

Foundations

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Introduction

This manual is designed to bring Christians into a solid foundation in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not written in book form, but in outline form. The reason for this is simple: the desire for this volume is that it would help you get into the Word itself to see what it has to say about God and His ways.

The questions are in two parts. The first set, “Important Points,” are designed to help you remember specific truths about the scripture. The second set of questions, “Personal Application,” is designed to help you apply the truths of these scriptures to your own life. You should first of all go through each study thoroughly before looking at the questions. Then go through the study again to answer the “Important Points,” being careful to use scripture references. Finally, only a brief review of the major headlines is needed to answer the “Personal Application.”

In using this manual you should go through point by point with your Bible open. You should look up all the scripture references and mark the most outstanding ones to your own life with a pen. The back of each page was left blank for you to use as a place to write notes.

Summed up in one word, the Christian life can be defined as relationship. It first begins with God loving us and making relationship with Him possible. When we accept that offer and desire to walk with Him, the second stage of relationship is completed. The third aspect of relationship can be seen as horizontal—that is, between people.

This manual will explore the extension of God’s plan of salvation to man in the first section. The second section will deal with how a man cultivates relationship with God. The last section on the church and evangelism deals with relationship between people.

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Part I—Laying the Foundations

Introduction

In preparation for this first section it must be realized that salvation is based first and foremost in the love of God. John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Notice it was the love of God that motivated Him to send His Son into the earth so that we might be able to move in relationship with Him. This love of God is the same love that a father has for his own sons. That is evidenced in His title of “Father” and the title which we receive as “sons of God.”

The love of God is further revealed through Jesus as He actually humbled Himself and became a man. Even more, He died for us, and the Bible declares that this is the greatest love possible (Jn. 15:13). So, we can only rejoice in the love of God which reached down and delivered us from darkness into the fellowship (or relationship) of His marvelous light.

In this section you will study the teachings called, in Hebrews 6:1-2, the foundations of Christ, “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” This scripture shows that in order for us to reach maturity, we must receive and act upon the principles taught within these subjects. Hopefully, through the study of these scriptures you will see more fully what your relationship to God is based on, the work of the cross, and where you now stand “in Christ.”

You will first cover the topic of salvation, and then the “foundation”: repentance, faith, baptisms (plural, both baptism in water and baptism in the Holy Ghost), laying on of hands, resurrection from the dead, and eternal judgments.

Get your Bible and pen and enjoy the following studies.

Laying the Foundations—Part 1 Salvation

“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.” (Jn. 3:16). Mankind is separated from God. This is because God is holy and man has chosen to be sinful. Light and darkness do not have fellowship. But, because of God’s love for mankind, He has reached out His infinite hand to finite man and offered him the opportunity to be redeemed. God sent His Son Jesus to pay for man’s sin by dying on the cross. Then, He conquered death so that whoever believes in Jesus is not just forgiven, but has eternal life.

IMPORTANT POINTS

From the “Introduction,” what process should be followed before answering the questions after each Bible study?

I. Man’s Need to Be Saved Man is separated from God because of sin. There is an immutable law of God, “...the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” (Eze. 18:4)

A. Man is Sinful.

1. Sin was introduced into mankind through Adam. (Gen. 3:17; Rom. 5:12)
2. All have sinned. (Rom. 3:23; Ps. 53:3; Pr. 20:9)
3. What is sin?
 - a. Sin is deliberately not doing God’s known will. (Ja. 4:17)
 - b. Sin is doing your own thing without seeking God. (Rom. 14:23)
 - c. Sin is selfishness. (1 Cor. 10:23-24; Ph. 2:4)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Is man sinful?

B. Man faces Death. The wages of sin is death. (Rom. 6:23)

1. Death to your body. (Ac. 5:1-11; 1 Cor. 15:54-56)
2. Death to your soul. (Ja. 5:20; Eze. 18:4, 17, 18)

3. Death to your spirit. (Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the full wages of sin.

II. God's Part in Salvation Salvation is the restoration of life to people walking in death, separated from God. In every instance, it is God who gets all the glory for salvation. "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Selah," (Ps. 3:8)

A. Salvation is of God.

1. God the Father planned it and sent the Gift. (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 6:23;
2. Cor. 9:15)
3. Jesus did it (God the Son). (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 6:23; Heb. 12:2)
4. The Holy Spirit draws people to salvation. (Ac. 2:37; Heb. 3:7-8, 10:15; Jn. 16:7-11)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the work of the Trinity in providing salvation.

