance for all of eternity.

The key word of this lesson is:

RELATIONSHIP

The key questions this lesson answers:

What does it mean to be born again?

How does salvation affect my relationship to God?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To briefly explain what took place in your life when you received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and how that decision has changed your standing with God.

The key point of this lesson:

Our relationship with God is now a perfect Father and child relationship.

MEMORY VERSES:

*“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” – **Ephesians 2:8-9***

*“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” – **John 1:12-13***

YOU LIVE WITHIN ONE OF TWO SPIRITUAL FAMILIES

A. Satan's Family

1. Every person in the world is born into Satan's family.

John 8:31-44; 1 John 3:10

2. You entered into Satan's family through a **PHYSICAL** birth by your earthly father, who is ultimately a descendant of Adam. The descendants of Adam are all born in the image and likeness of a fallen sinner.

Genesis 5:3; Psalm 51:5

3. You inherited a sinful nature from your father, Adam.

Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3

4. The Bible is clear that as a result of your sin, you are sentenced to die.

"For the wages of sin is death..." – Romans 6:23

THE ONLY SOLUTION TO YOUR SIN PROBLEM IS TO TRUST IN JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR SAVIOR.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." – John 14:6

– **Jesus is the way.**

The Bible says mankind will die in their sins if they are not saved from the punishment that they deserve through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Jesus became the way to your salvation by dying in your place on the cross, being buried for three days and three nights, and rising again in victory over sin and death.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Colossians 1:12-14

– **Jesus is the truth.**

The Bible says that mankind rejects the truth of Who God is by choosing to worship themselves and creation. Jesus is the truth they are seeking, and mankind needs to worship Him as the one true God.

Romans 1:20-25; 1 John 5:20

– **Jesus is the life.**

All mankind is born into sin, and they are condemned to be separated from God in an eternal death in the lake of fire. They need the eternal life that is found in Jesus Christ.

Revelation 20:15; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

B. God's Family

1. You enter into God's family through a **SPIRITUAL** birth by your Heavenly Father. By trusting Jesus Christ as your Savior, you become a son of God through spiritual birth. This is what the term "born again" means.

John 3:3-7; 1 Peter 1:23

2. This new birth is described for us in ***John 1:12-13***.

"But as many as received him,..."

Although Jesus died for all, you must place your trust in Christ as Lord and Savior, and choose to become His disciple.

"...to them gave he power to become the sons of God,..."

God enables you to become a son of God and enter into His family.

"...even to them that believe on his name:"

You must believe by grace through faith that Jesus paid for your sin by shedding His blood in death, and that He rose again in victory.

"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man,..."

You do not enter into God's family through a physical birth (*blood*), through your effort (*will of the flesh*), or because someone else wants it for you (*will of man*).

"...but of God."

Your entrance into God's family is through a spiritual birth.

3. God becomes your Heavenly Father when you are adopted into His family.

Romans 8:15

4. After your salvation, God will no longer deal with you as a sinner, but as His child.

1 John 2:1; Ephesians 5:1

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

Our relationship with God is now a perfect Father and child relationship. Unlike many earthly fathers, God never makes mistakes when He deals with His children.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

– Matthew 7:11

DISCUSSION:

When did you enter into God's family?

The only way that you can be saved and spend eternity with God is to believe that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again for you. You receive this amazing gift by calling out and asking Jesus Christ to save you.

- If you cannot point to a time or place that you got saved, then it is possible that you either cannot remember or have not really been born again.
- Some people have had a religious experience, but never really understood their need for the Gospel. Others may have said a prayer, but they were not sincere.
- If you are still unsure of your salvation, why not settle the issue and ask God to save you right now?

Romans 10:9-13

How does your relationship with your earthly father affect how you view your relationship with God as your Heavenly Father?

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND HOW YOUR LIFE HAS CHANGED SINCE YOUR SALVATION

A. You now have the Holy Ghost dwelling inside of you.

"That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." – 2 Timothy 1:14

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" – 1 Corinthians 3:16

B. You are now a new creature in Christ.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." – 2 Corinthians 5:17

C. You now possess eternal life.

It is yours right now; you are not waiting to receive it sometime in the future. The verses below mention your current spiritual life in the present tense.

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life:...” – John 3:36

“...He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” – John 6:47

“He that hath the Son hath life;...” – 1 John 5:12

D. You now possess a new spiritual nature.

1. Just as you inherited your human nature from your physical birth, you have inherited God’s divine nature through your new spiritual birth.

2 Peter 1:3-4

2. Now that you have a new nature in Jesus Christ, the Bible commands you to live a life different from that of the lost.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

IMPORTANT NOTE:

You did not lose your physical nature at the time of your spiritual birth. You now have two natures that are present within you at the same time. Your “old man” nature is your physical, sinful self that is made in Adam’s fallen image. Your “new man” nature is your spiritual self that has been made one with Christ. The issue for every believer is choosing which nature to serve and be conformed to. The nature that you invest in the most will be the one that will control you.

Colossians 3:5-11; 2 Corinthians 4:14-18

SOME COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT SALVATION

A. Is all of mankind part of one large family of God?

No. We can only be God’s children by faith in the resurrected Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:26

B. Do we have to earn/work our way to heaven?

No. Doing good works does not earn us our salvation. We do good works because we are saved.

Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 4:4-5

C. Are there many different ways to get to heaven?

No. Jesus is the only way to be with God.

Acts 4:12

SOME BASIC QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKING

A. Will I sin after I am saved?

Yes. When you got saved, your old nature did not change and will still draw you into sin for the rest of your life.

Romans 7:18-25; James 1:14

B. How does sin affect my relationship with my Heavenly Father?

Your sin will cause your fellowship with God to be broken, but your relationship as His child will not change. However, God will discipline you because you are His child.

Hebrews 12:5-11; Proverbs 3:11-12

C. What should I do when I sin as a child of God?

Confess it to God in prayer, which is to agree with God that it is sin and displeasing to Him. From there, in the power of God's Spirit, be diligent in putting away the sin.

Proverbs 28:13; Romans 8:10-11; 2 Corinthians 7:1

Discussion:

How has your life changed since your salvation?

Do you think that you would be able to tell someone how they can be saved and become a child of God? How would you begin that conversation?

Do you have any questions about this lesson?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Use *1 Corinthians 15:1-4* to define the gospel.

2. The only way to enter into a family is through birth. Describe in your own words how people enter into Satan’s family and God’s family.

3. How has your life changed since you accepted Jesus Christ as Savior?

4. How would you explain the two natures that you now possess?

5. Write down how your relationship with your Heavenly Father compares with your earthly father.

6. What is the key purpose of this lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Read *Ephesians 2:8-9*, and describe why no one can be saved through their efforts.

According to *Romans 10:9-10*, how does someone come to salvation?

Your relationship with God is pictured by the earthly relationship between a father and his son. Read the following verses and write down some of the ways that God cares for his children.

Psalm 46:1

John 14:26

Colossians 3:21

Matthew 4:4

Romans 8:28-30

Hebrews 12:5-11

Matthew 18:5-6

Philippians 4:19

1 Peter 5:7

Read *1 Thessalonians 1:9-10*, and describe how the lives of the believers in the Thessalonian church changed after their salvation.

Read *Colossians 1:12-14*, and describe in your own words what happened in your life because of your salvation.

LESSON 2 - ETERNAL SECURITY

It is important to understand and know that your relationship with God is an eternal one. When you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, God gave you eternal life and the security of an eternal relationship with Him. Being saved means that you have eternal life, and having eternal life means that you are saved.

The key word of this lesson is:

SECURITY

The key question this lesson answers:

Is my new life in Christ going to last forever?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To know that the security of your relationship with God is based upon nothing other than the finished work of Jesus Christ.

The key point of this lesson:

Our birth is irreversible.

MEMORY VERSES:

*“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” – **John 6:37***

*“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”
– **1 John 5:13***

THE SCRIPTURES REVEAL THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE

A. You received eternal life in Jesus Christ at the moment of your salvation.

John 3:15; 1 John 5:12

B. Jesus Christ paid the penalty of your sin through His sacrifice. You received the gift of eternal life through His resurrection.

Romans 6:9-11

C. God cannot lie and He has promised you eternal life.

Titus 1:2

THE SCRIPTURES DECLARE YOUR ETERNAL SECURITY

A. The Bible says that you have eternal life because God will not disown you for any reason.

1. Jesus promised that He would never cast you out.

John 6:37

2. Jesus promised that you are secure in His hand, and no one can take your salvation from you.

John 10:27-29

3. You must choose to trust that your soul is safe in God's possession.

2 Timothy 1:12

B. The Bible says that you cannot forfeit your own salvation.

1. Eternal life is the free gift of God received at the moment of your salvation by God's grace and not your works. You cannot lose eternal life because you cannot earn eternal life.

Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 6:23

2. If there was anything you could do to earn or keep your eternal life, then you would be righteous by your own efforts, and Jesus Christ would have died in vain.

Galatians 2:16, 21

3. If you were responsible for maintaining your salvation, then there is no doubt that you would lose it because of your sin. God alone secures your salvation.

Galatians 3:10; James 2:10

THE BIBLE DECLARES THAT NOTHING CAN SEPARATE YOU FROM GOD'S LOVE

Read ***Romans 8:38-39***. The immense promise and security of God's love toward each individual believer is demonstrated in these verses. There is nothing that can ever separate you from the love of Christ or the eternal security that you have in Him.

- **Death** – *you cannot lose it when you die*
- **Life** – *you cannot lose it while you live*
- **Angels** – *Angels cannot take it from you*
- **Principalities** – *government cannot take it from you*
- **Powers** – *Satanic powers cannot take it from you*
- **Things present** – *nothing right now can take it*
- **Things to come** – *nothing in the future can take it*
- **Height** – *nothing in the heavens can take it away*
- **Depth** – *nothing below you can take it away*
- **Any other creature** – *no living thing can take it*

DISCUSSION:

It is important to note that the past is not listed here. Your sin separated you from God, but now you are His child. You are no longer separated from God because of something in your past. Are you allowing your past to affect your relationship with God?

*“And you hath he quickened, who **were** dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time **past** ye **walked** according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all **had** our conversation in times **past** in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and **were** by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”*

– ***Ephesians 2:1-3***

THE SCRIPTURES CONFIRM YOUR ETERNAL SECURITY

A. Your relationship with God is secure because you are now His child by birth.

John 1:12-13; 1 John 3:1-2

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

Birth is irreversible. You will always be your biological father's child because you were born of his seed. Even if one or both of your parents were never a part of your life, it does not change the fact that you are their child. You could disown each other, change your name, or never see each other the rest of your lives; but your father will always be your father. The same is true of your Heavenly Father. You can never be "unborn" because your spiritual birth is fixed forever.

B. Your new birth in Christ has been sealed with the Holy Spirit of God.

1. When you were born again, God made a record of it by writing your name in the Lamb's Book of Life.

*"And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life." – **Philippians 4:3***

2. You were sealed by the Holy Spirit of God at your spiritual birth.

*"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."
– **Ephesians 1:13-14***

C. The scriptures confirm our faith even when our feelings do not.

Your salvation is not based on feelings, but on the truth of the Word of God. Doubts and fears can be real, but they should always be addressed by taking them to the Word of God.

1. You can know that you have eternal life.

*"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." – **1 John 5:13***

2. God promised eternal life, and eternal life has no end.

*“And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.”
– 1 John 2:25*

3. God knows you are saved, but you should be convinced of your own salvation.

“For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.” – 1 John 3:20

4. The love of God will overcome any fears you may have.

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” – 1 John 4:18

DISCUSSION:

Has there been a time in your life that you doubted your salvation?

How does knowing you have eternal security change the way you view your relationship with God?

SOME COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY

A. Do I have to work in order to keep my salvation secure?

No. Works are the opposite of grace. We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone. Faith justifies you before God, while your works justify you before men. We are to walk in Christ just as we received Him – by faith.

Titus 3:5; Galatians 2:16; Colossians 2:6-7

B. Will I lose my salvation when I sin?

No. When we sin, we break fellowship with God, but He doesn't remove us from His family. We simply need to confess our sins to our Father, repent, and fellowship will be restored.

1 John 1:9; 2 Corinthians 7:1

C. Will believers lose their salvation if they choose to turn their backs on Jesus?

No. The gift of salvation is not conditional; it is eternal. God will not turn His back on His children. However, there are always consequences in choosing to live a life out of fellowship with God. God will discipline His children so that it will lead them to holiness.

Hebrews 12:6-11; Galatians 6:7-9

DISCUSSION:

Are you willing to believe and accept what the Bible says about your eternal security?

What are some consequences you have faced because you chose to live a life outside of fellowship with God?

Do you have any questions about this lesson?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What are the promises that we can claim in *John 6:37 and John 10:27-29*?

2. Explain in your own words what it means to be sealed by the Holy Spirit. Use scripture to support your answer.

3. Is there anything that can separate you from the love of God? Give scripture to support your answer.

4. Write down some scripture references that promise that you can know that you have eternal life right now.

5. Is it possible for you to do anything that will cause you to lose your salvation?

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

2 Timothy 2:15-19 speaks of a group of people that walked away from following the Lord. Why was their faith overthrown? What does the Bible say about how God views their relationship with Him?

According to **1 Peter 1:3-5**, you have a living hope because you have been born again from the dead. What does this passage teach you about your heavenly inheritance? Whose power keeps your salvation secure?

Compare **Philippians 1:6**; **Jude 1:24-25**; and **2 Timothy 1:12** and describe the reasons why you can be confident in the security of your salvation.

The Bible teaches that you cannot lose your salvation. However, you can suffer loss by not serving the Lord. Please read and respond to the following verses and questions.

Psalm 51:12

Have you ever lost the joy of your salvation? Do you need to ask God to restore the joy of salvation back into your life right now? _____

2 Corinthians 6:1-3

It is possible to lose your testimony as a follower of Christ. Has there ever been a time since your salvation that God was not being glorified by the way that you were living? How is your testimony today? _____

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

There is an eternal reward to be given or lost based upon how you invest in eternal things or temporary things. Right now, are you living for and investing in things that will matter in eternity? _____

LESSON 3 - THE ORDINANCES

Various religious denominations teach many things concerning the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Bible teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ gave His church these ordinances to commemorate His death, burial, and resurrection. It is important to understand that the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are not essential to your salvation, but they are important to demonstrate your obedience to the Lord after your salvation.

The key word of this lesson is:

OBEDIENCE

The key question this lesson answers:

What is the importance of baptism and the Lord's Supper in my life?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To give the Bible's clear and definite teaching on the two ordinances given to the church.

The key point of this lesson:

Baptism is the first act of obedience for a believer, and the Lord's Supper is a remembrance of Jesus Christ's death until He comes.

MEMORY VERSES:

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

– Acts 8:36-37

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

– 1 Corinthians 11:26

SECTION 1: BAPTISM

Virtually all religious denominations teach some form of baptism as part of their doctrine, and the teachings are diverse. This section of the lesson is intended to give the Bible's clear and definite teaching on this subject so that you can understand what God's intention is regarding baptism.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

A. Water baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:1-7

B. Water baptism is the public testimony of your salvation and identification with Jesus.

Romans 1:16; 10:11

You are publicly demonstrating that you have trusted Christ's death on the cross on your behalf. As you are taken beneath the water, you are publicly demonstrating that your sins were buried with Christ in His grave. As you come up out of the water, you are publicly demonstrating your resurrection with Christ, and that He has raised you to walk in newness of life.

C. Water baptism is a public declaration that you are choosing to follow and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus set the example for us by submitting to baptism before He began His public ministry.

Matthew 3:13-17

THE KEY POINT OF THIS SECTION...

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

– **Matthew 28:19-20**

According to the Bible, the first act of obedience for a believer is the ordinance of baptism. It is essential for your spiritual growth. Before you can be taught to follow Jesus Christ, you must be willing to submit to the first act of obedience that God requires of you following your salvation. Your growth in Jesus Christ will be hindered if you will not obey the simple command of God to be baptized.

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

A. The Lord commands all who place their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to be baptized.

*“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:”* – **Matthew 28:19**

B. There are two requirements for those who desire to be baptized.

“And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” – **Acts 8:36-37**

Requirement #1 – Heart belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior

Requirement #2 – Confession that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior

Romans 10:9-10

WHEN SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED?

A. The Bible teaches that you should be baptized after your salvation.

Below are a few examples of baptism occurring after salvation:

- The people of Samaria – *Acts 8:12*
- The Ethiopian eunuch – *Acts 8:36-39*
- The Apostle Paul (Saul) – *Acts 9:18*
- Cornelius and his house – *Acts 10:44-48*
- The Philippian jailer – *Acts 16:25-33*
- The people of Corinth – *Acts 18:7-8*

B. You should be baptized at the first opportunity after understanding God’s command and purpose to be baptized.

Are you completely sure that you are saved?

Have you been baptized since your salvation? If not, when will you?

HOW SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED?

A. Every biblical example of an individual’s baptism was by immersion.

*“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway **out of the water**:...”*
– *Matthew 3:16*

*“...and they went down both **into the water**, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.”* – *Acts 8:38*

B. The biblical method of baptism is by complete immersion.

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” – Romans 6:4

1. The word “baptize” means to immerse, to dip, to be placed into, and to submerge.
2. Baptism cannot picture the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ if it does not include the believer being completely immersed into water.
3. Sprinkling is not a biblical method of baptism because it does not picture the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

WHERE SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED?