B. Salvation is the Door. God has provided the door for man to come back into relationship with Him.

1. It is through the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:21; Jn. 10:9)
2. It is by grace (grace comes from the Greek word Charis: which means "free gift"). (Eph. 2:8)
3. The blood of Jesus is the payment for our sins. (Rom. 5:9; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 9:14)

III. Man's Part in Salvation God has already purchased man's salvation. The only thing man must do to receive it is believe. "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," (Eph. 2:8-9)

A. Repenting. Repentance prepares the heart for true faith.

1. The message John the Baptist preached to prepare people for Jesus was “Repent.” (Matt. 3:2; Lu. 3:3-4)
2. The prodigal son is an example of repentance. (Lu. 15:11-32)
 - a. He came to himself. (vs. 17)
 - b. He realized his sin. (vs. 18)
 - c. He was humble. (vs. 19)
 - d. He returned to his father. (vs. 20)
3. The word repent means to change one’s mind and purpose.
4. False repentance does not lead to salvation.
 - a. Judas is an example. (Matt. 27:3)
 - b. This repentance was not a change of direction; it was just a pain of mind. (II Cor. 7:10)

B. Believing. Salvation is through faith.

1. Man must believe. (The words ‘believe’ and ‘faith’ are from the same Greek word.) (Jn. 3:16; Ac. 10:43; Rom. 3:22)
2. Works do not produce salvation. (Titus 3:5; Rom. 3:20)

C. Confessing. Confession follows true faith.

1. We must confess. (Rom. 10:9; Matt. 10:32; I Jn. 4:15)
2. Examples of confession:
 - a. Peter (Matt. 16:16)
 - b. Nathanael (Jn. 1:49)
 - c. The Ethiopian Eunuch (Ac. 8:37)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Repentance, faith and confession are three basic steps resulting in salvation. Expound on each.

D. Receiving. When you ask God for forgiveness, you receive it.

1. God is faithful to forgive. (I Jn. 1:9; Heb. 5:12)
2. Forgiveness is provided for through the Cross. (Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:22)
3. Repentance precedes forgiveness. (Lu. 3:3; Ac. 5:31)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the full wages of receiving Jesus’ life.

IV. The Results of Salvation Salvation is the restoration of life flowing through every area of a person's being. Jesus said, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," (Jn. 10:10).

- A. Salvation is Life. Jesus brought this life.
 - 1. Spiritual life.
 - a. Spiritual life is a present reality. (I Cor. 15:45; I Pet. 4:6)
 - b. Spiritual life is forever. (Jn. 11:25-26)
 - 2. Physical life.
 - a. Healing is for now. (I Pet. 2:24)
 - b. We will receive a new body. (I Cor. 15:51-54; I Th. 4:14-16)
 - 3. Life in your mind and emotions (soul). (I Cor. 2:16; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:23-4)
- B. Salvation is Progressive. (Isa. 12:3)
 - 1. You are born again and sealed to redemption. (Eph. 4:30; Jn. 1:13; I Pet. 1:9)
 - 2. You are being renewed and conformed to the image of Christ. (II Cor. 3:18)
 - 3. One day salvation will be completely realized. (Ph. 1:6; Rom. 8:19-21)

IMPORTANT POINTS

How is salvation progressive?

V. You Can Know that You Are a Partaker of Salvation Many people think that you cannot be assured of salvation. God's promise of salvation is absolute to everyone that believes. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God..." (Rom. 8:16)

- A. Assurance from the Word. The Word of God promises us salvation.
 - 1. God's Word does not lie. (Heb. 6:18; Ps. 19:9, 89:34)
 - 2. The Word of God specifically promises salvation. (II Pet. 1:4; Jn. 1:12)
- B. Assurance from the Spirit. The Spirit of God bears witness that we are saved.
 - 1. We know that we are in Him because of the Spirit He gave us. (I Jn. 3:24, 4:13)
 - 2. The Spirit is a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. (II Cor. 5:5; Eph. 1:13-14)
 - 3. At times the Spirit wells up within to call on the Father. (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Many people are accustomed to only going by feelings, but what other means does God use to give assurance of salvation?

VI. Point of Decision God provided salvation for man on the cross. If any man believes on the Lord Jesus, he shall be saved. Salvation is not just for now, but forever. Salvation brings life to the whole person — spirit, soul, and body. We grow daily in our salvation, understanding more of God’s provision as we mature.

“And if the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, [then] He who raised up Christ from the dead will also restore to life your mortal (short lived, perishable) bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you... [For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him – that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding [the wonders of His Person] more strongly and more clearly. And that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection [that lifts me] out from among the dead [even while in the body]. Not that I have now attained [this ideal] or am already made perfect but, I press on to lay hold of [grasp] and make my own, that for which Christ Jesus, the Messiah, has laid hold of me and has made me His own...straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward,” (Rom. 8:11; Ph. 3:10-14, in the Amplified Bible).

PERSONAL APPLICATION SALVATION

1. How do I receive God’s salvation?

2. What changes can I expect in my life as a result of my salvation?

3. At this point of decision in my life, I commit myself to continuing my relationship with Jesus by progressively...

Laying the Foundations—Part 2

Repentance from Dead Works

“No man 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,” (Matt. 6:24). It is impossible to please two people at the same time if they are wanting you to act in two separate, opposite ways. So it is in the life of the Spirit. Satan wants you to continue serving yourself and death. God wants you to serve righteousness and life. You can only choose to walk in one of these kingdoms at a time. In order to serve righteousness, you must leave the land of “self-service.” There must be a change in your heart resulting from true sorrow for selfishness. Then, and only then, are you able to put your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus for salvation.

I. Repentance is the Message of the New Testament Repentance was the message preached which ushered in the kingdom of God. “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, ‘Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,’” (Matt. 4:17).