- A. Your baptism should be carried out under the authority of a local church that teaches sound doctrine concerning baptism.**
- B. The location of baptism is not as important as the public testimony of your identification with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.**
- C. You should be baptized in a public body of water large enough for immersion.**

John 3:23; Acts 8:36-37

SECTION 2: THE LORD'S SUPPER

Like baptism, the Lord's Supper (communion) is not essential for your salvation, but it is very important for your new life in Jesus Christ. This section of the lesson is designed to give you a biblical understanding of how to apply the memorial of the Last Supper to your Christian life.

WHY SHOULD YOU OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

The primary reason to observe the Lord's Supper is for the regular remembrance of the price Jesus paid for your sins.

- A. Jesus instituted the observance of the Lord's Supper when he said, "*... this do in remembrance of me.*"**

Luke 22:14-20

- B. The Apostle Paul confirms the observance of the Lord's Supper for the New Testament church as a memorial of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for sin.**

1 Corinthians 11:20-34

WHAT DOES THE LORD'S SUPPER REPRESENT?

- A. Unleavened bread is used to signify the pure body of Jesus Christ.**

1. Leaven in the Bible speaks of corruption, sin, and false teaching. It was also forbidden in Israel's Passover feast.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Matthew 16:6-12; Deuteronomy 16:1-4

2. The bread is broken to remind you that Jesus' body was given for you.

1 Corinthians 11:24; Isaiah 53:4-6

B. Grape juice is used to signify the pure blood of Jesus Christ.

1. Grape juice (unfermented) is of the fruit of the vine and is used during the corporate observance of the Lord's Supper as it allows believers of all ages to partake.

Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18

2. The juice is "poured out" to remind you that the blood of Jesus was shed for sins.

Matthew 26:26-29

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?

A. The Lord's Supper provides you with a proper perspective.

The three views you should take when observing the Lord's Supper...

1. **Look to the PAST** – This reminds you of what Jesus did to pay for your sins. Remembering the death of Jesus Christ will remind you that your sins have been covered in His blood.

1 Corinthians 11:24-25

2. **Look to the FUTURE** – This reminds you that Jesus Christ is coming again. You should want to be clean so that you will not be ashamed when the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

1 Corinthians 11:26

3. **Look to the PRESENT** – This reminds you to judge your own sins. God wants you to examine your life so that you can judge your own sins and turn from them.

1 Corinthians 11:27-28

B. The Lord's Supper maintains purity within the body of Christ.

1. It is a time to purge bitterness and sin that defiles you. You will bring the chastisement of God if you choose to partake of the Lord's Supper "unworthily" by not examining your spiritual life and walk with God.

1 Corinthians 11:27-32

2. It protects from allowing unrepentant sin to remain within the church.

1 Corinthians 5:1-8

THE KEY POINT OF THIS SECTION...

The most important events in history are the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and His glorious return. Just as you observe special days in your life by a special "remembrance", the Lord's Supper is observed by the church as a memorial of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for your sins, and to remind you that He will come again.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Why does God instruct Christians to be baptized?

2. What is the biblical method of baptism and what does it represent?

3. What are the biblical requirements for someone to be baptized?

4. Why are Christians instructed to participate in the Lord's Supper?

5. How does the Lord's Supper picture the suffering of Jesus Christ?

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Explain in your own words what *Acts 8:36-38* teaches you concerning baptism.

Read each passage below, and describe when each individual was baptized.

Acts 8:12-13

Acts 10:44-48

Acts 18:7-8

Describe in your own words what Jesus was teaching his disciples in *John 6:48-58*.

Read *Matthew 26:26-30*, and briefly compare the Last Supper with the way the Lord's Supper is observed in your local church.

LESSON 4 - HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit of God took up permanent residency within you on the day that you received the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. The Holy Spirit is God's personal presence in your life, and He desires to make you holy as you learn to walk with Him. This third person of the Godhead is often misunderstood and ignored in Christianity.

The key word of this lesson is:

INDWELL

The key question this lesson answers:

What is the role and function of the Holy Spirit in my life?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To give you a basic understanding of the TRUE work of the Holy Spirit of God in your life.

The key point of this lesson:

The Holy Spirit dwells within you.

MEMORY VERSES:

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." – 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." – Galatians 5:22-23

WHAT DOES THE SPIRIT OF GOD DO WITHIN ME?

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

The Holy Spirit dwells within you. Throughout the Bible, we read about men and women who encountered the presence of God in various times and places. When you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, God gave his Spirit to dwell within you. You now have God's presence inside of you, and your body has become the temple of the Holy Ghost!

John 14:16-17; Galatians 3:2; 1 Corinthians 3:16

A. The Holy Spirit is the seal and earnest (*guarantee*) of your salvation.

Ephesians 1:13-14

B. The Holy Spirit empowers you to serve God.

Ephesians 3:16

C. The Holy Spirit bears witness to you of your salvation.

Romans 8:16

D. The Holy Spirit intercedes in prayer for you.

Romans 8:26-27

E. The Holy Spirit will teach you the Bible.

John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14

F. The Holy Spirit gives you direction in decision-making.

1 Corinthians 2:15-16

G. The Holy Spirit comforts you in time of need.

John 14:15-18

H. The Holy Spirit will bring what He has taught you to your remembrance.

John 14:26

I. The Holy Spirit will convict you of your sin.

John 16:8-11

DISCUSSION:

How does being the temple of God change the way you live your life?

Can you share an example of the Holy Spirit helping you to understand a passage in the Bible?

HOW DOES MY SIN AFFECT THE HOLY SPIRIT?

A. Your sin grieves the Holy Spirit.

God placed His Spirit within each believer because it is His desire that our lives reflect His character in the world. The Holy Spirit is grieved (saddened) when believers choose to live their lives for their own carnal desires.

Ephesians 4:30

B. Your sin quenches the Holy Spirit.

When believers continuously and intentionally ignore the conviction of the Holy Spirit, it will result in a seared conscience and hardened heart. The Holy Spirit will become quenched (extinguished) because their hard heart will ignore the promptings of the Holy Spirit to lead them into holiness.

1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 4:1-2

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The Bible uses the words “*godly sorrow*” to describe conviction, and “*sorrow of the world*” to describe guilt. It can be difficult for a believer to tell the difference between conviction and guilt because they often feel similar; however, they both have very different results.

Conviction comes from God revealing specific sin in your life so that you choose to repent. Conviction produces godly sorrow and the disappointment that you have offended God. It leads you **TO** God through repentance, and produces the fruit of forgiveness, peace, and a right relationship with God.

Guilt originates from Satan trying to accuse you of being unworthy of God’s love and blessings. It produces depression, anxiety, resentment, and a bitterness that drives you **FROM** having fellowship with God.

2 Corinthians 7:9-11

DISCUSSION:

Is there anything in your life that is causing the Holy Spirit to be grieved?

WHAT IS THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit of God produces a set of godly qualities within you called the fruit of the Spirit. Each quality is produced at the same time as you give your life to God and walk in His power. It is important to understand that there is only one fruit of the Spirit that is manifested in nine different qualities. The only way to become Christ-like is to see the fruit of the Spirit manifested in your life.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” – Galatians 5:22-23

A. There are inward qualities that transform your personal life.

1. Love

The Holy Spirit gives you a genuine love for God and others.

2. Joy

The Holy Spirit gives you a deep abiding joy regardless of external circumstances.

3. Peace

The Holy Spirit gives you an inner peace even in the midst of conflict.

B. There are outward qualities that transform your relationships with others.

1. Longsuffering

The Holy Spirit allows you to give grace to others despite their shortcomings.

2. Gentleness

The Holy Spirit gives you the ability to treat others with dignity, courtesy, and respect.

3. Goodness

The Holy Spirit gives you a godly character that reflects God's goodness.

C. There are upward qualities that transform your relationship with God.

1. Faith

The Holy Spirit gives you a confidence to trust God's Word.

2. Meekness

The Holy Spirit gives you an inner strength that is manifested in humility.

3. Temperance

The Holy Spirit leads you into a balanced life.

DISCUSSION:

Which of these spiritual qualities (fruit) would you like to see further growth in?

WHAT ARE THE WORKS OF THE FLESH?

The fruit of the Spirit cannot be produced within believers who follow the leading of their flesh over the leading of the Spirit. It is easy to identify believers who choose to live in sin because the works of the flesh are made evident in their lives.

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” – Galatians 5:19-21

– **Adultery**

Being unfaithful to your spouse

– **Wrath**

The active work of hatred, displaying anger

– **Fornication**

Any sexual sin outside the marriage bonds

– **Strife**

To stimulate conflict, cause division

– **Uncleanness**

Obscenity, any pollution of the flesh

– **Seditions**

Drawing others away from the truth

– **Lasciviousness**

Vulgar, lustful, uncontrolled sexual desire

– **Heresies**

False teaching

– **Idolatry**

Worshipping anything other than God

– **Envyings**

Desiring ill will towards successful people

– **Witchcraft**

Use of Satanic power, the occult, rebellion

– **Murders**

To kill someone through literal or verbal means

– **Hatred**

Internal hostility

– **Drunkenness**

Letting any substance control your life

– **Variance**

Unnecessary quarelling, debates

– **Revellings**

Wild partying, indulging the flesh

– **Emulations**

Envy of others, zeal for the world

– **And such like**

Anything else that will draw you away from God

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Each item on this list is potentially warring in your flesh at this very moment. When the flesh is in control of you, any one of the works of the flesh will be manifested. The works of the flesh are present in your life because you are still carrying around your fleshly body. That is why the works of the flesh will eventually come out when you allow your flesh to be in control.

HOW CAN I BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT?

A. You are filled with the Spirit of God as you are filled with the Word of God.

As you compare the passages below, you will observe that allowing the Word of Christ to dwell in you and being filled with the Spirit have the same result in your life. You will be filled with the Spirit as your mind and heart are saturated with the Word of God.

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;” – Ephesians 5:18-19

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” – Colossians 3:16

B. You are filled with the Spirit of God as you allow Him to control you.

Being filled with the Spirit is a life-long process of spiritual growth that requires you to be patient and consistent. As you grow and mature in your obedience to the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will control your thoughts, actions, and desires.

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” – Galatians 5:25

IMPORTANT NOTE:

You now have two natures dwelling within you. Your old nature is physical, sinful, and made in Adam’s image. This nature is often referred to within scripture as the “flesh” or the “old man.” Your new nature is spiritual, perfect, and renewed in God’s image. This nature is often referred to in scripture as the “new man.”

Ephesians 4:22-24

Both natures are present within you at all times. You are now faced with a daily choice to follow your flesh or the Spirit. You must choose which nature you will follow. Choosing to follow the flesh will bring consequences, and choosing to follow the Spirit will bring blessings.

Galatians 5:16-17; 6:7-9

DISCUSSION:

Are you living a life that is filled with the Spirit?

How is your time in the Word of God affecting how you are filled with the Spirit of God?

Which nature do you usually choose to follow? Why?

BASIC QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKING

A. Should I pray and ask God to give me more of the Holy Spirit?

No. You were sealed by the Holy Spirit at the moment of your salvation. You do not need any more of God's Spirit, you only need to be filled with the Holy Spirit that you already have within you.

To be filled with the Spirit means that God is controlling your life by the Holy Spirit. The filling of the Spirit is NOT you getting more of the Spirit, but rather the Spirit getting more control of you. The filling of the Spirit does NOT lead you to an emotional or spiritual experience, but it rather leads you to proclaim the Word of God.

Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 8:1-2

B. Will the Holy Spirit leave me when I sin?

No. You are sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day that you enter God's presence. The Holy Spirit is God's promise and guarantee that you are saved and will be His child for all of eternity.

Ephesians 4:30

C. Is the Holy Spirit a spiritual force, or is it part of the trinity?

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead. He is co-equal with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is to be obeyed as He provides guidance and instruction to believers.

Acts 5:3-4; 10:19-21; 13:1-4; 16:6-10

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Where does the Holy Spirit dwell? List three scripture references to support your answer.

2. When does the Holy Spirit come into the believer's life?

3. List four examples of what the Holy Spirit does within you.

4. What is the difference between guilt and conviction?

5. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?

6. Explain in your own words the difference between your two natures.

7. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Read the following verses and write down the different names given to the Holy Spirit.

John 14:16

Acts 5:32

Galatians 4:6

John 14:17

Romans 8:2

Romans 8:9

Read the following verses, and write down what happened after each individual was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Luke 1:41-42

Luke 1:67-68

Acts 2:4

Acts 4:8

Acts 4:31

Acts 13:9-10

According to these passages, what is the common result after someone is filled with the Holy Spirit? _____

What can you learn about your relationship between the flesh and the Spirit from *Romans 8:8-10*?

What does *Galatians 3:1-3* teach you about how you are to continue to grow in your relationship with God?

LESSON 5 - WORD OF GOD

What makes Christianity unique is its claim to an absolute written authority from God. The Word of God is essential to your growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Bible sets a standard by which we are to conform our life. In its pages, we see how God governs the details of our lives in every way.

The key word of this lesson is:

INFALLIBLE

The key questions this lesson answers:

Do I have God's Word today?

What is the significance of the Bible in my life?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To acquaint you with the basics of the Bible, and to learn how it relates to your everyday life as the guide to your personal walk with Jesus Christ.

The key point of this lesson:

Every experience in your life, physical or spiritual, should be judged by the infallible standard of God's Word. The Bible is the absolute final authority in your life as a believer.

MEMORY VERSES

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." – 2 Peter 1:21

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." – 2 Timothy 3:16-17

UNDERSTANDING THE ACCURACY OF GOD'S WORD

The Bible has a unique construction.

- The Bible is a collection of 66 books. There are 39 books in the Old Testament, and 27 books in the New Testament.
- The Bible was written by more than 40 men in three languages over a time period of approximately 2,000 years.
- The Bible is accurate in all matters of history, prophecy, and in every issue of life.
- The Bible does not contradict itself.
- The Bible fits together perfectly, as if it were written by one man, because the Holy Spirit is the author of all 66 books.

A. The Bible is the INSPIRED Word of God.

The Spirit of God moved men of God to write the Word of God. God revealed his Word, and men published it.

2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21

B. The Bible is the INFALLIBLE Word of God.

God holds Himself to the truth of His Word. Every word of the Bible is perfect, and there is no error within it.

Proverbs 22:20-21

C. The Bible is the COMPLETE Word of God.

We are warned not to add to or change the inspired, perfect, and preserved Word of God. God's Word is complete; there is no new revelation from God outside of the Bible.

Proverbs 30:5-6

D. The Bible is the PRESERVED Word of God.

God's Word is eternal. He has promised to preserve His perfect Word throughout history and for every generation. You can be sure that you have access to God's perfect and inspired Word today.

Mathew 5:18

DISCUSSION:

Do you believe that your copy of God's Word is perfect, and without errors?

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

God has preserved His Word for the very purpose of giving you instruction for victorious living. The Bible is the absolute final authority in your life as a believer. The truths of God's Word are greater than any experience that you might have.

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." – John 7:24

Example:

In **2 Peter 1:16-21**, the Apostle Peter allowed God's Word to be his final authority when he compared it to his experience on the holy mount with Jesus in **Matthew 17:1-9**.

Peter was relating his experience of seeing the glorified Jesus and hearing the audible voice of God from heaven. Peter understood that believers have a "more sure" authority in the Word of God than in the audible voice of God. His conclusion was that every experience, spiritual or physical, in our lives should be judged by the infallible standard of God's Word.

UNDERSTANDING THE APPLICATION OF GOD'S WORD

A. The Word of God has the power to save you.

1. The Bible says that the Word of God is able to save your souls. Without the Word of God, mankind would have no opportunity to be saved.

James 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:15

2. The only way we can know the gospel is because the Bible reveals it. Jesus died, was buried, and rose again according to the scriptures. You must hear and believe what the Bible says about your sin, your lost condition, and God's plan for your salvation in order to be saved.

Romans 10:17; Ephesians 1:13

3. God's plan of salvation begins with Him sending out His Word so that man can be saved. Therefore, you have the responsibility to share the Word of God with others so that they may also be saved.

Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 10:13-15

B. The Word of God has the power to guide you.

1. Our own natural intellect can never fully comprehend the things of God. God gave us the Spirit of God so that we can know and understand His Word. All believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and can learn the Bible.

John 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14

2. As you begin to study and understand the Bible, you will become equipped to make biblical and spiritual decisions in your life. The Word of God gives you clear direction and provides you with the mind of Christ for any situation in life.

1 Corinthians 2:15-16; Psalm 119:105

C. The Word of God has the power to grow you.

1. The Word of God transforms you as it cleanses you from the inside out.

John 15:3; Psalm 119:9-11

2. The Word of God helps you to overcome spiritual opposition as you apply scripture to your temptation.

Luke 4:1-13

3. The Word of God equips you to serve God and to live out its truths.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

– 2 Timothy 3:16-17

- a. DOCTRINE – *The Bible teaches you what is true.*
- b. REPROOF – *The Bible reveals areas in your life that are wrong.*
- c. CORRECTION – *The Bible directs your attention to what is right.*
- d. INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS – *The Bible teaches you to live what is right.*

DISCUSSION:

What verses of the Bible did God use to reveal your need for salvation?

Can you share an example of how your reading and studying God’s Word helped you to make an important decision in your life?

How has your life changed after choosing to allow the Word of God to be your final authority?

SOME COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT THE WORD OF GOD

A. Is it really necessary to use the Bible when sharing your faith?

Yes. Individuals need to hear the Word of God in order to be saved.