- A. Some Definitions. What does the word repentance mean?
1. Metanoeo – To change one’s mind and purpose (Strong’s).
 2. Shub – To return (Strong’s).
 3. To turn from evil and to turn to the good (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament).
 4. In religious usage, to feel so contrite over one’s sins as to change, or decide to change, one’s ways; be penitent, (Webster’s).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What does the word repentance mean?

- B. Authorities. Many different people called for repentance.
1. John the Baptist. (Matt. 3:1-2)
 2. Jesus. (Matt. 4:17)
 3. Peter. (Ac. 2:38)
 4. God. (Ac. 17:30)
 5. Paul. (Ac. 26:19-20)

IMPORTANT POINTS

In what situations did different people call for repentance?

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- C. An Example. The prodigal son is an example of repentance. (Lu. 15:11-32)
 - 1. He came to his senses. (vs. 17)
 - 2. He made a decision to return. (vs. 18)
 - 3. He acted on his decision. (vs. 20)

 - D. False Repentance. False repentance is not fruitful.
 - 1. The Pharisees were bringing forth bad fruit, showing false repentance. (Matt. 3:7-10)
 - 2. Judas had a false repentance. (Matt. 27:3-5)
 - a. Here the word repent, metamellomai, means pain of mind or troubled; it has nothing to do with moral change.
 - b. This kind of repentance (self pity) led to suicide.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is false repentance?

- E. True Repentance. True repentance comes from God. (II Tim. 2:25; Ac. 11:18).
 - 1. God's goodness draws us to true repentance. (Rom. 2:4; Hos. 11:4; Eph. 2:7-8)
 - 2. Godly sorrow brings true repentance (as opposed to self-centered sorrow). (II Cor. 7:9-10; Ps. 34:18, 51:17)

- F. Repent from What? Repentance is from dead works, or sins. (Heb. 6:1)
 - 1. Sin is selfishness, or doing your own thing. (Gal. 5:17; Rom. 8:5-8)
 - 2. Sins of omission are not doing what God told you. (Lu. 11:42; Ja. 4:17)
 - 3. Sin is transgression of the law. (I Jn. 3:4).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is sin?

II. Repentance is a Decision to Change Repentance is to completely change addresses. “And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the Lord their God,” (Ex. 29:46). When you repent, you are deciding to no longer live under your own rule of Satan. Instead, you are going to live under the dominion and kingdom of the Lord Jesus.

- A. The Decision. You have to choose which kingdom you are going to live in.
 - 1. The choice is yours. (Josh 24:15)
 - 2. You cannot live in both kingdoms. (Matt. 6:24; I Ki. 18:21)
 - 3. No decision is decision. (Matt. 12:30; Mk. 9:40)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Expound on the differences of living in the kingdom of God rather than the kingdom of Satan.

- B. The Changes. A new kingdom has a new King.
 - 1. Jesus is King and Lord. (I Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; Ac. 17:7; Jn. 1:49)
 - a. Kings are to be obeyed. (I Pet. 2:13; Jer. 7:23; Ac. 5:29)
 - b. Even nature obeys King Jesus. (Mk. 4:41; Lu. 8:25, 17:6)
 - c. Obedience involves three steps: listen, hear and obey. (Ja. 1:22-25)
 - 2. Jesus is a King who rules in love and righteousness.
 - a. Love. (Jn. 3:16; I Jn. 4:16, 19; Rom. 5:8)
 - b. Righteousness. (Heb. 1:8; II Thes. 1:5; II Tim. 4:8)
 - 3. Jesus wants to reproduce His character in His nation. (II Pet. 1:4)
 - a. Love. (Ja. 2:8; Mk. 12:29-31; I Jn. 4:7)
 - b. Righteousness. (I Pet. 2:9; II Tim. 2:19)
 - 4. The Kingdom is not with observation. You cannot see it with the natural eye.
 - a. It is in men’s hearts. (Lu. 17:20-21; Jn. 3:5-8)
 - b. It is a kingdom of men with changed character. (Rom. 14:17; Gal. 5:19-24; Ja. 3:17)

III. Repentance Prepares the Heart for Faith. “Therefore say thou unto them, ‘thus saith the Lord of Hosts, turn ye unto Me, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts.’” (Zech. 1:3). Repentance causes us to humble ourselves before God and look to Him for help. It is as we turn to Him that we can see His ability and trust in Him.

- A. Seeing God. Salvation is by faith. The word faith means, “to put your trust in and rely upon.” (Rom. 1:16-17)
 - 1. It is not by works. (Eph. 2:8)
 - 2. Faith is based on knowing God’s promises. (Rom. 10:17)
- B. Seeing yourself. Repentance turns the heart away from self and sin, so that you might look to God for salvation.

1. Repentance has two turnings: away from the sin and toward God. (Ja. 4:6-10; II Cor. 7:10; Eze. 18:21-31)
2. Repentance involves recognizing your condition. (II Cor. 7:9-10; Isa. 6:5)
3. Recognizing and confessing your condition puts you in a position to receive. (Matt. 5:3-6; Jn. 16:20)
4. As you look to God from this position of humility and sorrow, you will put your faith in Him. (Ps. 72:12; Lu. 5:31; Ps. 62:1-2)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Explain the two “turnings” of repentance.

IMPORTANT POINTS

How does repentance prepare the heart for faith?

IV. Point of Decision Repentance is a decision to change and allow Jesus to rule your life rather than self. It is this change of heart which is the ground-work from which true faith can spring. Many people try to use their “faith” to build on the old self life. However, faith can only be used to build lives that are under the authority of the King of Kings. You must change from “self-rule” in order to go on in the Kingdom.

Repentance is an attitude as well as an act. The Christian life begins with repentance, but must also continue with an attitude of repentance. This could be called a humble spirit or one who is “poor in spirit.” Maintaining this attitude of brokenness makes us teachable and allows both God and those around us to point out sin in our lives and thus direct us again toward the cross.

PERSONAL APPLICATION—REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

1. How do I fit the role of “The Prodigal Son?”

2. What is happening to my heart (my inner man) when I repent?

3. At this point of decision in my life, I recognize the necessity to submit to Jesus as my daily King, and I see a need for a deeper work of repentance in the areas of...

Laying the Foundations—Part 3

Faith Toward God

“Without faith it is impossible to please God, for everyone that comes to Him must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him,” (Heb. 11:6). The life of a Christian is based solely in his trust of God. The difference between Christianity and every other religion is the “faith factor.” All other religions teach that if you work hard enough, you will attain to their idea of heaven. Christianity teaches that we receive our admittance to God by putting our faith in Him. This is the strength of being a Christian, trusting in God rather than in our own abilities. Then, we begin to produce good works of faith. Working hard does not produce Christ-likeness in our lives, Christ in our hearts by faith produces His nature in us. More specifically, we believe that the work Jesus did on the cross is what purchased our salvation. We cannot add to that in any way. He has done it, we believe it.

- I. What is Faith? Faith is knowing in your heart, without any doubt, that what you are believing for will happen. “now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen,” (Heb. 11:1).

A. Scriptural Definition.

1. Faith is the substance of things hoped for.
 - a. The Greek word translated substance means “a substance which is real, a foundation, a substructure, a placing under.”
 - b. Hope is different from faith (hope is directed toward the future and is primarily in the heart, while faith is in the present).
 - c. Faith gives substance now. Mk. 11:24.
2. Faith is the evidence of things not yet seen.
 - a. The Greek word translated evidence means “a proof, a conviction, that by which a thing is tested or proved; a courtroom term dealing with evidence presented in a case.”
 - b. This faith, which is offered as evidence, is based in the Word of God. Rom. 10:17.
 - c. You cannot see faith, but you know it is there. Rom. 4:17-20; Jn. 20:25-29, 11:40.

B. Usage Definition.

1. Strong’s Concordance—Persuasion, i.e., credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), especially reliance upon Christ for salvation.
2. Webster’s—Unquestioning belief; unquestioning belief in God, religion, etc.; complete trust, confidence, or reliance, as children usually have faith in their parents.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is faith?

II. The Foundation for Faith Faith cannot be based on the philosophy of man, or what a person thinks up. It must be based on the Word of God. “now faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God,” (Rom. 10:17).

A. The Bible’s Integrity. The Word of God is something solid to put your faith in.

1. God cannot lie. Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2.
2. God will not break His promises. Ps. 89:34; Nu. 23:19.
3. God’s Word is settled forever. Ps. 119:89; Matt. 4:4, 24:35.

B. The Bible’s Authority. The Bible is the Word of God.

1. Men of God spoke and wrote it. Lu. 1:3-4; Rev. 1:2; Ex. 34:27.
2. They spoke and wrote by the inspiration of God. 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21; Rev. 1:1-3.

C. The Bible’s Examples. Hearing the Word of God brings faith. Rom. 10:17; Lu. 8:15; Jn. 20:30-31. Examples of this fact include:

1. Abraham. Heb. 11:8.
2. David. Ps. 106:12, 119:30.
3. New Testament believers. Ac. 4:4.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Give several scriptural references to show why the Bible is something solid to put your faith in.

III. Faith receives God’s Gift of Salvation. Faith is the channel by which we receive what God has already given to us. The word grace means gift. “for by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God,” (Eph. 2:8).

A. Some Definitions.

1. Strong’s—Graciousness (as gratifying) of manner of act.
2. Vine’s—On the part of the bestower, the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds.
3. Webster’s—In theology, the unmerited love and favor of God toward man; divine influence acting in man to make him pure and morally strong.

B. Salvation by Grace. It is through faith that we receive salvation by grace. Through means “the channel of an act,” and by means “the cause.”

1. God has extended grace for salvation. Ac. 15:11; Rom. 11:6.
2. That grace is the gift of Christ dying on the cross. Rom. 5:15, 3:24.
3. God has extended that grace to all men. Titus 2:11.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is the definition of grace?

IV. Faith in What? Salvation is by putting your faith in what God has done as it is revealed in the Bible. “But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in the heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved,” (Rom. 10:8-9). The Bible says that we are saved by believing in Jesus.