1 Peter 1:23; Romans 10:17

B. Can someone really understand the Bible without outside resources?

Yes. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself. It is filled with self-defining passages and cross references within its own pages.

Isaiah 28:9-10

C. Does reading the Bible really change a person?

Yes. You are to read the Bible not to be informed, but rather to be transformed by the truth of God's Word. The truth of the Bible cleanses you from the inside out, and gives you victory over sin in your life.

John 17:17; John 8:32

SOME BASIC QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKING

A. Where should I start reading?

You should begin to invest your time in God's Word by focusing on some of the passages that deal with your relationship with your Heavenly Father.

1. The gospel of John is written so that you might believe on Jesus Christ.

John 20:31

2. The epistles that the Apostle Paul wrote are focused on how to serve God through the ministries of the local church.

Romans - Philemon

3. The book of Proverbs will give you wisdom and insight into life.

Proverbs 1:7

B. How do I have a quiet time?

It is important to understand that you are meeting with God, and not just reading the Bible. He will speak to you through His written Word, and you speak to God through prayer. God wants you to know and understand what His Word says to you. As you read the Bible, ask simple questions like... What does this passage say? What is God teaching me in this passage? After you have read the Bible, ask God to guide you and give you wisdom in how to apply its truths to your life.

Proverbs 2:1-6

As you learn the Bible, your love for God and His Word will grow. You will prove your love for God as you respond by believing what the Bible says and by living out its truths.

John 14:15; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; James 1:22-25

C. What if I find something in the Bible that I don't understand?

You will find many things you do not understand. Do not get frustrated. Wait for God to reveal it to you in His time. The most important thing is to live out what you DO understand. God will not give you more than you are capable of handling. As you put the things you are learning into practice, God will entrust you with more. The Spirit of God alone will guide you into all truth as you compare scripture with scripture.

John 16:12-15

D. Can I rely on the accuracy and authority of God's Word?

There are two different views of the Bible among believers today. Those with a faith view of scripture believe that the Word of God is perfect, inspired, complete, and preserved. They believe God is able to preserve His Word perfectly in any language. However, those with a critical view of the Bible believe that the Word of God may contain errors that need to be corrected through human scholarship and intervention.

Unfortunately, the critical view of scripture has caused confusion among Christians, and has led many to no longer believe in the accuracy and authority of God's Word. It has also motivated some to produce alternate versions of the Bible in different cultures and languages.

It is important for you to have a faith view of the scriptures and to know that you can rely on the accuracy and authority of God's Word that is available to you in your language. If there are multiple versions available to you, then ask your discipler to assist you in discovering which version of the Bible is rooted with a faith view of the scriptures, and use it as your copy of God's Word.

Mathew 5:18

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. List four reasons why you can know that the Bible is reliable in every detail.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

2. As you begin to study and understand the Bible, you will be equipped to make biblical and spiritual decisions in your life. What decision will you trust God to guide you in this week?

3. According to *1 Corinthians 2:9-16*, why is it not possible for lost people to understand what the Word of God teaches?

4. List four ways in which God’s Word will transform your life. Give a scripture reference for each.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

5. According to *2 Timothy 3:16-17*, what four things do the scriptures provide to equip the believer for service?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Read the following verses, and write down six types of food that the scriptures use to describe the Word of God.

1 Peter 2:2

Luke 4:4

Psalms 119:103; Proverbs 16:24

Ephesians 5:26; Isaiah 55:10-11

Proverbs 7:2; 25:11

1 Corinthians 3:1-2; Hebrews 5:12-14

Read *Psalms 19:7-11* and *Hebrews 4:12-13*. Choose one of the passages, and make a list of the characteristics of God's Word that you find.

Read *Psalms 1* and then compare how your relationship with God's Word will affect the way you live your life.

It is important that you have your own time to meet with God through His Word. Where are you currently reading in the Bible? Write down a truth that God has shown you from that passage? How are you living out this truth in your life today?

LESSON 6 - PRAYER

Your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ cannot grow without having proper communication. The two basic elements of spiritual survival for a Christian are the Word of God and prayer. God speaks to you as you read the Bible, and you speak to God through prayer. Your relationship with God will only be as strong as your dependence upon prayer.

The key word of this lesson is:

COMMUNICATION

The key question this lesson answers:

How important is prayer in my life?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To teach you how to cultivate an effective and intimate prayer life.

The key point of this lesson:

Prayer is the communication from the heart of a believer to God.

Memory Verses:

*“And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.” – **John 14:13-14***

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

WHAT IS PRAYER?

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON...

Prayer is the communication from the heart of a believer directed to God. We have bold access to God's throne through our relationship with Jesus Christ.

"In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him."
– **Ephesians 3:12**

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." – **Hebrews 4:16**

A. Prayer can be spoken audibly and silently.

"I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech." – **Psalm 17:6**

"Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard:..." – **1 Samuel 1:13**

B. Prayer can be spoken publicly and privately.

"And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all."
– **Acts 20:36**

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." – **Matthew 6:6**

WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?

The topic of prayer can be overwhelming. Many believers are missing out on the blessings that God promises because they do not spend time with God in prayer. God is interested in every intimate detail of your life, and He promises to hear your prayers no matter how large or small they may be.

A. God answers prayer.

1. You should be confident when you pray, knowing that God hears your prayers.

Psalm 86:6-7; Psalm 145:18-19

2. You should be confident when you pray, knowing that God will answer your prayers according to His will.

John 14:13-14; 1 John 5:14-15

B. Prayer produces a change in you.

1. Prayer produces peace within your heart and mind.

Philippians 4:6-7

2. Prayer conforms you to the will of God. It does not conform God to your will.

Matthew 26:36-39; Colossians 1:9

3. Prayer changes your perspective in the midst of your circumstances.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

C. Prayer draws you close to God so that He alone can prove His sufficiency for your every need.

“And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;” – 2 Corinthians 3:4-5

1. God knows exactly what you need even before you ask.

Matthew 6:8

2. God allows needs to come into your life so He can draw you closer to Himself.

Psalms 50:15

3. You must recognize that you have needs in your life. It is dangerous to convince yourself that you do not need anything.

Revelation 3:16-17

DISCUSSION:

Are you sometimes afraid to pray in front of others?

Do you ever doubt that God is really listening to your prayers?

Has your attitude ever changed after spending time with God in prayer?

WHEN SHOULD YOU PRAY?

A. God desires that you continuously communicate with Him in prayer.

Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17

B. God desires that you give thanks in every circumstance in your life.

1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:20

Learn from the many examples in scripture of individuals with a consistent lifestyle of prayer:

1. Nehemiah prayed instantly when he had an immediate need.

Nehemiah 1:4; 2:4

2. Daniel continued to pray even when a law was passed forbidding it.

Daniel 6:4-10

3. David maintained a lifestyle of prayer at all times.

Psalms 5:3; 55:17

HOW SHOULD YOU PRAY?

A. You do not need to go through any other person to talk to God. You have direct access to God personally.

1 Timothy 2:5; Ephesians 2:18

B. Talk to the Lord as a friend.

John 15:13-15; Exodus 33:11

C. It is not necessary or biblical to use repetitious prayer.

Matthew 6:7

D. Pray specific prayers. The prayers of many believers are wasted because they are too general and are not biblically based.

Philippians 4:6

DISCUSSION:

Do you find that your prayers are sometimes vague and sound repetitious?

What are you specifically trusting God for in your life right now?

WHAT SHOULD YOU PRAY?

There is not a special “formula” to follow when you pray. However, the Word of God does mention and demonstrate different types of prayer throughout the Bible. You will not have an effective communion with God without spending careful and committed time with Him in four major areas of prayer.

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;” – 1 Timothy 2:1

A. SUPPLICATIONS – *These are earnest and fervent requests for God to move.*

Psalms 6:8-9; James 5:16

B. INTERCESSIONS – *These are specific requests on the behalf of others.*

Romans 15:30-32

C. PRAYERS – *These are communications with God that are based in His Word.*

Psalms 145:18-19

D. THANKSGIVINGS – *These express gratitude to God for His wonderful works.*

Psalms 100:4

IMPORTANT NOTE:

God wants you to live in complete fellowship with Him in prayer. Many believers choose not to pray because they do not believe that God is interested in working in their lives or their specific circumstances. When believers fail to pray, they will fail to see answers to prayer. God commands you to watch with expectation to see how He will answer your continuous prayers.

*“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;” – **Colossians 4:2***

*“Our praying needs to be intense and fervent with an energy that never tires. It must have a persistency that will not be denied and with a courage that will never fail. The praying Christian is like a brave soldier who, as the conflict grows more severe, exhibits a more superior courage than in the earlier stages of the battle.” – **E.M. Bounds***

DISCUSSION:

How often do you pray?

Can you share a recent example of how God answered your prayer?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. List three ways that prayer will change you.

2. Use scripture to describe why prayer is important to you.

3. When is the best time for a believer to pray? Why?

4. What can we learn from the following verses about how to pray?

1 Timothy 2:5

Matthew 6:7

5. List the four major areas of prayer and a scripture reference for each.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

6. What is the key purpose of this lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Explain in your own words what *1 Timothy 2:1-2* teaches you concerning prayer.

Describe the hindrances to prayer mentioned in the passages below.

Psalms 66:18; Isaiah 59:1-2

Proverbs 28:9

Matthew 6:14-15

1 Peter 3:7; Colossians 3:19

James 4:2

James 4:3

Proverbs 21:13

Describe in your own words what Jesus was teaching His disciples about prayer in *Matthew 6:9-13*.

LESSON 7 - LOCAL CHURCH

God established the family, the civil government, and the local church as three unique institutions on the earth. Each one has been ordained with leadership, blessings, and accountability. God has commissioned the local church to carry out His purposes in reaching the lost and perfecting the saved. It is important to understand that God's plan for your life can only be fulfilled when you are connected with the local church.

The key word of this lesson is:

EDIFICATION

The key question this lesson answers:

What is the purpose of the local church?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To explain the importance of the local church in the everyday lives of believers.

The key point of this lesson:

God intends for the local church to educate, equip, and edify the saints of God for the work of the ministry.

MEMORY VERSES:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:" – Ephesians 4:11-12

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." – 1 Corinthians 12:27

WHAT IS THE LOCAL CHURCH?

It is important to understand what the local church is NOT...

1. The church is **NOT** a denominational group of congregations. The churches mentioned in the New Testament were all individual groups of believers serving together.
2. The church is **NOT** a building. Our bodies are the temples of God, and we worship God in spirit and in truth. – **1 Corinthians 6:19-20; John 4:24**
3. The church is **NOT** replaceable. There are many good things (*TV and radio preachers, podcasts, electronic media, commentaries, conferences, etc.*) that believers try to use to fill a need that only a local church can biblically provide. God's work in your life is accomplished through the local church, and nothing should replace it in your life.

A. The “Church” is the body of Christ made up of born again believers from every nation, and from all time both in heaven and on earth.

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:”
– **Ephesians 1:10**

“... and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” – **Ephesians 1:22-23**

B. The “Local Church” is the visible body of Christ on this earth that is made up of born again, baptized believers who have agreed to worship and serve God together in a specific location under clear biblical leadership.

“Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:” – **Philippians 1:1**

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse...” – **Colossians 1:1-2**

C. God has ordained two offices to provide structure and leadership within the local church.

1. The office of pastor.

The role of a pastor is to oversee, lead, feed, and care for the church according to the Bible. He is to protect the church from false doctrine by preaching and teaching the truth of God's Word. He must also be committed to pray for the church body.

1 Timothy 3:1-7; Hebrews 13:17; Acts 6:4; 20:28-31

2. The office of deacon.

Deacons are Spirit-filled ministers who are chosen out of the congregation to serve the church. They are to help and assist the pastors with anything that might distract them from the ministry of the Word, prayer, and oversight of the church.

1 Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6:1-10

THE WORD OF GOD COMPARES THE LOCAL CHURCH TO A HUMAN BODY.

After His resurrection and ascension into heaven, Jesus replaced Himself on the earth with the indwelling Holy Ghost (His Spirit), the complete Word of God (His soul), and the local church (His body). The Holy Spirit will guide you through the Word of God to help you fulfill your role within your local church.

- **Each member has a different function.**

“For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body.”

– **1 Corinthians 12:14-20**

- **No single member can function on its own.**

“And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.” – **1 Corinthians 12:21**

- **Each member’s contribution is vital.**

“Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:”

– **1 Corinthians 12:22-24**

- **A properly functioning body will operate in unity.**

“That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” – **1 Corinthians 12:25-27**

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH?

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

The local church is the only institution ordained by God to fulfill the Great Commission. God intends for the local church to educate, equip, and edify you for the work of the ministry and to provide a place for God's plan to be realized in your life. God's plan for you can only be fulfilled when you are connected within the local church.

A. The local church provides you the environment to help you grow through three general stages of spiritual growth.

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:" – Ephesians 4:12

1. Become a LEARNER as you are EQUIPPED in the Word of God.

There is a time to observe and learn as you are being perfected. Your first priority should be to submit to the teaching of the Word of God and learning to be who God desires you to be.

Matthew 11:28-30

2. Become a LABORER as you are ENGAGED in the work of the ministry.

As you grow in your relationship with Christ, there will be a time for you to begin serving through the ministries that are already established within the local church.

Matthew 4:19; James 1:22-25

3. Become a LEADER as you are EDIFIED within the body of Christ.

As your spiritual growth continues, you should reach the point where you are able to minister to others in the same way that you have been ministered to.

2 Timothy 2:2

IMPORTANT NOTE:

These three stages can be roughly compared to the child, youth, and adult stages of physical growth. This process of spiritual growth takes time, so it is important to be patient. As you grow, be sure to remain faithful to God's established institution of the local church.

B. The local church helps to conform you to the image of Christ.

*“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:”
– Ephesians 4:13*

C. The local church provides a guard for doctrinal purity.

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;” – Ephesians 4:14

D. The local church helps you to discover and fulfill your vital role within the body of Christ.

*“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”
– Ephesians 4:15-16*

DISCUSSION:

How has this lesson changed your understanding of the local church?

Which stage of spiritual growth would you say that you are in?

What do you believe your role is within this church?

HOW DO YOU FIND A GOOD LOCAL CHURCH?

There may be a time in your life when God will direct you to another location to further accomplish His plan for you. It is important for you to find a good local church to serve the Lord through. Remember, God’s plan for your life will always be connected to a local church. He will never take you from a local church to a place that does not have one.

Many people choose a church based on external matters such as location, quality of the building, the style of music, and available programs. However, it is more important for you to observe the spiritual qualities of a particular church and compare them with the biblical qualities of what a good local church should be. It is important to be patient and trust God to lead you!

A. According to *Acts 2:41-47*, the early church was focused on...

1. Observing the two ordinances of the church
 - a. Baptism-“*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized:...*” – **vs. 41**
 - b. Lord’s Supper- “*... in breaking of bread,...*” – **vs. 42**
2. Teaching the Word of God – **vs. 42**
3. Fellowshiping with other believers – **vs. 42, 46**
4. Praying together – **vs. 42**
5. Testifying to God’s grace and power – **vs. 43**
6. Ministering to each other’s needs – **vs. 44-45**
7. Having a good testimony within the community – **vs. 47**
8. Glorifying and praising God – **vs. 47**
9. Bringing the lost to salvation in Jesus Christ – **vs. 47**

B. The following questions will help you to determine if there is evidence of the biblical qualities that should be present within any local church.

1. Is the main emphasis on demonstrating and declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Matthew 7:20; Acts 2:47

2. Does the church teach that salvation is a free gift that is not earned through religious rituals or good works?

Ephesians 2:8-9

3. Does the church leadership believe and teach that the Bible is the Word of God and the perfect guide for your life?

Titus 1:9

4. Does the church send out and support missionaries?

Acts 13:1-3

5. Are both the congregation and the leadership encouraged to read and study the Bible personally?

Acts 17:10-12

6. Do people genuinely care for others and minister to their physical and spiritual needs?

Galatians 6:10

7. Does the church practice believer's baptism?

Acts 8:12

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the difference between the “church” and a “local church”?

2. The local church is compared to the human body in *1 Corinthians 12:14-27*. List four ways that the human body compares to how the local church body should function.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

3. What roles and ministries do you believe God may have planned for you within your local church?

4. What are the three general stages of spiritual growth you should grow through within your local church?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

5. List some of the biblical qualities a Christian should be looking for when considering a local church.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Who are the pastors and deacons within your local church? Explain in your own words what *1 Peter 5:1-4* and *Hebrews 13:17* teach us about our relationships with our pastors.

Read *Hebrews 10:24-25*. This passage teaches us that it is important for the members of a local church to gather regularly. According to this passage, what are you missing out on when you do not faithfully attend a local church service or gathering? Is there anything in your life that you are choosing to give more importance to than your regular attendance to your local church?

We learned in this lesson that the local church is compared to the human body in *1 Corinthians 12:14-27*. Please read the following passages and write down some of the other comparisons the Bible makes to the local church.

1. *Acts 20:28; John 10:1-18; 1 Peter 5:1-4*

2. *Ephesians 2:19-22*

3. *Ephesians 5:25-32; 2 Corinthians 11:1-3*

LESSON 8 - OTHER CHRISTIANS

You entered into God's family through a SPIRITUAL birth when you trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior. You now have a spiritual family with many brothers and sisters who are saved through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This lesson will guide you through the special relationship you have with your spiritual family.