A. Works are Futile. You cannot get saved by works.

1. You cannot do anything in the flesh to get saved. Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16.
2. All of our endeavors amount to nothing. Isa. 64:6.
3. Abraham is an example of faith over works.
 - a. It wasn't by works. Rom. 4:13.
 - b. It was by faith. Gen. 15:6.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why can't a person be saved as a result of only doing good works?

B. Trust is Essential. You must trust God for your salvation.

1. The Word tells us God will save us by faith. 2 Tim. 3:15; Rom. 10:8; Hab. 2:4.
2. Christ is already our righteousness. Phil. 3:9; Rom. 10:3-4.
3. If we will just believe in Christ, we will be saved. Rom. 10:9-11; Jn. 20:31, 3:15, 5:24.

C. The Blood Shows Grace. The grace (or gift) that brought salvation was Jesus dying on the cross and being resurrected.

1. The sacrifice on the cross purchased our salvation. Eph. 1:19-20.
2. The blood paid for our sins, and we put our faith in it. Rom. 3:25; 1 Pet. 1:18-19.

3. So faith for salvation is simply believing that we are forgiven and saved through Jesus' shedding of blood.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the gift that brought salvation.

- V. Living By Faith After you are saved through faith in the cross, you must live by faith. "now the just shall live by faith. But if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him," (Heb. 10:38).

- A. Trusting. We cannot do anything in the flesh; we must trust God in everything.
1. It is sin to do something without faith. Rom. 14:23.
 2. We cannot please God outside of faith. Heb. 11:6.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why is it impossible to live the Christian life without continuing in faith?

- B. Releasing. Victory in your life is through faith in God's provision. This faith releases one from the attraction of the world.

1. Our faith makes us overcomers. 1 Jn. 5:4.
2. Examples of overcomers by faith:
 - a. Three Hebrew captives. Dan. 3:17.
 - b. Caleb. Josh. 14:6-12
 - c. Paul. Ac. 27:25.
 - d. Many others. Heb. 11:1-40.

- C. Resisting. Faith is the substance that resists the Devil. 1 Pet. 5:9.

1. Satan's attacks are aimed to destroy faith. Lu. 22:32.
2. Faith is maintained by the word of our testimony. Rev. 12:11.

- D. Activating. Faith works by love. Gal. 5:6.

1. This faith assures success. 2 Chron. 20:20.
2. Faith is a fundamental duty. Jn. 6:20-29.
3. It is essential in prayer. Ja. 1:5-6.
 - a. We locate His promises in the Word.

- b. The conditions attached to the promise must be met.
- c. Actively claim the promise for the glory of God, that He might be exalted, and not for our own lusts. Ja. 4:3.

IMPORTANT POINTS

List and explain some facts about faith.

VI. **Faith Produces** Faith will produce good works in your life. “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also,” (Ja. 2:26).

A. Obedience. Faith produces obedience.

- 1. This is for the glory of His name. Rom. 1:5.
- 2. Abraham is our example. Heb. 11:8-10

B. Good Works. Faith produces good works.

- 1. Faith without works is dead. Ja. 2:20.
- 2. That which is of faith brings forth true life. Isa. 6:3; Ps. 125:1.
- 3. After having repented from a life of dead works (sin), we put our faith in God which brings a life of good works. Heb. 6:1.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe in detail what true faith produces.

VII. **Point of Decision** Faith is the channel we use to receive the gift (or grace) that God has already given us. As we hear the Word of the Gospel telling us that Jesus died for our sins, we receive it by faith. That grace we received goes on to cause us to live a life of faith, which in turn produces good works, victory over sin, and answers to prayer. As faith takes our eyes off this present world and causes us to focus on things above, our dependency will rest more and more in Him.

PERSONAL APPLICATION – AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHURCH

1. Is my faith resting upon the Bible?

2. My overall purpose of being a part of the body of Christ includes....

3. When has faith produced obedience and good works in my life?

4. At this point of decision, I desire to receive all of God's graces through having faith in the Lord and His ability, and so I ask Him to....

Laying the Foundations—Part 4a

Baptism in Water

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” (Gal. 3:27). Baptism in water is one of the two outward sacraments that Jesus commanded that we observe (the other is communion). Baptism is the first step of obedience we take as Christians. It not only shows our obedience outwardly, but it also does a spiritual work on our inward man. It can be compared to circumcision in the Old Testament and is the outward sign of an inward truth. Any person who has truly been born again will want to be baptized.

I. John’s Baptism John the Baptist, the immediate forerunner of Jesus, baptized unto repentance. This was not full Christian baptism, but prepared the hearts of men to receive Jesus. “And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,” (Lu. 3:3)

A. Some Definitions. We will see that to be baptized is to be dipped into and covered with water.

1. The Greek word, baptisma, means to immerse in a liquid, immersion (Strong’s).
2. The Latin word means a dipping in (Webster’s).
3. A derivative of this word is used in the following Scriptures:
 - a. Ac. 16:33 (dip).
 - b. Jn. 13:26 (dipped).
 - c. Mk. 14:20 (dip).
4. Bapto means to cover wholly with fluid (Strong’s).
5. Baptizo is to make fully wet (Strong’s).
6. John baptized at a place with plenty of water. Mk. 1:5.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What do the words for baptism mean?

B. Purposes. What was the purpose of John’s baptism?

1. To prepare the way of the Lord. Mk. 1:3
2. A baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Mk. 1:4; Matt. 3:11
3. An outward confession of sins. Mk. 1:5.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What was the purpose of John’s baptism?

C. A Distinction. John's baptism was not full Christian baptism. It was a transition between the Old Testament and the New. Ac. 19:1-2.

1. People were re-baptized into Christ later on. vs. 5.
2. They also later received the Holy Ghost associated with baptism. vs. 6.

II. Christian Baptism Christian Baptism is an identification with Christ. It shows outwardly what has happened in your heart and seals you to that work. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death," (Rom. 6:3)

A. Conditions. What conditions prepare a person for baptism?

1. Being taught the simple Gospel (notice there is teaching before and after baptism). Matt. 28:19-20.
2. Repentance must precede baptism. Ac. 2:37-38.
3. You must believe in Christ. Mk. 16:15-16; Ac. 8:36-38.
4. Repentance and faith produce a good conscience toward God. I Pet. 3:21.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What conditions prepare a person for baptism?

B. What is the spiritual significance of baptism? Rom. 6:1-7.

1. It is a death and burial to sin; the old man is crucified. Rom. 6:3-4, 11-12, 14.
2. It is a resurrection unto newness of life; our spirit is alive to Christ. Rom. 6:4-5, 8:10.
3. It is a type of circumcision by the Spirit.
 - a. Every male Jew was circumcised on the eighth day in the Old Testament. Lev. 12:3.
 - b. Circumcision was a token of the covenant. Gen. 17:11.
 - c. The uncircumcised were cut off. Gen. 17:14.
 - d. This circumcision is a spiritual cutting away of the flesh in the New Testament. Col. 2:11.
 - e. It also points to a resurrection with Him. Col. 2:12.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Elaborate on the Scriptures showing baptism as a death to sin and a resurrection to life...

C. Types. There are two Old Testament types that help explain baptism.

1. Passing through the Red Sea.
 - a. Paul says this is a type of baptism. 1 Cor. 10:1-2.
 - b. The children of Israel had been in bondage to the Egyptians (compare to the flesh). Ex. 13:3.
 - c. They had to pass through the water (compare to baptism). Ex. 14:16.
 - d. The Egyptians were washed away (compare to flesh). Ex. 14:27-28.
2. Crossing the Jordan River. Josh. 5:1-9.
 - a. Once again they passed through the water. vs. 1.
 - b. The first thing they did after crossing over was to circumcise every male. vs. 8.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Explain why Israel's passing through the Red Sea is similar to New Testament baptism...

D. Jesus. He is our example. Matt. 3:13-17.

1. Jesus submitted to baptism. vs. 13.
2. He did it to fulfill all righteousness. vs. 15.
3. God's approval came after baptism. vs. 16-17.

IMPORTANT POINTS

How is Jesus our example?

E. Questions. The Five "W's" and an "H" are presented.

1. Who? Every believer should be baptized. Ac. 16:32-34.
2. What? Baptized unto his death and resurrection. Rom. 6:1-8.
3. When? Immediately after confession. Ac. 19:17-18, 16:14-15, 33.
4. Where? Wherever you can find enough water. Ac. 8:36-39.
5. Why? To fulfill all righteousness. Matt 3:15
6. How? By immersion, Jn. 3:23.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Should everyone be baptized? When?

III. Point of decision From this short study we can see that baptism is the natural spiritual consequence of believing and repenting. We will want to participate in this outward act which seals us publicly by the Spirit to the circumcision not made with hands, but by God. It is the cutting away of the flesh and the resurrection of life. By baptism we are buried with Christ and risen with Him. When this glorious commandment comes to our ears, the Spirit within will cry with the Ethiopian eunuch, “What doth hinder me to be baptized?” (Ac. 8:35).

PERSONAL APPLICATION – Baptism in Water

1. What happens to my inner man when I am baptized?

2. At this point of decision, I desire to follow Jesus by being baptized so that...

Laying the Foundations—Part 4b

Baptism in the Holy Spirit

One of the most exciting promises given to the believer is found in Acts 1:5, “For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” In the book Joel it is prophesied that the Spirit would be poured out on all flesh, and that people would see visions, dream dreams and prophesy. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit into our lives brings us into supernatural power, and to be witnesses unto Jesus. The Twentieth Century has seen the restoration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on many Christians. It is a truth to be experienced by every person.

- I. The Promised Gift The promise of the Holy Spirit was given through the Bible and was directed to all people. It is God’s desire that we all be filled (baptized) with the Spirit. “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” (Ac. 2:39)

A. Promised by Authorities. The baptism in the Holy Spirit was promised by several authorities.

1. God the Father. Lu. 11:13
2. Jesus. Jn. 14:16-17
3. The Old Testament
4. The New Testament.
 - a. In all four gospels. Matt. 3:11-12; Mk. 1:8; Lu. 3:16; Jn. 1:33
 - b. In Acts. Ac. 1:8; 2:33

IMPORTANT POINTS

Who promised the baptism in the Holy Ghost?