The key word of this lesson is:

FELLOWSHIP

The key question this lesson answers:

What is my relationship to other Christians?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To give you a clear understanding of how the body of Christ operates as a family unit.

The key point of this lesson:

You must have a personal relationship with Jesus before it is possible to have proper fellowship with other believers.

Memory Verses:

*"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."
– John 13:35*

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." – 1 John 1:7

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN GOD'S SPIRITUAL FAMILY

- A. Your spiritual brothers and sisters are only those who have been born again through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” – Romans 8:29

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” – 1 John 3:1-2

- B. Those who have not been born again are not spiritually related to you and are not God's children.**

“...They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” – Romans 9:8

*“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”
– 2 Corinthians 6:17-18*

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN GOD'S SPIRITUAL FAMILY

- A. You have spiritual responsibilities toward your brothers and sisters in Christ.**

1. Pray for your family.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3; 2 Timothy 1:3

2. Labor together with your family to spread the gospel.

1 Corinthians 3:5-10

3. Share your family's burdens and problems.

1 Corinthians 12:24-26; Romans 12:13-16

B. You have physical responsibilities toward your brothers and sisters in Christ.

1. Be sensitive to your family's needs and help to fulfill them.

- a. Minister to believers within your local church.

1 John 3:16-18; James 2:15-16

- b. Minister to believers in other local churches.

Acts 11:27-30; Galatians 6:10

2. Serve your family in humility by placing their needs before your own.

Philippians 2:3-4

C. You have personal responsibilities toward your brothers and sisters in Christ.

1. Encourage and support your family.

Romans 15:1-2; Hebrews 13:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:11

2. Love your family biblically with pure motives.

John 13:34-35; 1 John 3:14-16

3. Be patient with your family.

Romans 15:5-7

4. Be honest with your family by speaking the truth in love.

Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29

5. Forgive your family in the same way God forgives you.

Ephesians 4:32

Discussion:

What are some of your specific prayers for the members of your church family?

Do you know of a brother or sister in Christ who needs ministered to in a physical way?
How can you minister to them?

How have you been ministered to by the members of your church family?

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF FELLOWSHIP WITHIN GOD'S SPIRITUAL FAMILY

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

True biblical fellowship is found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. As believers grow in their individual relationships with God, they are united together in fellowship with each other. You must have a personal relationship with Jesus before it is possible to have biblical fellowship with other believers.

1 John 1:1-7; 1 Corinthians 1:9-10

A. Biblical fellowship is the common bond that unites all believers in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You share a common life and mission with every person who is saved through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is important for you to gather with other believers in activities, conversations, and friendships because they provide opportunities for biblical fellowship to take place in your life. Believers are united in fellowship, not when they gather, but when spiritual life is shared.

Philippians 1:3-6; 2:1-2

B. Believers are united in biblical fellowship when spiritual life is shared.

1. Fellowship unites believers in prayer.

2 Corinthians 1:11

2. Fellowship unites believers in faith.

Romans 1:12; Philippians 1:27

3. Fellowship unites believers in ministry and service.

2 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 2:9

4. Fellowship unites believers in suffering.

Philippians 3:10; 1 Peter 4:13; 5:1; Hebrews 13:3

5. Fellowship unites believers in doctrine.

Acts 2:42; Romans 16:17; John 17:8, 20-21

UNDERSTANDING HOW TO HANDLE CONFLICT WITHIN GOD'S SPIRITUAL FAMILY

IMPORTANT NOTE:

“And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.” – 1 Peter 4:8

Unfortunately, there may be times within your local church when Christians get offended by their brothers and sisters in Christ. These offenses are often difficult to deal with because of the close relationships we have within our spiritual family. It takes courage, character, and maturity to resolve conflict in a family. The love, patience, forgiveness, and care we are to show one another will cover most “minor” offenses. However, when an offense is serious enough, the Bible gives us definite principles to resolve conflict between brothers and sisters in Christ.

A. What should you do if you have offended someone?

1. **You must be approachable when a brother or sister is seeking reconciliation.**

- a. It is important for you to be spiritually mature and not to be easily offended when others speak with you.

James 3:13-18; Psalm 119:165

- b. You will prevent God from working to resolve the conflict if you allow yourself to be ruled by pride and emotions.

Proverbs 25:28; 16:32; 1 Samuel 25:17

2. Examine yourself to make sure you are not living in the flesh.

At times, you may be unaware that your attitudes or actions have offended someone. Once you are made aware of an offence, you must examine yourself to make sure you are not living in the flesh, and your life reflects God's Word.

Matthew 7:1-5; Romans 14:1; 15:1

3. Seek to immediately reconcile with the offended brother or sister.

Take responsibility and seek to immediately reconcile your relationship with the other person. Your brothers and sisters in Christ are worth being right with.

Matthew 5:23-26; Ephesians 4:26-27

B. What should you do if someone has sinned against you?

1. Approach the person who sinned against you privately and discuss it in person.

Do not gossip and talk about it with others who are not involved in the situation. Most conflicts between believers can be resolved when they both approach the situation with biblical maturity and love. In most cases, the conflict will give you a greater love for one another, and your relationship will be stronger.

Matthew 18:15

2. If the conflict cannot be resolved privately, ask a mature believer to help mediate the conversation.

This person should be a church leader with the ability to evaluate objectively and present a balanced biblical response.

Matthew 18:16

3. If there is still no resolution, take the conflict to your pastoral leadership and submit to the structure of the local church.

Matthew 18:17

- a. Your pastoral leadership will handle it justly as the Holy Spirit leads through the structure God has established.

Hebrews 13:7, 17

- b. If it is necessary, your pastoral leadership will bring the situation before the church in the form of church discipline.

Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14

4. If the person who has offended you has repented and seeks to be reconciled, then you are to forgive the offence.

Matthew 18:21-22

A NOTE ABOUT FORGIVENESS...

True forgiveness follows true repentance. If another believer has sinned against you, then you must give them the opportunity to repent and make things right with you. Your forgiveness must come from a heart that is ready to forgive in the same way that God forgives you. Forgiveness should always lead you to be reconciled and have restored fellowship with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

Luke 17:3-4; Ephesians 4:32; Galatians 6:1-2

C. You must remain blameless throughout any conflict with another believer.

There are some important actions to avoid to ensure that you are not hindering any reconciliation with a brother or sister in Christ.

1. **Do not go to the lost world to solve a spiritual problem within the body of Christ.**
If an offence has been committed, apply the principles of this lesson to biblically resolve the matter. Only involve the proper authorities when a crime has been committed for the sake and safety of the body of Christ and His church.

1 Corinthians 6:1-6; Romans 13:1-5

2. **Do not give Satan an opportunity to use conflict to destroy you or your church.**
God's mission and your walk with Him are far more important than a personal grievance, no matter how serious it is. Even if you have suffered a wrong, give the matter to God and leave it in His hands.

1 Corinthians 6:7; 2 Corinthians 2:10-11

3. **Do not stop praying for your brother or sister in Christ.**
Be diligent to ensure that you are praying with pure motives.

Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:14

4. Do not try to seek out opportunities to get revenge.

Trust God to resolve the situation, even if it doesn't get resolved until eternity.

Romans 12:17-21; Proverbs 20:22

5. Do not allow yourself to harbor bitterness in your heart.

Bitterness affects everyone in your life.

Hebrews 12:14-15; Ephesians 4:31

DISCUSSION:

Have you ever offended another believer? How did that person respond?

Has another believer ever sinned against you? How did that change your relationship?

Do you have an issue with another believer that needs to be dealt with biblically?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Define what your relationship is with other believers.

2. List four of the responsibilities toward other Christians, and give a scripture reference for each.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

3. What does the term “fellowship” mean?

4. List five examples of how believers are united in fellowship.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

5. You should seek to be reconciled with another Christian who has sinned against you. List the steps you should take when seeking reconciliation.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Some believers find it easier than others to build relationships within their local church. Read *Acts 2:46-47* and *1 Peter 4:8-9* and then write down some examples of ways that you can use hospitality to encourage more fellowship in your life.

Read the following passages, and write down six different terms that the New Testament uses to define our fellowship with other believers.

1 Thessalonians 3:2

Philippians 2:25

Philemon 1:2

Colossians 4:7

3 John 1:8

Colossians 4:11

Read *Philippians 4:1-3*. In Paul's letter to the Philippian church, he encourages Euodias and Syntyche to work out their differences because they were affecting everyone around them. Is there a situation with another believer in your life that requires reconciliation? What steps have you taken to see this relationship restored? What steps do you still need to take so that the ministry is not hindered?

LESSON 9 - THE FAMILY

Our worship and service to God begins within the home, and that is where we will discover our most important of all human relationships. God has entrusted certain responsibilities to each family member that enable us to enjoy a healthy and happy home to the glory of God.

The key word of this lesson is:

RESPONSIBILITY

The key question this lesson answers:

What are your specific biblical responsibilities within the family?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To teach you how to function biblically within your family.

The key point of this lesson:

God uses your role in the family as an illustration of what it means to be a member of God's family.

Memory Verses:

*“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” – **Ephesians 6:1-4***

*“Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.” – **Ephesians 5:33***

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY

A. The first institution that God established on earth was the family.

God is the one who created the family, and God is the one who instituted and officiated the first marriage. Our original parents were given the responsibilities to love each other and raise a family.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18, 21-24

B. The human family is a picture of God's family.

The family is supposed to be a small representation of the local church because it is a living picture of God's family. That is why the family has always been a proving ground for anyone who desires to be a church pastor.

1 Timothy 3:4-5

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

God uses your role within the family as an illustration of what it means to be a spiritual member of God's family.

1. **FAMILY** – The body of Christ is called the "*family*" of God.

Ephesians 3:14-15

2. **HUSBAND** – You have been espoused to Christ as your "*one husband*".

2 Corinthians 11:2

3. **WIFE** – The body of Christ is called "*the Lamb's wife*".

Revelation 19:7

4. **FATHER** – God desires that you approach him as a "*Father*".

Luke 11:1-2

5. **MOTHER** – You are to spiritually minister to others "*as a nurse cherisheth her children*".

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8

6. **CHILDREN** – God desires to relate to you as His "*sons and daughters*".

2 Corinthians 6:17-18

THE BIBLICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF A HUSBAND

A. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church.

Jesus chose to give up all His glory and the riches of heaven to become a poor servant. He gave up His life to save ours. In the same way, the husband is to give up his own self-interests, and give his life to serve and live for his wife.

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” – Ephesians 5:25

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” – Philippians 2:5-8

*“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”
– 2 Corinthians 8:9*

B. The husband is to give honor to his wife.

The husband should know and be paying attention to his wife. He should value her as a priceless treasure and handle her with great care because she is precious. The husband should treat his wife as an equal partner, knowing they are of equal standing in God’s eyes.

“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.” – Proverbs 31:10

*“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life;...”
– 1 Peter 3:7*

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The Apostle Peter warns the husband that his prayers will be hindered if he does not honor his wife. It is the duty of every husband to pray for his wife and family. Peter warns that if the husband does not love and honor his wife, then he certainly will not pray for his wife as he should. The prayers of the husband are a direct reflection of how much he values his wife and family.

“...that your prayers be not hindered.” – 1 Peter 3:7

Discussion:

How are you ensuring that your wife feels loved and honored?

How is your relationship with God affecting your relationship with your wife?

THE BIBLICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF A WIFE

A. The wife is to help her husband.

The husband cannot lead a home or rear a family alone. He needs the help of a godly wife who is joined together with her husband as one, and works together with him as she helps her husband to obey God's will for the family.

"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." – **Genesis 2:18**

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." – **Genesis 2:24-25**

B. The wife is to reverence her husband.

God desires for the wife to follow her husband's lead. She is to respond in kindness to the selfless service she sees, and to the love and honor that he gives her. The wife is to respect her husband's role and his example in the home in the same way the church does to Christ.

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord."
– **Colossians 3:18**

"Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." – **Ephesians 5:33**

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The command for a wife to submit to her husband comes directly after the command for all believers to have a submissive attitude toward one another. The submission of a wife is meant to happen within the context of a marriage where both partners already have a biblical attitude, and have committed themselves to serve one another.

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."
– **Ephesians 5:21-24**

Discussion:

How are you helping your husband fulfill God's will for your family?

How are you submitting to your husband's leadership within your home and family?

THE BIBLICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

The various passages in the Bible that detail and imply the responsibilities of parents will often emphasize either the father or the mother. However, it is important to keep in mind that they are always intended for both parents, with the father taking the lead by example.

A. Parents should train their children.

Parents are responsible to train their children to be godly adults. This will involve providing loving care and encouragement as they give their children biblical instruction with patient and consistent discipline.

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” – Deuteronomy 6:6-7

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” – Proverbs 22:6

“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.” – Proverbs 29:15

B. Parents should not discourage their children.

A parent’s instruction should be both challenging and comforting. Parents should correct their children with biblical instruction, but they should also encourage them. Rearing children out of frustration and anger will only provoke them to be discouraged and angry themselves.

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” – Ephesians 6:4

*“Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”
– Colossians 3:21*

“As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,” – 1 Thessalonians 2:11

C. Parents should manage their home.

Both parents should work together to guide their home in holiness and wisdom in both physical and spiritual matters. The Bible gives clear instructions and responsibilities for both parents. The husband is the head of the home, while the wife is responsible to manage the home.

“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” – 1 Timothy 5:8

“I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.” – 1 Timothy 5:14

“A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.” – Proverbs 13:22

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” – Joshua 24:15

THE BIBLICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILDREN

Parents provide their children the perfect environment to become holy and happy adults when they fulfil their roles and responsibilities as godly spouses and godly parents. Children learn to obey God by obeying parents who obey God. This is why children only have one responsibility within the home, and that is obedience.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.” – Ephesians 6:1-3

A. Children should obey their parents.

As children obey their parents, they are obeying the Lord. Children lay the foundation for all future obedience to the Lord by obeying their parents.

1. Children should obey their parents because God’s Word instructs them to.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord:...” – Ephesians 6:1

2. It is the duty of children within the home to obey their parents because it is the right thing to do.

“...for this is right.” – Ephesians 6:1

B. Children should honor their parents.

This is not really a different command, but it is rather the same command that focuses on the heart behind obedience.

1. The goal is not simply obedience, but obedience from the heart. Children should trust their parents and obey them out of love and respect.

“Honour thy father and mother;...” – Ephesians 6:2

2. This command comes with a promise. If children will trust, love, respect, and obey their parents, they are much more likely to live a full and prosperous life. There are some children, however, that choose rebellion and miss out on this promise from the Lord.

“That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”
– **Ephesians 6:3**

Important Reminder:

The roles and responsibilities within our earthly families are meant to be a living illustration of God’s family. Through the husband, we see the sacrifice and love of Christ. Through the wife, we see the love and reverence of the church. Through the parents, we see the loving care and guidance of our Heavenly Father. Through the children, we see the love, trust, and obedience of every believer.

When all of these family roles come together in unity, they show the world what God always intended for humanity. They are a reflection of God’s love, holiness, and wisdom. The family is one of your greatest opportunities to glorify God in the world.

Discussion:

Do your actions support the truths of God’s Word that you are teaching your children?

How do you discipline your children?

How would you describe your relationship with your children?

Is God being glorified through your family?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. According to *1 Timothy 3:4-5*, why is the home important to the ministry?

2. Explain in your own words the biblical responsibilities of husbands, wives, parents, and children.

a. Husbands:

b. Wives:

c. Parents:

d. Children:

3. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Read *Genesis 20:1-13*. Did Abraham fulfill his responsibilities toward his wife Sarah? What do you think Abraham should have done differently?

Read *Genesis 27*. What did Rebekah encourage her son Jacob to do when she found out that Isaac was going to bless Esau? What kind of parents were Isaac and Rebekah for Jacob and Esau? How did the decisions of Jacob and Esau's parents affect their decision-making abilities?

Read *Job 1-2*. This passage talks about God's servant, Job, being physically attacked by Satan. What kind of support was Job's wife to him during his pain and sorrow?

Read *Acts 18:1-4; 18:18-28; and Romans 16:3-5*. The Apostle Paul worked side by side with Aquilla and Priscilla throughout his ministry in different cities and continents. How important was Aquilla and Priscilla's home to the ministry? How are you using your home for the ministry?

LESSON 10 - DEALING WITH SIN

Perhaps the greatest challenge for any believer is the battle we have with sin. This truth is not always evident to a young Christian, but as you grow in Christ, you will realize more fully the intensity of this struggle.

The key word of this lesson is:

OVERCOME

The key question this lesson answers:

How do I overcome sin in my life?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To help you learn to overcome your sin nature, and walk in the Spirit of God as He intended.

The key point of this lesson:

If you have true godly sorrow concerning your sin, repentance will follow naturally.

Memory Verses:

*"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." – **Romans 6:11***

*"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." – **Psalms 119:11***

UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF SIN

Sin is a larger issue than most people realize. It is much more than just an individual wrong act, because it involves our fallen nature. In order to overcome sin, it is important to know that God is very clear in His Word about what He considers sin to be.

A. It is sin to have a proud heart.

Proverbs 21:4

B. It is sin to do anything that is not of faith.

Romans 14:23

C. It is sin to do the opposite of what you know is right.

James 4:17

D. It is sin to break God's law.

1 John 3:4

E. It is sin to allow any unrighteousness in your life.

1 John 5:17

DISCUSSION:

Has God used one of these passages to reveal an area of sin in your life?

Is dealing with your sin important to you?