B. Promised to Everyone.

1. It is for all flesh. Joel 2:28
2. Paul desired everyone to speak in tongues. 1 Cor. 14:5

II. The Purpose of the Gift The purpose of the baptism is multifaceted. However, the foundation of each purpose is to glorify Jesus. “He [the Spirit of truth] shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.” (Jn. 6:11)

A. Witnessing. The ability to witness will increase. “You shall receive power...to be witnesses...” (Ac. 1:8)

1. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin. Jn. 16:8
2. As a result of Peter’s witness at the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit, 3,000 were added to the church. Ac. 2:41

3. A great revival broke out in Ephesus after twelve were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Ac. 19:6-10
4. The Spirit gives us direction of where to go and what to say. Ac. 8:29, 10:19-20; Lu. 12:11-12

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe two accounts of the ability to witness increasing as a result of the baptism in the Spirit.

- B. Purging. The Spirit purges you. He is called the Holy Spirit.
1. God’s holiness is pictured as a consuming fire. Heb. 12:29; Ex. 13:21-22
 2. He shall baptize you with purging fire. Matt. 3:11-12
 3. Tongues of fire appeared on the day of Pentecost. Ac. 2:14
 4. It’s by walking in the Spirit that we daily overcome sin. Rom. 8:1-4; Gal 5:16

IMPORTANT POINTS

Fire is often symbolic of a purifying work. How does the baptism relate to fire?

- C. Communicating. It will help your devotional life.
1. Supernatural help will flow in prayer. Rom. 8:26; Eph. 6:18; Jude 20
 2. You will have a greater release in praise and worship. Eph. 5:18-19; 1 Cor. 14:15-16
 3. Understanding of the scriptures will be increased through the Spirit’s ministry. Jn. 6:63, 14:26; 1 Thes. 1:5

IMPORTANT POINTS

What help can be found in the Word, prayer and worship by receiving the baptism?

- D. Gifts. You are opened up to a greater measure of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit to develop your ministry. 1 Cor. 12:8-11

1. The word of wisdom. vs. 8
 2. The word of knowledge. vs. 8
 3. Faith. vs. 9
 4. Gifts of healing. vs. 9
 5. The working of miracles. vs. 10
 6. Prophecy. vs. 10
 7. Discerning of spirits. vs. 10
 8. Diverse kinds of tongues. vs. 10
 9. Interpretation of tongues. vs. 10
- E. Fruit. You are opened up in a greater measure in the nine fruit of the Spirit to develop your character. Gal. 5:22-23
1. Love. vs. 22
 2. Joy. vs. 22
 3. Peace. vs. 22
 4. Longsuffering. vs. 22
 5. Gentleness. vs. 22
 6. Goodness. vs. 22
 7. Faith. vs. 22
 8. Meekness. vs. 23
 9. Temperance. vs. 23

III. Speaking in Tongues Speaking in tongues is used in several ways by people baptized in the Holy Spirit. Not only is it given as a prayer language, but it is also used as a means to speak to the whole church. “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Ac. 2:4)

- A. Initial Evidence. Tongues are an initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (as seen from the 5 accounts in Acts).
1. The original outpouring was evidenced by tongues. Ac. 2:4
 2. Simon saw something in the Samaritan believers that made him want it. Ac. 8:18
 3. The account of Paul’s baptism in Acts does not record him speaking in tongues, but elsewhere it does. Ac. 9:17-18; 1 Cor 14:18
 4. Cornelius’ household was baptized in the Holy Spirit before being baptized in water. Ac. 11:15, 10:46
 5. The saints at Ephesus spoke in tongues and prophesied. Ac. 19:6

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

- B. Speaking to God. Tongues are for praying and praising.
1. Most speaking in tongues are used for praying at home. 1 Cor. 14:2, 18-19

2. The Spirit helps us pray. Rom. 8:26; Jude 20
3. You can praise, sing and worship in tongues. 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:18-19
4. Speaking in tongues builds you up. Jude 20; 1 Cor. 14:4

C. Speaking to the Church. Tongues are for speaking to the church.

1. This is one of the nine power gifts of the Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:10
2. There must be an interpretation in this case. 1 Cor. 14:26-28, 12:10

IMPORTANT POINTS

Explain how tongues are for at church and at home.

IV. How to Receive the Gift Being baptized in the Holy Spirit is part of your relation to God. It is not a form, so it is ministered on an individual basis. He will meet you in the best way for you.

A. Way of Receiving the Baptism.

1. Through the laying on of hands. Ac. 8:18, 19:6
2. During the united devotion of the church. Ac. 4:31
3. After individual prayer. Ac. 9:9-18
4. Corporately. Ac. 2:4
5. By a spontaneous outpouring. Ac. 10:44-46
6. The baptism can be experience during a time of devotion without the believer full understanding what has happened.

IMPORTANT POINTS

List the various ways of receiving the baptism.

B. Keys in Receiving.

1. Ask for it. Lu. 11:9-13
2. Believe that God will give it. Ja. 1:6-7
3. Open your mouth and He will fill it. Ps. 81:10
4. Submit to the Spirit. Ja. 4:7

IMPORTANT POINTS

What are some keys in receiving?