UNDERSTANDING WHY YOU SIN

A. You sin because you inherited a sinful nature from Adam.

As a believer, sin will always be an issue in your life because you did not lose your old sinful nature at the time of your spiritual birth. You now have both an old and new nature.

Colossians 3:9-10

B. You sin because your old nature draws you into sin.

Both natures are present within you at the same time. The issue for every believer is choosing which nature to serve. The nature that you feed the most is the one that will control you.

James 1:13-15; Romans 7:14-25

C. You sin as a result of three major areas of temptation.

“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” – 1 John 2:16

1. **The lust of the flesh** – *the temptation to satisfy the desires of your body*
2. **The lust of the eyes** – *the temptation to become covetous*
3. **The pride of life** – *the temptation to be lifted up in pride*

There are two great examples of these temptations in the Bible:

1. The temptation of Adam and Eve in the garden – *Genesis 3:1-6*

- **Lust of the flesh** – Eve saw that the tree was good for food.
- **Lust of the eyes** – Eve saw that the tree was pleasant to the eyes.
- **Pride of life** – Eve saw that the tree was to be desired to make one wise.

2. The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness – *Matthew 4:1-13*

- **Lust of the flesh** – Jesus was tempted to turn the stones into bread.
- **Lust of the eyes** – Jesus was shown and offered all of the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.
- **Pride of life** – Jesus was tempted to prove that He was the Son of God by jumping off of the temple.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Jesus faced the same temptations that we do, and yet He did not sin. Jesus overcame His temptation by quoting scripture. While we can never be completely without sin, we can learn to overcome the temptations of life by standing on the authority of God’s Word.

Hebrews 4:15-16; 1 Corinthians 10:13

UNDERSTANDING HOW GOD VIEWS YOUR SIN

It is important to know what sin is, but it is also important to know how God views your sin. You belong to a holy God who must deal with your sin so that you may also be holy in His sight.

A. God judged your sin at Calvary by placing your sin upon Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:21

B. God allows you to reap the consequences of your sin.

Galatians 6:7-8

C. When you continue in your sin, God will chastise you as His child.

Hebrews 12:5-11

DISCUSSION:

How intense is the battle between your flesh and Spirit in your life right now?

Do you know how to go to scripture in response to the temptation in your life?

UNDERSTANDING HOW TO RESPOND WHEN YOU SIN

A. Instead of covering up your sin, confess it to God and trust Him to cleanse you.

Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:9; Psalm 41:4

B. Judge your own sin, and do not attempt to make excuses or rationalize it.

1 Corinthians 11:31-32

C. Choose to serve God over the sins that frequently dominate your life.

Hebrews 12:1-2; Philippians 3:13-15

D. Apply God's Word to your life to cleanse you from your sin.

2 Corinthians 7:1; John 15:3; 17:17

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

Repent by turning away from your sin and pursuing holiness. If you have a genuine, godly sorrow concerning your sin, then repentance will naturally follow. Do not go back to your sin, but rather pray and ask God to give you a hatred for that particular sin.

Romans 6:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:10-11; Proverbs 8:13

UNDERSTANDING HOW YOU CAN OVERCOME SIN

You will never overcome sin in your life until you see sin the way God sees it. Then you may begin to remove the sin from your own life through the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

A. Agree with God that sin no longer has power over you.

Romans 6:6-13

B. Do not provide your flesh with opportunities to sin.

Romans 13:14

C. Do not allow sinful thoughts to control your mind.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

God has equipped you with the tools to overcome sin in your life.

1. The Word of God will lead you to overcome sin.

- a. God has made a way to escape from your temptation to sin.

1 Corinthians 10:13

- b. One way of escape is to memorize the Word of God.

Psalm 37:31; Psalm 119:9-11

- c. Jesus Christ set the example for you by quoting scripture when He was tempted to sin.

2. The Spirit of God will lead you to overcome sin.

- a. You are now free and able to choose righteousness because the Spirit of God dwells within you.

Romans 8:1-9

- b. The lusts of the flesh have no power over you when you choose to live your life in the power of the Spirit of God.

Galatians 5:16-25

SOME BASIC QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKING

A. How do I keep the influences of a sinful world from affecting me?

Be separated from the ways of the world as you follow the Lord Jesus Christ. As you build relationships with lost people in order to win them to Christ, refrain from getting involved in their sin. When your primary focus is on reaching the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ, then you are less likely to be drawn into their sin.

Ephesians 5:5-12; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

B. How will God continue to lead me to deal with sin in my life?

The Holy Spirit of God will convict you of sin in your life.

John 16:7-11; Psalm 139:23-24

Your conscience will point out what is the right or wrong thing to do. However, if you continue in sin and ignore God's conviction, your conscience can become seared.

Romans 2:14-15; 1 Timothy 4:1-2; Titus 1:15

As you read the Word of God, it will speak into the thoughts and activities of your life.

Hebrews 4:12-13

Discussion:

Do you need to make some changes in your life so that you do not give your flesh opportunities to sin?

Do you need to separate yourself from specific people so that you are free from the temptation to sin?

Is there an area of sin in your life that God has given you victory over?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Briefly explain why you sin even though you are saved.

2. According to *1 John 2:15-17*, there are three areas of temptation in which you sin. What are they?

3. How does God view your sin?

4. List three ways to overcome sin in your life.

5. What are some biblical ways to respond to your sin?

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Explain in your own words what the Apostle Paul is communicating to you in *Romans 7:14-15*.

Describe the process of sin found in *James 1:13-15*.

Briefly explain the instructions given to you in the following verses:

Romans 13:14

1 Corinthians 11:31-32

1 John 1:9

2 Corinthians 7:1

LESSON 11 - LIBERTY IN CHRIST

The New Testament is clear that as a saved person, you are not bound by the Old Testament law, you are bound by God's grace. Some believers abuse the grace of God by claiming liberty to do as they wish without consequences. Others measure the quality of their relationship with God by trying to keep self-imposed moral rules and religious traditions. This lesson establishes the lordship of Jesus Christ as the biblical principle that protects you from abusing your liberty in Jesus.

The key word of this lesson is:

FREEDOM

The key question this lesson answers:

Now that I am forgiven, how can my liberty glorify God?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To help you understand what your liberty in Jesus Christ is, and how it affects your daily life.

The key point of this lesson:

The liberty you have in Jesus Christ gives you freedom to do what is right, and to serve God fully and completely.

Memory Verses:

*"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." – **Galatians 5:13***

*"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."
– **Romans 8:2***

YOU ARE FREE IN CHRIST

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” – John 8:36

A. Jesus Christ made you free from sin.

You are free from the penalty of sin. Your sin has been judged by the cross of Christ, freeing you from the guilt and condemnation of sin. In Christ, you are forever forgiven and free.

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” – Romans 6:12-14

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” – Romans 8:2

B. Jesus Christ made you free from the law.

The righteousness of God is fulfilled for you in Christ. Keeping a list of religious and legalistic rules will not earn you more of God’s favour because you are already accepted by Him in Jesus Christ.

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” – Galatians 3:24-26

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” – Galatians 5:1

YOU ARE FREE TO SERVE

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

Everyone in the world lives in service to either the kingdom of darkness or the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Before your salvation, you did not have the ability to serve Christ because you were subject to the kingdom of darkness. The liberty you have in Christ gives you freedom to do what is right, and to serve God fully and completely.

A. You are free to serve the Lord BECAUSE you are no longer a servant to sin.

In Christ, you have been set free from your sin. You are now subject to Christ and are free to be a servant of righteousness.

Romans 6:17-23; Colossians 1:12-14

B. You are free to serve the Lord BECAUSE you are no longer bound by the law.

You have freedom to have different preferences and ideas, and to use all means to see people from all cultures and backgrounds come to faith in Christ.

1 Corinthians 9:19-22

Example:

Jesus exercised liberty when He went into Samaria and spoke with a woman who was drawing water from a well. The woman was someone that the Jews had no dealings with because of their self-imposed religious rules. Jesus approached the woman and spoke with her about her need for salvation. She was so excited about this great news that she went and told the people in her town about Jesus and many of them believed.

John 4:1-9, 24-26, 28-30, 39-42

Discussion:

Are you currently allowing sin in your life to keep you from serving God?

Have you ever been in a situation where your legalism has kept you from serving God or ministering to others?

YOU ARE FREE TO CHOOSE

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” – 2 Corinthians 3:17

A. You are free to choose between your will and God’s will.

God does not force you to serve Him. He wants you to serve Him because you want to. He wants you to glorify Him with your life. God is glorified as you are transformed into the image of his Son Jesus Christ. You should enjoy your liberty and view it as an opportunity to bring glory to God, not as an opportunity to enjoy sin.

Matthew 5:16; Galatians 5:13

B. You are free to make wise choices.

As you follow the Lord, you will make many decisions. God allows you to reap the positive and negative consequences of the choices you make. Instead of seeking out the right thing to do, it may be more helpful to seek out the wise thing to do.

1 Corinthians 10:23; Galatians 6:7-9

Discussion:

Can you share an example of when you made a wise choice because it glorified God?

DETERMINING THE BOUNDARIES OF YOUR LIBERTY

The Bible often provides clear boundaries that should not be crossed. You cannot justify sin that is in direct violation of God's Word by claiming liberty in Christ. There are, however, areas where it may not seem so clear. These are moments when the Holy Spirit guides us with wise principles from the Word of God instead of explicit commands.

1. Can I enjoy this with a clear conscience?

Acts 24:16

2. Am I being brought under the power of anything but the Holy Spirit?

1 Corinthians 6:12

3. Does this make me stronger in my relationship with the Lord?

1 Corinthians 10:23

4. Will this bring God glory?

1 Corinthians 10:31

5. Will this help me in sharing the gospel with the lost?

1 Corinthians 10:32-33

YOUR LIBERTY WILL AFFECT PEOPLE AROUND YOU

- A. Do not judge others who have different convictions than you.**

Romans 14:1-6

- B. Avoid anything that could cause another believer to stumble in their faith.**

Romans 14:13-15

- C. You must guard yourself against the appearance of wrong doing.**

Romans 14:16-18

Discussion:

Have you ever chosen to avoid something so that you would not offend another believer or hinder your testimony with the lost?

YOUR LIBERTY MUST SUBMIT TO THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

The purpose of this lesson is to establish the lordship of Jesus Christ as the guiding principle for your liberty. The reason you have liberty is because you have a new Lord, and have been set free from your old one. You were once a servant to sin, but now you have become a servant of righteousness. Jesus Christ is more than just your Savior, he is also your Lord.

A. Lordship is choosing Jesus Christ first in every situation.

*“And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” – **Colossians 1:17-18***

B. Lordship is yielding your will to God’s will.

*“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” – **Psalms 40:8***

*“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”
– **Phillipians 2:13***

C. Lordship is recognizing that you are not your own.

*“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
– **1 Corinthians 6:19-20***

D. Lordship is loving God with your entire being.

*“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.” – **Mark 12:30***

Discussion:

Jesus is the ultimate example and pattern of lordship for us. Even though He was God in the flesh, Jesus chose to deny Himself and submit to the will of the Father.

“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”

– 1 John 2:6

How has submitting to Jesus as Lord changed the way you exercise your liberty in Christ?

Is there an area in your life that you have yet to bring into submission to the lordship of Jesus Christ?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Explain in your own words what it means to have liberty in Christ.

2. What are two choices you are free to make within the liberty you have in Jesus Christ? Please include supporting verses.

a.

b.

3. Explain how making Jesus your Lord protects you from abusing the liberty that God has given you.

4. List three examples of how your liberty may affect others around you?

a.

b.

c.

5. What do you feel is the most important question you can ask yourself when determining the boundaries of your liberty? Why?

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

In *Acts 10:9-20*, God causes the Apostle Peter to have a dream about eating animals that were not lawful for God's people to eat. What do you think God was teaching Peter through the dream?

Read *Acts 10:27-35*. What conclusion did Peter come to about his dream? How were the people in Cornelius' household affected by Peter's liberty in Christ?

Read *Galatians 2:11-16*. The liberty Peter had in Jesus Christ allowed him as a Jew to minister and share life with people who were not Jewish (*Gentiles*). What did Peter do when his liberty in Jesus was tested by religious legalism? How did his response affect those who were close to him? What did the Apostle Paul say about Peter's testimony?

Our liberty in Christ frees us from the bondage of sin so that we are free to serve Jesus Christ as Lord. Read *1 Corinthians 7:22-23*, and explain, in your own words, what it means to be free to serve Christ. What is Paul's conclusion about serving men or the Lord in our liberty?

LESSON 12 - WILL OF GOD

If you want to be successful in life, then you must discover what God wants you to accomplish and then fulfill it. The true measure of success is not your social status, financial stability, influence, or fame: it is in the simple obedience to the will of God in your life.

The key word of this lesson is:

CONFORMITY

The key question this lesson answers:

How do I find God's will for my life?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To reveal the will of God from the Word of God, so that you can effectively conform your life to God's will.

The key point of this lesson:

You must be in conformity to the will of God before He will direct you in the specifics of your life.

MEMORY VERSES

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." – Romans 12:1-2

*"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
– 2 Peter 3:9*

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOD'S WILL, GOD'S PLAN, AND GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE?

A. God's Will

1. The will of God concerns who you are in Christ, and it is the same for everyone. It involves your relationship with God and is never dictated by a set of rules, a geographical location, or a specific ministry.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." – **Romans 12:1-2**

2. It is God's will for every believer to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."
– **Romans 8:29**

B. God's Plan

1. The plan of God concerns what you do in Christ, and it is not the same for everyone. It involves the specific direction that God will give you as you encounter the different circumstances of your life.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." – **Romans 8:28**

2. God desires that you fulfill His will as you carry out the plan He has for you. The individual circumstances of your life should lead you to accomplish the entire will of God.

"Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." – **Colossians 4:12**

C. God's Purpose

1. God created mankind for the purpose of glorifying Him.

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

– Revelation 4:11

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." – 1 Corinthians 10:31

2. God is glorified as you accomplish His will through the life you live before Him.

"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." – John 17:4

WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR YOUR LIFE?

A. It is God's will for you to be **SAVED**.

Anyone who is not saved is not in the will of God.

2 Peter 3:9

B. It is God's will for you to be a **SOUL WINNER**.

It is your responsibility to share the gospel with the lost so that they might be saved.

1 Timothy 2:4; Mark 16:15

C. It is God's will for you to be **SANCTIFIED**.

You are to live a life that is separated unto God in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-7

D. It is God's will for you to **SHOW GRATITUDE**.

God desires that you give Him thanks in every circumstance of your life.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

E. It is God's will for you to be **SPIRIT FILLED**.

Being filled with Spirit of God allows you to make the most of the limited time you have remaining to serve Him as you continue to discover and understand the will of God.

Ephesians 5:15-18

F. It is God’s will for you to SERVE.

You are to serve your employer as if you were serving Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 6:5-7

G. It is God’s will for you to be SUBMITTED.

You are to be submitted to every law of man as a testimony to the lost world. However, your submission to authority is balanced by a higher standard to please the Lord first.

1 Peter 2:13-15

H. It is God’s will for you to SUFFER.

You will experience suffering if you follow Jesus Christ. The suffering we endure must be the result of well doing and not of evil doing.

1 Peter 3:17; 1 Peter 2:19-21

DISCUSSION:

Are you laboring to see the lost come to salvation?

Are you living your life to fulfill the will of God or the will of your flesh?

Are you prepared to be presented blameless and holy before the Lord?

WHAT IS GOD’S PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE?

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

Obedience to God’s will is more important than the discovery of God’s plan. You must be in conformity to the will of God before He will direct you in the specifics of your life. Your priority should be to fulfill the will of God in your daily life now, and then trust Him to guide you in the detailed plan, step by step.

Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 3:5-6

A. God reveals His direction for your life by the three resources He has provided.

1. God has given you the Holy Spirit to guide and direct you as He dwells inside you.

Galatians 5:25; John 16:13

2. God has given you the Word of God to be your absolute authority in every detail of your life. You must learn to saturate your mind with God's thoughts. God's plan for your life will never violate the Bible.

Psalm 119:105; 1 Thessalonians 2:13

3. God has given you the local church to equip you for life and ministry. God provides wise counsel through other believers who surround you.

Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 13:1-4

B. God will use the events and circumstances of your life to direct you.

As different circumstances arise, God will also confirm His plan through the Bible, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and your local church.

Romans 8:28; Romans 15:22-24; Psalm 37:23

C. God is more interested in who you are than in what you do for Him.

Knowing what God wants you to do is not as important as being who God wants you to be. As you grow into the image of God, He will reveal what He desires you to do.

Philippians 2:13; Psalm 37:4-5

BASIC QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKING

A. Why does God choose not to reveal all the details of His plan for me now?

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." – John 16:12

1. Knowing the entire plan of God for you at one moment would overwhelm you.
2. You may not be equipped to handle it now. God will reveal what you can handle as you are able.
3. You may not be walking in obedience to what God has already revealed to you.
4. As you mature physically and spiritually, your interests, talents, and desires change. God wants you to be patient as He works in your life spiritually.

B. Why does God allow seemingly bad things to happen in my life?

- a. God will allow suffering in your life to perfect you. The difficult times in your life will draw you into a deeper understanding of who God is and who you are.

1 Peter 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:10

- b. There are always consequences to the decisions that God allows you to make. God has given you a free will and He will not force you to make biblical decisions. There may be times when you suffer as a result of the decisions you make.

Galatians 6:7-8

DISCUSSION:

Do you have an example of how God has given you direction in His plan for your life?

Do you know what God's plan is for your life today?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the difference between the will of God and the plan of God?

2. List the five specific things that God wills for your life.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____

3. Use scripture to summarize the will of God for a Christian.

4. What are the resources that God has given you to reveal His plan for you?

5. What should be the priority in your life?

6. What is the key purpose of this lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Read *1 Kings 17:1-9*, and describe how God's plan was revealed to Elijah.

According to *1 Peter 5:10*, God allows Christians to go through suffering so that they might be more...

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

How was God's plan for the gospel to go into Europe revealed to the Apostle Paul in *Acts 16:1-13*?

Write down a testimony of a past example of how God revealed His plan to you.

LESSON 13 - GIVING

God is a giving God, and His will is for you to reflect His nature in your giving. It is important to understand that God owns everything, and He does not need your money. The way you give is an indication of your maturity as a believer. Giving is an act of faith and worship, and it demonstrates your love for God and His mission. This lesson will help you to understand your responsibility in the stewardship of your life and your resources.

The key word of this lesson is:

CONTROL

The key question that this lesson answers:

What does it mean to give, and what are my responsibilities to give?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To help you understand the nature of New Testament giving.

The key point of this lesson:

True New Testament giving concerns turning over complete control of your life and resources to Jesus Christ.

MEMORY VERSES:

*“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” – **2 Corinthians 9:7***

*“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” – **Matthew 6:21***

WHY DOES GOD WANT YOU TO GIVE?

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

Everything you are and everything you have already belongs to God. He does not “want” or “need” your money. God wants you! The focus of New Testament giving is on turning over complete control of your life and resources to Jesus Christ. If God has control of your life, He will also have control of all your resources. The way that you give demonstrates how much you trust God to provide for your every need.

“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;” – Acts 17:24-25

*“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?”
– Luke 16:10-11*

A. Giving redirects your focus away from earthly things so that you may invest in eternal things.

*“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”
– Matthew 6:19-21*

B. Giving produces the fear of the Lord within you, because you are showing that your first priority is to honor God.

“And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.” – Deuteronomy 14:23

C. Giving establishes your dependency upon God because you are trusting Him to supply your future provision.

*“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”
– Proverbs 3:9-10*

DISCUSSION:

Do you have a need that you are trusting God for?

Have you ever chosen not to give to the Lord because it appeared that you could not afford to?

Have you ever chosen to be obedient and give to the Lord despite being in a position of great need? How did God provide for you?

WHERE DOES GOD WANT YOU TO GIVE?

A. Build your giving around the structure of your local church first.

The primary focus of biblical giving is through the local church because God has chosen it to accomplish His mission in the world. It is important to understand that any giving outside of the local church should never hinder your normal giving to your local church. It is equally important to focus your giving on causes that will matter in eternity.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

B. The leaders of your church are responsible to be wise stewards.

The leaders of your local church are accountable to the people of the church, as well as to the Lord. As a member of your local church, you are able to see how resources are being used, and you should be able to trust the leadership to handle those resources with wisdom.

2 Corinthians 8:20-22; Acts 4:34-35

HOW DOES GOD WANT ME TO GIVE?

In his second letter to the Corinthian church, the Apostle Paul used the churches in Macedonia as an example of what biblical giving should look like for New Testament believers. The testimony of how the Macedonian churches gave is a great lesson for all believers to learn from.

A. Your willingness to give to God’s mission is more important than the amount that you are able to give.

2 Corinthians 8:1-3

B. Your giving should begin by first giving yourself to the Lord and His people.

2 Corinthians 8:4-5

C. Giving develops an attitude of grace as you grow in your relationship with God.

2 Corinthians 8:6-7

D. Giving proves the sincerity of your love for God, His church, and His mission.

2 Corinthians 8:8-9

E. Your giving should be as God has prospered you. Do not compare the amount that you give with the amounts that others give.

2 Corinthians 8:10-12

DISCUSSION:

Are you faithfully giving through your local church?

How has giving to the Lord changed how you view the importance of God's mission?

Have you ever allowed what another believer gives to affect what you give?

WHAT DOES GOD WANT YOU TO GIVE?

A. There are three types of giving mentioned in the Old Testament scripture.

1. Tithes

The tithe is one-tenth of a person's income taken from the top. It was given to God as a reminder of who provided it, and to demonstrate that God always came first.

Malachi 3:10; Deuteronomy 26:2, 10

2. Offerings

In addition to the tithe, voluntary offerings were given by God's people to fund special needs as they arose within the congregation.

Exodus 25:1-2

3. Sacrificial Giving

This is a sacrificial gift that came at the giver's expense. It was a sacrifice that someone was willing to make as an investment in God's mission.

2 Samuel 24:21-25

B. As a New Testament believer, your giving should be structured upon biblical principles as you establish the discipline of giving in your own life.

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." – Romans 15:4

1. Give regularly to support the management of the local church.

Just as God's people brought a tithe to support God's mission in the Old Testament, you should have a set amount of your choosing to give regularly. These gifts support operating expenses, the staff, and general ministry expenses.

1 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Timothy 5:17-18

2. Give generously to support the special projects and ministries of the local church.

Just as God's people brought offerings to support special needs, you should be ready to give as needs arise within your local church. These gifts help support the needs of members within the church who are unable to take care of themselves, and other special projects as determined by the leaders of your church.

Acts 11:27-30; 1 Timothy 5:3, 9-10, 16

3. Give sacrificially to support missions.

Just as God's people gave sacrificially to invest in God's mission, you should be ready to give to the support of the missionaries that your church sends out and approves of. These gifts support missionaries to go to places that you are unable to go.

Philippians 4:15-19

C. God has not commanded you to give a specific amount.

God allows you the freedom to give any amount. New Testament giving is more of an issue of growth and maturity in Christ, than it is about money. God wants all of you. The way that you give will reveal the depth of your spiritual walk with God. Below are some practical principles to consider as you decide on the amount that you will regularly give through your local church:

1. Plan your time, service, and finances around your giving.

Many believers have difficulty in giving regularly because they are not prepared to do so.

2 Corinthians 9:1-4

2. Decide how much you will give before you arrive at church.

Your giving should be between God and you alone. If you wait until you arrive, there is a potential that your giving could be influenced by the giving of others.

2 Corinthians 9:5

3. Remember the law of sowing and reaping.

You should not give with the expectation that you will receive personal gain in return. However, God does promise to bless faithful givers. As you prove yourself faithful with what God has given you, He may entrust you with more resources.

2 Corinthians 9:6

4. Your giving should come from a heart that is ready and willing to give.

Are you giving to the Lord because you are expected to, or because you desire to give back to God?

2 Corinthians 9:7

5. God will provide for your needs.

As you give to support the great commission of making disciples around the world, God will make sure that you will have enough resources to support the great commission through your local church.

2 Corinthians 9:8

6. God will be glorified through your giving.

God's essential nature is to give. He gave you the ultimate gift of salvation through the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. When you give according to biblical principles, you will reflect the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ in your life, and God will be glorified through you.

2 Corinthians 9:9-15

DISCUSSION:

Have you budgeted your time and finances so that you are free to give regularly?

Do you have a set amount that you give regularly?

Is God being glorified through your giving?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. List three reasons why God wants you to be a giver.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. Why is it important for you to build your giving around the structure of your local church first?

3. *2 Corinthians 8:1-2* teaches us that the Macedonian believers were committed givers. List five examples of their giving that you can learn from.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

4. List three biblical principles that you will begin to apply in your life as you develop the discipline of giving in your life.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

5. Does God give the New Testament believer a specific amount to give? Why?

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

God called for the nation of Israel to bring offerings to help contribute to the building of the tabernacle while they were in the wilderness. Read *Exodus 35* and write down some of the ways that the people gave that did not include giving money. What does this passage say about the hearts of the people as they gave? What are some ways that you can give to God’s mission that do not involve money?

Read *Luke 6:38*, and list God’s promises concerning your giving.

In *Luke 21:1-4*, Jesus compares the amounts given by a poor widow and the rich men as they gave to the temple treasury. What did Jesus say about the woman’s gift? What did Jesus say was the difference between how she and the rich men gave?

In *Acts 2*, we read about many people who had travelled long distances to be a part of the feast of Pentecost. After hearing the gospel, many of them accepted Christ as Savior. Instead of returning home, they chose to stay to be a part of the new church in Jerusalem. This caused a large problem within the local economy, and many in the new church were having difficulty providing enough resources to support their families. Read *Acts 4:34-37*. How committed were God’s people to giving? Where did they take their gifts? Who was responsible for distributing the gifts that were brought?

LESSON 14 - MONEY AND POSSESSIONS

One of the greatest temptations that a believer can face is the tremendous amount of materialism in the world. We are misled to believe that success is measured by material wealth, when biblical success is measured by following God's will. Many believers find themselves in harmful situations because of their attitudes toward money and possessions. The purpose of this lesson is to guide you in managing your resources by following biblical principles.

The key word of this lesson is:

ATTITUDE

The key question this lesson answers:

What should my attitude be toward money and possessions?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To teach from the scriptures how to be a biblical steward of God's resources.

The key point of this lesson:

To be content with the resources that God has entrusted you with.

MEMORY VERSES:

*"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." – **Philippians 4:11***

*"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
– **Luke 16:13***

DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE OF A MANAGER

A. God owns everything in this world because He created everything.

"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." – Psalm 24:1

*"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof."
– Psalm 50:10-12*

B. You have the responsibility to manage a portion of God's resources. God owns it, and you manage it.

"Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God." – Ecclesiastes 5:18-19

C. The way that you manage your physical resources will reveal the way that you will manage your spiritual responsibilities.

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" – Luke 16:10-12

D. God will hold you accountable for your faithfulness in managing the resources He entrusted you with.

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord." – 1 Corinthians 4:2-4

DISCUSSION:

Have you considered the fact that you only manage God's resources, and that you do not really own anything?

How well are you managing all the resources God has given you?

DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE OF ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. The amount of material goods you possess is not a reflection of your spiritual character.**

Luke 12:15

- B. There is no eternal value in accumulating material things.**

Luke 12:16-21

- C. It is better to pursue a right relationship with God than to pursue the riches of the world.**

Proverbs 15:16; 16:8

- D. The quickest way to reveal what has your heart's attention is to evaluate where you invest your resources.**

Matthew 6:19-21

- E. Focus your attention on the Kingdom of God, and allow Him to take care of your physical needs.**

Matthew 6:33

- F. The most precious possession you have is your eternal soul, not your material things.**

Matthew 16:24-26

- G. You must choose between serving the Lord and material things.**

Luke 16:13; Colossians 3:2

DISCUSSION:

Do you equate how much you have with how much God loves you?

What area of your life has your heart's attention?

Do you spend more time focusing on your income than you do on seeking ways to invest your resources in furthering God's kingdom?

DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE OF FAITH

- A. You must trust God to help provide for all of your needs rather than attempt to provide for them solely on your own.**

Philippians 4:19

- B. Your possessions will hinder your relationship with God if you place your trust in them.**

Mark 10:23-27; Proverbs 11:28

- C. Do not forget God when He blesses you materially.**

Deuteronomy 6:10-12; Deuteronomy 8:10-18

- D. Do not lose faith in God when you have difficult times of great loss.**

Job 1:20-22

DISCUSSION:

Are you a self-sufficient person? How does that hinder what God wants to do in your life?

Have you ever had a time of great financial difficulty? How did that affect your relationship with God?

DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE OF BEING BLAMELESS

A. Avoid getting involved in opportunities to obtain wealth quickly.

Proverbs 20:21; Proverbs 28:20, 22

B. Do not be envious of someone else's wealth.

Psalm 49:16-17; Exodus 20:17

C. Do not allow your financial stewardship to hinder your testimony or cause God's name to be evil spoken of within your community.

Proverbs 30:7-9; Psalm 37:21

D. Be honest and ethical in your business dealings. God will not bless you when you choose to compromise biblical principles to gain wealth.

2 Corinthians 8:21; Proverbs 10:4, 22

DISCUSSION:

Have you allowed someone else's wealth to affect your financial decisions?

What is your financial testimony around your community?

DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE OF CONTENTMENT

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

Be content with what God has given you. To be content does not mean to have a poor attitude and grudgingly resign yourself to accept your state in life. Having an attitude of contentment is realizing that whatever you possess is a blessing from God, and to rest satisfied in God's provision. Contentment is a learned character trait, and it sometimes requires that you go through adversity to learn it. The Apostle Paul explained what he learned about contentment while in prison.

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."
– **Philippians 4:11-13**

A. God uses both the poor and the rich to further His kingdom.

The important issue is not the amount of wealth you have, but rather how willing you are to use the resources God has given you to serve Him.

1. Jesus was accompanied by a group of wealthy women who materially provided for His ministry.

Luke 8:1-3

2. Paul used the churches of Macedonia as an example of how to support the ministry even in a time of deep poverty.

2 Corinthians 8:1-3

B. Contentment comes from having a proper understanding that a relationship with God is the only source of eternal riches.

It can sometimes require sacrificing temporal riches for rewards only God can give.

Philippians 3:7-8; 1 Timothy 6:6-8

C. Loving money is the root of all evil.

The rich and the poor can both love money and make it their goal in life to increase riches. However, they will never be happy, and it will bring them nothing but sorrow.

1 Timothy 6:9-10

D. People get into financial trouble for many reasons.

Most often, it is because they are not content with what God has given them.

1. Media and advertising attempt to influence you to make purchases by creating discontentment in your heart. The Bible calls it covetousness, and equates it with idolatry.

Psalm 37:4; Colossians 3:5

2. Excessive debt is the result of individuals purchasing items they cannot afford.

Proverbs 22:7; Romans 13:8

E. God desires for you to be balanced in your finances.

There is a proper balance that you should develop in your attitude toward money and possessions. The Bible does not contradict itself, but it rather provides principles to give you balance in handling your finances. Here are a few examples...

1. Compare what the Bible says about providing for your needs. The Bible says that you are not to worry about physical needs, but it also says that you must work and provide for your family.

*“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?” – **Matthew 6:31***

*“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” – **2 Thessalonians 3:10***

2. Compare what the Bible says about saving money and possessions. The Bible says that hard workers earn more wages than others, but it also says that your main priority should not be on temporary riches.

*“He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.” – **Proverbs 10:4***

*“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.” – **1 Timothy 6:7***

DISCUSSION:

Do you feel like your current financial situation hinders you from fully serving God?

Has there been a time when you chose to sacrifice your resources so that you could focus on your relationship with Christ?

Is there an area in your finances that you need to be more balanced in?

Is your current financial situation allowing you to save money?

Do you have a spending plan in place to help protect you from making purchases you cannot afford? If not, schedule a time to work with the person discipling you to develop one.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Explain what it means to manage God's resources instead of owning them.

2. List three principles and supporting verses that will help you develop an attitude with an eternal perspective concerning money and possessions.

- a.

- b.

- c.

3. Explain why a person can never truly be satisfied by obtaining wealth.

4. Why is it important to be blameless in your finances?

5. How does having a wrong attitude about money affect your relationship with God?

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

One of the best ways to develop contentment is to focus on things in life that are far more important than money, and which money cannot buy. Read the following verses and write down some of the things that cannot be purchased with money.

Psalm 119:14, 72, 127

Proverbs 16:16

Proverbs 16:8; 28:6; Psalm 37:16

Ecclesiastes 4:6

Ecclesiastes 5:12

Matthew 16:26

In *Ecclesiastes 2:4-11*, Solomon talks about his wealth. What was his attitude while accumulating his wealth and possessions? What was his conclusion after he acquired everything he desired?

Read *Matthew 6:25-34* and *Philippians 4:19*. God promises to provide for your every physical and spiritual need. However, it is important for you to be able to discern the difference between wants and needs. Compare the following verses, and then write down some examples of needs and wants in your own life.

NEEDS:

James 2:15-16; Hebrews 4:15-16; Mark 2:25

Make a list of some needs...

WANTS:

Psalm 23:1; Proverbs 13:25; James 1:4

Make a list of some wants...

LESSON 15 - JOB AND EMPLOYER

God will lead you to use your position within the workplace as a mission field to reach the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your job gives you the opportunity to build relationships with people that you would not normally have contact with. It is essential to your spiritual growth that you understand this area of responsibility in accordance with the Word of God.

The key word of this lesson is:

OPPORTUNITY

The key question this lesson answers:

What should my attitude be toward my job and my employer?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To help you be the type of employee or employer that God would have you to be in order to accomplish His mission in your workplace.

The key point of this lesson:

You should view your job as a mission field where God has placed you for His service and glory.

MEMORY VERSES:

“And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

– Mark 10:44-45

“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;” – Colossians 3:23

GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO HIS WORK

It is important to understand that God's calling in your life is not to a specific occupation, but rather to His work. God has given you the ministry of reconciling the world to Christ, and your employment is only one way in which you are to help fulfill that ministry.

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." – 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

A. Your true calling and vocation is to serve Jesus Christ with all of your life.

Ephesians 4:1

B. God expects you to be involved in His work of reaching the lost of this world with the gospel.

Luke 19:10; Luke 10:1-2

C. God has called and commanded you to live a life that is committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:18-20

DISCUSSION:

Which holds the greatest priority in your life today: your job or the work of the Lord?

How are you currently laboring in God's harvest?

Does the task of reaching the world with the gospel overwhelm you?

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

You should view your job as a mission field where God has placed you for His service and glory. By being there, you are to be in contact with people who need a relationship with Jesus Christ. When you view your job as a mission field, you are less likely to be dissatisfied or discontent with your job. God places you in the midst of lost people as a light in a dark world to represent Jesus Christ. Your primary focus is more on the people you are ministering to than on the individual job responsibilities you have.

Matthew 5:14-16

YOUR JOB IS A MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY

A. Your co-workers are probably the greatest exposure you have to the lost.

You must understand that lost people do not naturally seek after God.

Romans 3:10-11

B. Your co-workers have the opportunity to observe your life as a daily testimony of God's grace and love.

Your life may be the only true witness of Jesus Christ that your co-workers may ever see.

Titus 2:12; Philippians 2:12-16

DISCUSSION:

Do you view your job as a mission field, or simply as a way to get a paycheck?

Are you seeking opportunities to share the gospel with your co-workers?

Do your co-workers know that you are a Christian?

YOUR JOB PROVIDES FOR YOUR MINISTRY

A. Your first ministry is to your family.

It is your responsibility to earn an honest living to provide resources for your household.

1 Timothy 5:8; 2 Thessalonians 3:10

B. Your second ministry is to your church family.

Earning an honest living allows you to have the resources to minister to your spiritual family.

Galatians 6:10

C. Your third ministry is to reach the lost with the gospel.

Your honest living provides you with the resources to invest in people with the gospel.

1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8-9

DISCUSSION:

Is your job providing for the needs of your family?

What are some ways that you can use your resources to get the gospel to the lost?

WHAT KIND OF EMPLOYEE SHOULD YOU BE?

A. You are to serve in the workplace as if Jesus Christ is your employer.

Regardless of the work day stresses, you have a responsibility to always reflect the light of Jesus Christ.

“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;” – Colossians 3:22-23

B. You are to do your best and work hard so that your employer is successful.

The company you work for does not exist in order to provide you a job; it must maintain a profit in order for you to remain employed. God will work through you to bless your employer materially, and He will work through you to minister spiritually to your co-workers.

*“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”
– Ecclesiastes 9:10*

C. You are to focus on your own work and not the work of others.

Do not allow someone else’s errors and poor work habits to affect you so that you are free to be a good witness of Jesus Christ by both your words and life.

“And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.” – 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

D. You are to have a healthy respect for the company and its leaders.

“Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” – Titus 2:9-10

1. Respect your employer’s authority – “not answering again”

Choosing to submit to your employer’s authority, even in the midst of disagreement, will allow you the opportunity to be a testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Respect your employer’s property – “not purloining”

Take care of your company’s property, and do not take property that does not belong to you.

3. Respect your employer’s time – “shewing all good fidelity”

Be faithful to do your work with diligence throughout your scheduled shift.

DISCUSSION:

Do you find it difficult to submit to your employer like Jesus?

Are you the hardest working employee at the company you work for?

How is your testimony of Jesus affected by the type of employee you are?

WHAT KIND OF EMPLOYER SHOULD YOU BE?

A. Set fair and equal expectations for your employees.

Set the same standards for all of your employees and then demonstrate that you are willing to keep those same standards.

*“And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.”
– Ephesians 6:9*

B. Give your employees fair and equal wages in relation to their responsibilities.

Do not be so consumed with the success of your business or your own self-interests that you neglect to consider your employees’ needs. When you value the needs of your employees, they are much more likely to respond by valuing your leadership and your company.

“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.” – Colossians 4:1

C. Always maintain the attitude of a servant.

You are to lead your employees, not rule over them. You are responsible to lead your employees to faith in Jesus Christ as well as to have success in business.

“But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” – Mark 10:42-45

DISCUSSION:

Do your employees know what you expect from them?

Is your leadership giving your employees the opportunity to see Jesus Christ in you?

YOU WILL ENCOUNTER CONFLICT IN YOUR JOB

A. Your job may conflict with your spiritual priorities.

This is a conflict that requires you to seek God's guidance in balancing your priorities. You cannot abandon your job or take off work for a few minor conflicts; however, you should not use your job as an excuse to neglect your church or spiritual life.

1 Corinthians 9:25; James 1:8

B. Your job may conflict with biblical principles.

There may be times when your employer requests you to do something that is contrary to the Word of God. You must make a biblical decision to do what is right, and guard yourself against the temptation to be influenced by sinful activities and attitudes around you.

Ephesians 5:3-12

C. You may have conflict with your co-workers.

While your co-worker may not be a believer, you should follow both biblical principles of dealing with conflict as well as any policy that your company requires. You must choose to be blameless and humble in any situation that requires conflict resolution.

Matthew 18:15-17

D. You may encounter conflict through persecution.

Many times, persecution in the workplace is nothing more than the result of a believer's improper walk with the Lord. However, there will be times when the opposition you face is because you are truly living for Christ. The proper response to persecution is to commit the adversity to the Lord and respond to it in a blameless manner.

1 Peter 2:18-23; 3:16-17

E. You may have conflict because of an opportunity to advance in your career.

God can use your higher position and larger wage for His glory. However, more money or a better position are not always what is best for you. Any new responsibility may become a burden on your time and hinder your service to Jesus Christ. It is important to be sure that you are able to be faithful with the greater responsibility, and that you will not allow yourself to become too busy.

Luke 16:10-13

DISCUSSION:

Are you experiencing a conflict with a co-worker at your job?

Have you ever had to choose between serving the Lord or serving your job?

ARE YOU CONSIDERING NEW EMPLOYMENT?

A. Have you prayed and sought the Lord's direction?

God will reveal His plan to you through the Word of God and prayer. It may be a good idea to write down how God is leading you so that you are able to go back and review it.

James 1:5

B. Have you sought counsel from a mature believer?

Seeking out or pursuing a new job can be a very complex issue. It is wise to seek biblical counsel from another mature believer whom you respect.

Proverbs 11:14

C. How will this new employment opportunity affect your family?

Many times, our jobs will affect some of the time we are able to invest in our families. However, some jobs require a large amount of time that hinders you from having a relationship with your spouse and children.

Proverbs 27:23-24

D. How will this new job opportunity affect what God is doing in your life?

There are jobs that will, at times, conflict with your ability to make disciples and minister through your local church. It is important to understand that God will not lead you to a job where that conflict is consistent or constant.

2 Timothy 2:4

E. Are you avoiding something you should be facing and trying to correct?

God will often use difficult situations to teach you biblical truths and strengthen your faith in Him. If you are experiencing conflict in the work place, it is best to try to resolve that conflict before seeking new employment opportunities. Most problems are not eliminated simply by changing your circumstances.

Matthew 5:23-25

F. Will this new employment opportunity cause you to seek a new local church?

If your new job is leading you to move to another location, then one of your first priorities must be to find another local church to minister through. Review the lesson on finding a good disciple-making local church.

DISCUSSION:

How does your current job affect your time with your family and ministry?

Did you seek God's leading and biblical counsel when applying for your current job?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the work that God has called all believers to?

2. List the three ministries that your job provides for.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

3. Describe in your own words what kind of employee you should be.

4. What is the most important attitude an employer or supervisor should have?

5. List three examples of the types of conflict you might encounter in the workplace.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

6. List three things you should consider when seeking new employment.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

7. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Read *Acts 18:1-5* and *Acts 20:33-35*. The Apostle Paul made tents for a living, and he used his job as a tool for ministry. What principles have you learned from these passages that you will apply to your job?

Read the following verses and write down what the Bible says about individuals who choose to be lazy and have no work ethic.

Proverbs 18:9

Proverbs 21:25

Proverbs 19:15

Proverbs 22:13

Proverbs 20:4

Proverbs 26:14

Read *Daniel 6*. In this chapter, Daniel is one of the presidents within the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. What was the main conflict Daniel faced within this chapter? What was Daniel's response? How did Daniel's decision affect the king and the kingdom?

Read *Genesis 39*. Joseph was sold as a slave to Potiphar. What does this passage say about Joseph's character? How did Joseph respond to temptation?

LESSON 16 - THE LOST WORLD

The Bible commands God's people to be separate from the world, while at the same time reaching lost men and women for the Lord Jesus Christ. As you seek to rescue the lost, you will receive opposition from the world because it is contrary to God's eternal purpose. This lesson is focused on the importance of being an effective witness of the grace of Jesus Christ while overcoming the opposition you receive from the world.

The key word of this lesson is:

MISSION

The key question this lesson answers:

What are your responsibilities toward the lost?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To reach the lost without compromising your walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The key point of this lesson:

Allow the actions of your life to demonstrate your love for God.

MEMORY VERSES:

*"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." – **Romans 1:16***

*"But if any man love God, the same is known of him." – **1 Corinthians 8:3***

HOW DOES THE LOST WORLD VIEW YOU?

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

Allow the actions of your life to demonstrate your love for God. The way you live should validate the message of the gospel. Your mission to reach the lost can never be accomplished without a valid presentation of the gospel and a visible testimony of a changed life.

*“Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;” – **Philippians 2:14-15***

A. The world is watching you to see if you really live out what you believe.

1. They should see your love for God in the way that you live your life.

1 Corinthians 8:3

2. They should see that you live a life that is separated from the way of the world. You should be separated from the world, but not so separated that you lose all credibility or influence.

1 Corinthians 9:19-22; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

3. They should see that you are open and honest in all matters.

2 Corinthians 8:21; Romans 12:17

B. The world will oppose you because you are Christ’s representative on earth.

1. Satan is the power behind any opposition you receive.
 - a. He has established the course of this world that is directly opposed to the work of the Lord.

Ephesians 2:1-3

- b. He seeks to destroy your life in any way he can.

1 Peter 5:8

2. You will be opposed because Jesus was opposed. However, the world will only oppose a believer who is living for Christ.

John 15:18-21; 2 Timothy 3:12

3. You will receive opposition from three main areas...

- a. Society in general will oppose you because it is contrary to God's Word. The majority of this opposition will come through the media, literature, and education.

1 John 2:15-17; 1 John 3:13

- b. Lost people will oppose you because you are no longer part of their family.

Acts 9:17-23

- c. Your friends, family, co-workers, and acquaintances will oppose you. This opposition is often the hardest to face because of the personal relationships involved.

Mark 6:4; John 1:11

How can you overcome the opposition that you face?

- 1. Avoid fights whenever possible, and answer with soft words.

*"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."
–Proverbs 15:1*

- 2. God may give you peace with your enemies as you please Him with your life.

"When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." – Proverbs 16:7

- 3. Pray for your enemies with pure motives.

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;" – Matthew 5:44

- 4. Love your enemies and help to meet their needs.

"Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not... Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." – Romans 12:14, 20-21

You will never fully eliminate opposition in this life, but you can achieve victory in the face of opposition with biblical principles. You already have victory because you have faith in the Lord and you have the entire armor of God.

Ephesians 6:10-20

DISCUSSION:

Is the lost world able to see that you are a Christian?

Have you received any opposition from close family or friends because of your faith in Christ?

How do you normally respond to the opposition?

HOW DO YOU VIEW THE LOST WORLD?

The people, laws, and cultures of where you live will affect your view of the lost world. It is important to understand that the truths of God's Word apply to all believers within all cultures and nations.

A. You must understand your relationship with the culture.

1. Most cultures are contrary to the holiness and purposes of God.

Titus 1:10-14

2. You must live a godly life while ministering within the culture you live in.

Titus 2:11-14; 1 Peter 2:12

B. You must understand your relationship with the government.

1. Submit to the laws of your land as a testimony to the lost.

1 Peter 2:13-17; Romans 13:1-5

2. Pay your taxes, giving to the government what is due by law.

Romans 13:6-7

3. Pray for your government and pray for your freedom to share the gospel.

1 Timothy 2:1-4

C. You must understand your relationship with the lost world.

1. Your home is in heaven and not in this world.

Ephesians 2:6

2. You are a pilgrim in a strange land.

1 Peter 2:10-12

3. This world has nothing of eternal value to offer you.

2 Peter 3:10-13

4. You are now an ambassador of Jesus Christ, and this world is your mission field to reach the lost for Christ.

Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

DISCUSSION:

How is your culture and government impacting your ability to serve the Lord?

How has your relationship with the world changed since your salvation?

Can you name some people in your life right now who you know are lost and need to hear the gospel so that they might be saved?

HOW DO YOU SHARE YOUR FAITH?

Jesus made disciples by leading them to evangelize.

“And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.” – Mark 1:17-18

If you follow Jesus, then He will lead you to seek the lost.

“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” – Luke 19:10

A. Start by understanding what God told you to do.

“...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” – Mark 16:15

1. God told you to GO.

You cannot share your faith without going where the lost are.

2. God told you to go and PREACH THE GOSPEL.

You cannot share your faith without going and proclaiming the gospel.

3. God told you to go and preach the gospel to EVERY CREATURE.

The gospel must go to everyone because Jesus died and rose again for everyone.

B. Focus on your obedience, not results.

1. Share the gospel because you are commanded to.

When your actions are based upon answering the question “What did God tell me to do?” instead of “What is going to work?”, then you will measure your success based upon your obedience, and not on your results.

“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”

– 1 Corinthians 9:16

2. Do not be tempted to be clever in your presentation of the gospel.

The message of the gospel is powerful alone without attempts to make it more palatable or believable.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

– Romans 1:16

3. Do not be tempted to avoid sharing the gospel because you feel unequipped.

God has equipped you to carry the great message of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection to the world.

“And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament...”

– 2 Corinthians 3:4-6

C. Pray for God to lead you in the sharing of your faith.

1. Pray that God will fill your heart with a desire to tell all men about Jesus Christ.

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” – 2 Peter 3:9

2. Pray for God to provide you with opportunities to share the gospel.

“Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.” – Colossians 4:3-4

3. Pray for boldness to share the gospel when you are presented with an open door.

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,” – Ephesians 6:18-19

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The only way to find open doors is to knock on closed ones. You find open doors by engaging people in conversation and asking them if they would like to talk about Jesus. How many people would get saved if someone would just ask them to? How many people would get saved if they knew how?

D. Develop a simple presentation of the gospel.

There are many different ways to share the gospel, but it is important to understand that the gospel will always include the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

The most familiar gospel presentation is the “Romans Road.”

1. You must realize you are lost before you can see a need for salvation.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” – Romans 3:23

2. You must see that your sin originated with Adam, and that you are sentenced to die eternally separated from God.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” – Romans 5:12

3. You must see that your sin leads to death, but that God offers you salvation as a free gift through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” – Romans 6:23

4. You must know that Jesus died for your sins.

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” – Romans 5:8

5. You must confess that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that He died and rose again from the dead.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” – Romans 10:9-10

6. You must call upon the name of Jesus to save you.

*“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”
– Romans 10:13*

YOU CAN ALSO SHARE THE GOSPEL BY USING A SINGLE VERSE OR PASSAGE.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” – John 3:16

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” – Ephesians 2:8-9

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” – 2 Corinthians 5:21

EXAMPLE...

Jesus says that the only way to get to God is through Him. The only way to be forgiven is to accept by faith what Jesus did for us in His death, burial, and resurrection.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” – John 14:6

Jesus is the way...

The Bible says mankind will die in their sins if they are not saved from the punishment that they deserve through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Jesus became the way to your salvation by dying in your place on the cross, being buried for three days and three nights, and rising again in victory over sin and death.

Jesus is the truth...

The Bible says that mankind rejects the truth of who God is by choosing to worship themselves and creation. Jesus is the truth they are seeking, and mankind needs to worship Him as the one true God.

Jesus is the life...

All mankind is born into sin, and they are condemned to be separated from God in an eternal death in the lake of fire. They need the eternal life that is found in Jesus Christ.

E. Be ready to share your testimony.

One of the best ways to keep the conversation going is to share your story. Your testimony has great potential power.

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” – Revelation 12:11

Your testimony gives a practical illustration of how your life has changed because of the gospel. The Apostle Paul’s testimony in **Acts 22** is a great model of how to develop your personal testimony.

1. What were you like without Christ?

Paul spoke about his race, origin, education, and religious devotion.

Acts 22:3-5

2. How did you meet Christ?

Paul spoke about how he personally encountered Christ.

- a. Paul spoke about God’s intervention. He encountered God’s light, not man’s reason or intellect.

Acts 22:6

- b. Paul spoke about the conviction of sin.

Acts 22:7

- c. Paul spoke about meeting Jesus. Salvation is in a person not a religion.

Acts 22:8-9

- d. Paul spoke about submitting to the lordship of Jesus.

Acts 22:10

3. How has your life changed?

Paul spoke about how God began to work in his life.

- a. Paul spoke about how his submission to Christ resulted in his submission to Christ’s servants.

Acts 22:11-13

b. Paul spoke about receiving God's direction for his life.

Acts 22:14-15

c. Paul spoke about taking basic steps in following the Lord through baptism.

Acts 22:16

d. Paul spoke about his growth in spite of his past.

Acts 22:17-20

4. Who are you in Christ right now?

Paul spoke about his ministry of reconciling the lost to Christ.

Acts 22:21

DISCUSSION:

Are you actively seeking opportunities to get the gospel to the lost?

Do you have a method you like to use to share the gospel?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Explain why you will encounter opposition from the world.

2. List four things that describe your relationship with the world. Include scripture references.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

3. Briefly explain how the following verses can help you to overcome the opposition you may face from the world.

Proverbs 15:1

Matthew 5:44

Proverbs 16:7

Romans 12:20-21

4. What are the five main instructions for learning to share your faith?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

5. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

There should be a natural desire to share the great news of Jesus with others. Read the following passages. Who is the passage about? What does each person say about Jesus after meeting him?

John 1:40-41

John 1:45

John 4:28-29

Acts 9:18-20

Acts 18:25-28

How has your testimony changed since you started discipleship?

What is your favorite passage to use when you share the gospel? Why is it your favorite?

LESSON 17 - JUDGMENT SEAT

The Bible is clear that all people will stand before God one day to face judgment. For the Christian, that judgment will be at the Judgment Seat of Christ where we are judged for our works and service to the Lord Jesus Christ. You should be looking for that day when you will be held accountable to Jesus Christ.

The key word of this lesson is:

SERVICE

The key question this lesson answers:

What will I be held accountable for at the Judgment Seat of Christ?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To keep the believer focused on eternal matters by outlining our final accountability to the Lord Jesus Christ as His servant.

The key point of this lesson:

You will be judged as a servant of Jesus Christ.

MEMORY VERSES:

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

– 2 Corinthians 5:10

“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” – Romans 14:12

WHAT IS THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST?

Every person who has ever lived will be judged by God.

The lost will be judged, and found guilty at the Great White Throne Judgment, while the saved will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”
– **Hebrews 9:27**

“Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the LORD.”
– **Proverbs 29:26**

A. Every believer will one day be presented before the Lord Jesus Christ.

God desires for you to be blameless in His sight when you are presented before Him.

“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:” – **Colossians 1:21-22**

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
– **1 Thessalonians 5:23**

B. All believers will give an account for their Christian service at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” – **Romans 14:10-12**

God's judgment of your sin took place on the cross at Calvary.

By placing your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior, your sins were paid for, and you do not have to fear the judgment of your sins.

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” – **2 Corinthians 5:21**

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”
– **1 Peter 2:24**

DISCUSSION:

Are you ready to be presented before the Lord Jesus Christ?

WHAT WILL YOU BE JUDGED FOR AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST?

THE KEY POINT OF THE LESSON!

Jesus Christ expects you to glorify Him with your life, therefore you will be judged for the works you performed as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ after your salvation.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” – Ephesians 2:10

A. You will be judged for how you built upon the foundation of your salvation in Jesus Christ.

The Bible uses gold, silver, and precious stones to illustrate works that have eternal value; while wood, hay, and stubble refer to works that have no eternal value.

1 Corinthians 3:10-12

B. You will be judged by the quality of your works, not by the quantity of them.

God is not going to judge the amount of works that you do, but rather the kind of works you serve Him with. He is more concerned with the purity of your heart attitude than in the amount of your works for Him. Your love for Jesus Christ will produce the right kind of actions.

1 Corinthians 3:13

IMPORTANT NOTE:

You should always do what is right even if you do not feel like it. Do not allow what is perceived as an improper heart attitude to keep you from doing good works for the Lord. You should serve the Lord in humbleness of heart, not allowing feelings and emotions to keep you from that service.

*“Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.”
– Proverbs 16:3*

DISCUSSION:

How would you describe the quality of your service for the Lord?

How is God being glorified through your life?

HOW WILL YOU BE AFFECTED AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST?

As your work is examined and tried by fire, your eternal works will remain while your fleshly works will be destroyed.

“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” – 1 Corinthians 3:13-15

A. There are negative consequences at the Judgment Seat.

1. Some Christians will be found to suffer loss because their works were focused on earthly things and not eternal things. Their works were of the wrong sort (*wood, hay, stubble*).

1 Corinthians 3:15

2. Some Christians will be ashamed in God’s presence for not having lived for the Lord Jesus Christ when He returns.

1 John 2:28

3. Some Christians will stand before the Lord in their nakedness because they did not serve the Lord faithfully in this life.

2 Corinthians 5:2-3; 2 John 8

IMPORTANT NOTE:

You should be mindful that appearances and assumptions can be deceitful, even in your own life. You are very capable of wasting your life in religious activity, yet never actually doing anything of significance for the Lord. God knows our hearts.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” – Galatians 6:7-8

1. Be sure that your service is for the Lord, and not for your own fleshly desires.

Luke 16:15

2. Be sure that you are investing in heavenly rather than earthly rewards.

Matthew 6:19-20

B. There are rewards available to the New Testament believer at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

All believers will receive the reward of the inheritance of a glorified body in the eternal presence of God.

Colossians 3:23-25; Philippians 3:20-21

God promises that those who suffer for Him in this life will rule and reign with Him.

Romans 8:16-19; 2 Timothy 2:11-12

1. The Crown of Righteousness

This crown is given to those who love the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. Your overriding desire should be to be with the Lord at all times.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." – 2 Timothy 4:7-8

2. The Crown of Life

This crown is given to those who love Christ. Their love motivates them to lay down their lives when overcoming temptation and facing persecution.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." – Revelation 2:10

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." – James 1:12

3. The Incorruptible Crown

This crown is given to those who have not fallen away from the faith and have maintained a testimony of Jesus Christ to others by being temperate or moderate in all their physical, spiritual, and mental matters of life.

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." – 1 Corinthians 9:25-27

4. The Crown of Rejoicing

This crown is given to those who lead people to Jesus Christ. There is rejoicing in heaven when someone is saved.

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?” – 1 Thessalonians 2:19

5. The Crown of Glory

This crown is given to those who shepherd or pastor people in the Word of God. Any believer should be actively investing the Word of God into others.

“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” – 1 Peter 5:2-4

ANY REWARD THAT YOU MAY RECEIVE BELONGS TO THE LORD.

Any work that you have done of eternal value was accomplished by Jesus Christ through you. He alone has the preeminence, and He alone gets the glory.

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:” – Philippians 1:6

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” – Philippians 2:12-13

There is an example given for you in the book of Revelation as the 24 elders lay down their crowns at God’s throne and give Him glory. May you have the same heart and cast all glory to the Lord Jesus Christ for what He has done in your life.

*“The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”
– Revelation 4:10-11*

DISCUSSION:

What can you expect to happen when you are at the Judgment Seat of Christ?

How does the reality of the Judgment Seat of Christ affect the way you view your life?

HOW CAN YOU PREPARE FOR THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST?

A. Focus your life on the things that will matter in eternity.

Remember, the Bible uses gold, silver, and precious stones to illustrate works that have eternal value; while wood, hay, and stubble refer to works that have no eternal value.

“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s work shall be made manifest...” – 1 Corinthians 3:12-13

1. Gold represents deity.

When you worship, serve, and magnify Christ as God, you lay up gold in heaven.

Exodus 39:30

2. Silver represents redemption.

When you tell another person about the price that Jesus paid for them, you lay up silver in heaven.

Zechariah 11:10-12

3. Precious stones represent the souls of men and women.

When you lead someone to Christ, you lay up precious stones in heaven.

1 Peter 2:4-5

B. Focus on pleasing the Lord with your life now.

If God is pleased with your life now, He will be pleased with you at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.” – 2 Corinthians 5:8-9

C. Focus on being held accountable for your life.

Live your life in a way that is pleasing to Him, knowing that you will one day give an account for how you served Him.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.” – 2 Corinthians 5:10-11

D. Focus on the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Focusing on the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is one of the most practical doctrines for everyday living in the Bible. When you focus on seeing Jesus Christ face to face, it produces many character qualities in you.

1. It produces PATIENCE in your heart.

James 5:7-8

2. It produces JOY in leading others to faith in Christ.

1 Thessalonians 2:19

3. It produces HOLINESS within you.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

4. It produces COMFORT in sorrow.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

5. It produces CONFIDENCE that God is not finished with you.

Philippians 1:6

6. It produces DILIGENCE to serve the Lord until the end.

1 Timothy 4:1-8

7. It produces RIGHTEOUS living in the present world.

Titus 2:11-14

8. It produces FAITH even in difficult times.

1 Peter 1:5-7

DISCUSSION:

Are you living your life for the things that will matter in eternity?

Is there an area of your life that is out of focus and needs to be redirected?

Do you possess any of the character qualities that come from focusing on the return of Jesus Christ?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. According to *1 Corinthians 3:11-15*, what will we be judged for at the Judgment Seat of Christ?

2. Why will we not be judged for our sin?

3. What are the five crowns that we can be given? Provide a brief description and scripture reference for each.

- a.

- b.

- c.

- d.

- e.

4. Why should we focus on the Judgment Seat of Christ?

5. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Explain in your own words how *2 Corinthians 4:16-18* relates to the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Read *Colossians 1:21-23*. According to this passage, God wants His children to be presented blameless before Him. What is the warning given in this passage that would cause someone to not be presented blameless?

Read *Colossians 3:1-4*. What does this passage say about where you are to place your affection? According to this passage, your life is hidden in Jesus Christ. Where is Jesus right now? What does this passage promise us about His return?

Read *2 Timothy 4:6-7*. The Apostle Paul was ready to be presented before the Lord because he was confident that he accomplished everything he could for the Lord. Are you ready to be presented before the Lord? What commitments can you make to the Lord so that you can finish strong for Him?

LESSON 18 - NEXT STEPS

The purpose of biblical discipleship is to reproduce spiritual sons of God. Now that you have been taught the basic doctrines found in God's Word, it is time for you to fulfill God's command to reproduce in others what has been reproduced in you.

The key word of this lesson is:

REPRODUCE

The key question this lesson answers:

Is it my responsibility to make disciples?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To impress upon you the commandment to make disciples.

The key point of this lesson:

You have the responsibility to reproduce your relationship with Jesus into another believer.

MEMORY VERSES:

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." – 2 Timothy 2:2

*"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."
– John 17:4*

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

A. You have been given the responsibility to lead the lost to salvation.

You have been given the ministry of reconciliation as God's ambassador to this world. You are responsible to seek out the lost in Christ's absence so that they might be reconciled to God through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Luke 19:10

B. You have been given the responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission.

Matthew 28:18-20

1. Fulfilling the Great Commission requires personal evangelism.

1 Corinthians 9:16

2. Fulfilling the Great Commission requires personal discipleship.

1 Corinthians 11:1

C. You have been given the responsibility to abound in the work of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:58

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON!

God commanded every believer to share the gospel with the lost and disciple the saved. You have the responsibility to reproduce your relationship with Jesus into other believers. Jesus gave us the example in glorifying the Lord by finishing the work of making disciples.

"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

– *John 17:4*

1. Jesus EVANGELIZED by making God's name and nature known to the lost.

John 17:6

2. Jesus DISCIPLED believers by teaching them to know and do the Word of God.

John 17:8

3. Jesus REPRODUCED Himself by training believers and sending them out to do the same in others.

John 17:18

UNDERSTANDING HOW TO APPROACH DISCIPLESHIP

Biblical discipleship is the lifelong discipline of being a hearer and doer of the Word of God, so that the believer might be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

A. Understand what you are teaching.

1. You are to teach your disciple about Jesus.

You are making a disciple of Jesus, so it is important for you to teach your disciple to observe all the things that Jesus taught and then follow Him.

Hebrews 12:2-3; Matthew 11:29-30

2. You are to teach your disciple sound doctrine.

The only way to teach sound doctrine is to teach the rightly divided Word of God. Be diligent to teach God's Word and not your own opinions and traditions.

Titus 2:1; 2 Timothy 1:13; 2 Timothy 3:16

B. Understand that Discipleship is not a program, it is a ministry philosophy.

Church programs come and go, while biblical ministry will produce fruit that remains. Discipleship is not a series of Bible study lessons, it is the process of teaching another believer how to follow Christ. The lessons are only a tool to help you teach the Word of God.

John 15:16

C. Understand that Discipleship is not only the transfer of knowledge, it is also the transfer of spiritual maturity.

The mark of spiritual maturity is application of biblical truth. Immature believers tend to get prideful because of what they know about the Bible, and yet have little understanding of how to follow Jesus with their lives. Through practical examples, you must share how the biblical truths you are teaching your disciple are being carried out in your life.

1 Corinthians 8:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:1

D. Understand that Discipleship requires you to be completely committed to share your life with your disciples.

You are to take on the role of a parent who lovingly provides whatever is necessary for your disciples to grow. This means that you must become open and transparent about your walk with God to be able to better teach your disciples. You are to give your soul. Your disciples need to know that you really care and want to be there to help them grow.

1 Thessalonians 2:1-10

THE ELEMENTS OF COMMITMENT TO DISCIPLESHIP

1. Discipleship requires you to make the choice.

"...If any man will..." – Luke 9:23

2. Discipleship requires you to do what Jesus did.

"...come after me..." – Luke 9:23

3. Discipleship requires you to be a living sacrifice.

"...let him deny himself..." – Luke 9:23

4. Discipleship requires your daily dedication to eternal things.

"...and take up his cross daily..." – Luke 9:23

5. Discipleship requires you to follow Jesus for the rest of your life.

"...and follow me." – Luke 9:23

UNDERSTANDING THE GOALS OF DISCIPLESHIP

1. **Established in Worship:** *The focus of your life*

As you begin to know Jesus as Savior and Lord, you will begin to live your life with an eternal perspective. You will desire to honor and glorify God by following Christ personally and passionately.

2. **Established in the Word of God:** *The authority of your life*

Your understanding of who God is should lead you to study His Word. It is important for you to submit and live out the truths of the Bible as you study it, and discover what God is saying to you.

3. **Established in the Local Church:** *The context of your life*

God's will for your life is found in the Word of God, and you are to fulfill it through your local church. You have a God-given and specific role within your church that you are responsible to carry out through the time, abilities, and resources God has given you.

4. Established in the Ministry: *The purpose of your life*

It is important that you live your life committed to fulfilling God's will. God's will for your life is for you to BE A DISCIPLE (live a holy, Spirit-filled life apart from sin) and to MAKE DISCIPLES (sharing the gospel, and committing these things to faithful men).

UNDERSTANDING THE FOCUS OF DISCIPLESHIP

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." – 2 Timothy 2:2

1. Focus on making doctrine the priority.

The relationship between the disciple and the discipler will determine whether discipleship will take place or not; however, the ultimate goal of discipleship is to equip faithful believers with sound biblical doctrine. Bible doctrine will always be centered around following Jesus.

"And the things..." – 2 Timothy 2:2

2. Focus on maintaining a teacher and student relationship.

There must be a disciple for it to be discipleship. This will normally happen one-on-one; however, it is possible to accomplish discipleship with two or three people, as long as there is only one teacher, and the rest are students. Discipleship is not simply a Bible study, or two individuals spending time together. It is focused on teachers pouring their lives and the Word of God into their students.

"...that thou hast heard of me..." – 2 Timothy 2:2

3. Focus on having accountability.

Discipleship requires a close relationship between the disciple and the discipler. However, discipleship should not be carried out in isolation. There must be accountability from others who are able to witness the process and identify the goals being accomplished.

"...among many witnesses..." – 2 Timothy 2:2

4. Focus on teaching in a way that can be repeated.

Present biblical truth in a way that is simple to understand, and in a way that will be easy for your disciples to reproduce and present to their disciples.

"...the same commit thou..." – 2 Timothy 2:2

5. Focus on discipling faithful believers.

Discipleship is built upon one disciple of Jesus entering into a relationship with another believer who has been found to be faithful. Faithfulness must be established over time. Therefore, discipleship cannot be fully applied to a new believer.

“...to faithful men...” – 2 Timothy 2:2

6. Focus on making disciples who are able to make more disciples.

The reason we commit “these things” unto faithful believers, is so that they can teach others to do the same. Your main goal is to make a disciple who will make more disciples.

“...who shall be able to teach others also.” – 2 Timothy 2:2

SOME QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKING

A. Can God use me to make disciples even if I am not a pastor or leader in the church?

Yes. God has made you an able minister because you have the Spirit of God dwelling inside you. God is glorified through your weaknesses.

2 Corinthians 3:5-6; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

B. What do I do if my disciple chooses to quit before we are finished with the lessons?

The purpose of discipleship is to bring people to a crossroads of having to choose whether they are going to obey Christ or not. If a disciple quits, it does not mean that discipleship failed. Pray and ask God to lead you to a faithful believer that you might disciple.

1 Corinthians 15:58; John 6:66; Proverbs 20:6

C. How do I get connected with someone to disciple?

Clear off a segment of time that you can devote to preparing to make disciples. Then trust your local church leadership to assign someone for you to disciple.

Start by praying for God to give you a disciple. The best way to get a disciple is lead someone to Christ and then begin pouring your life into that person.

1 Corinthians 9:16

FINAL NOTE:

Making disciples is hard work, but it is work that will matter in eternity. If you are not careful, the things of this world will be a constant temptation to distract you from enduring the hardness of making disciples. Satan will also attempt to stop you from fulfilling the Great Commission with your life.

2 Timothy 2:2-4; 1 Peter 5:8

DISCUSSION:

How are you fulfilling the Great Commission with your life right now?

Have you been approaching these lessons as just another Bible study, or as a means of preparation to enable you to make disciples with your life?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What are the two main requirements for fulfilling the Great Commission?

- a. _____
- b. _____

2. According to 2 Timothy 2:2, what six areas should you focus on when meeting with your disciple?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

3. What are the four goals of discipleship? How would you say you are doing in accomplishing those goals in your life?

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

4. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Read *1 Thessalonians 3:1-3*. The Apostle Paul wanted to make sure that the new church in Thessalonica would last, so he sent Timothy there to disciple them. What are the different character qualities that Paul mentions about Timothy that qualify him to go and make disciples in Thessalonica?

Read *1 Thessalonians 4:1*. What did the Apostle Paul beseech and exhort the Thessalonian church to do with the discipleship they received? Do you think it is your responsibility to do the same? What are the next steps you are trusting God to lead you to take within these next few years?

What are the two greatest lessons the process of discipleship has taught you?