- C. An Example. Ac. 19:1-20
 - 1. Paul’s first question was, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost?” vs. 2.
 - 2. Next, they were baptized in the name of Jesus. vs. 5
 - 3. Paul laid his hands on them for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. vs. 6
 - 4. As a result, the Holy Spirit came on them. vs. 6
 - 5. They spoke in tongues and prophesied. vs. 6
 - 6. Following this, a great revival broke out in that city. vs. 18-20

V. Point of Decision The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a door that opens the believer into deeper understanding and operation to the Spirit of Christ that is abiding in him at salvation. In every recorded account, it was something that happened early in a believer’s experience. It is not some great spiritual height that they waited around for. The supernatural power of God is made readily available for everyone that will ask. “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” (Lu. 11:13)

PERSONAL APPLICATION – BAPTISM IN THE HOLY GHOST

1. What change can I expect in my life after I am baptized in the Holy Spirit?

2. After I am baptized with the Holy Spirit, what purpose is there with me speaking in tongues?

3. At this point of decision, I desire to follow God’s Word by being baptized in the Holy Ghost and...

Laying the Foundations—Part 5

Laying on of Hands

“And these signs shall follow them that believe in My name...they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” (Mk. 16:17-18). When we study the foundation of the laying on of hands, we begin to understand that God now works through believers to impart His graces. Although God works sovereignly in lives and in history, He also works specifically through His saints to minister to each other. This ministry is found both in the Old and New Testaments. It is not a game, and must not be done too hastily (1 Tim. 5:22).

I. Hands “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear,” (Isa. 59:1). The hand has always been used as a sign of ability and the extension of power, blessing or authority. God is said to “stretch out his hand” and also to work through the hands of men.

- A. The Extension of God’s Hand.
 - 1. God’s hand is all-powerful. Josh. 4:24; Ps. 89:13; Ex. 15:6/
 - 2. His hand is gracious. Ezra 7:9; Ps. 48:10; Neh. 2:18
 - 3. His hand moves to:
 - a. Lift and uphold. Ps. 37:24, 18:35; 1 Pet. 5:6
 - b. Create. Isa. 48:13, 45:12; Ps. 10:25
 - c. Curse. Ac. 13:11; Ps. 106:26
 - d. Set free. Ex. 7:5
 - e. Destroy. Deu. 2:15; 1 Sam. 5:6
 - f. Bless. Ps. 104:27-28; II Chr. 30:12

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe God’s hand and what it does.

- B. The Extension of Man’s Hand.
 - 1. God gave dominion into the hands of His warriors. 1 Sam. 23:4; Judges 6:1; Josh. 6:2
 - 2. The priests imputed sin through the laying on of hands. Lev. 3:8, 4:24
 - 3. The extension of Moses’ hand was important in the performing of miracles. Ex. 17:9-13, 7:17-21, 14:16
- C. The Extension of God’s Hand through Men. God actually works His power through men; He gives His authority, power, and blessing through Christians.
 - 1. The victory was of God yet through men’s hand. Judges 6:36-37
 - 2. Our works are now just the working of God through us. Neh. 6:9
 - 3. We are to consider that the Lord’s hand is at work today. Isa. 41:19-20; Ps. 143:5; Isa. 5:12

4. Through the apostles' hands miracles, signs, and wonders occurred. Ac. 5:12, 14:3, 19:11

IMPORTANT POINTS

Give examples of God extending His power through men.

II. Laying on of Hands for General Blessing There have been times in the Word of God where various people passed on special graces to those who received the laying on of hands.

- A. Jacob. Joseph's two sons received Jacob's (or Israel's) blessing. Gen. 48:1-20
 - 1. Jacob laid his left hand on Manasseh and his right hand on Ephraim. vs. 14
 - 2. Joseph thought Jacob had made a mistake. vs. 17-18
 - 3. Jacob knew what he was doing. vs. 19.
 - 4. Apparently the laying on of hands had a great effect, even down to which hand was laid. vs. 20
- B. King Joash (or Jehoash) was ministered to by Elisha. II Ki. 13:14-25
 - 1. Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. vs. 16
 - 2. He prophesied blessing to King Joash. vs. 17
 - 3. Joash was successful. vs. 25
- C. Jesus laid hands on little children. Mk. 10:13-16; Matt. 19:13-15
 - 1. Jesus wanted to bless the children. Mk 10:16
 - 2. The disciples felt this was unimportant. Matt. 19:13; Mk. 10:13
 - 3. Jesus corrected the disciples and prayed for the children. Mk. 10:14-15

IMPORTANT POINTS

Cite examples of men laying hands on others to impart blessing.

III. Laying on of Hands in Preparing Men for Service This should never be done for someone's private gain, but the laying on of hands in preparing men for ministry should always take place before the whole body of Christ. When everyone is present, one person may lay hands on another (Nu. 27:15-23; II Tim. 1:6), all the elders may lay hands on someone (Ac. 6:1-6, 13:1-3; 1 Tim. 4:14), and all the people may be called to prepare someone for service (Nu. 8:10). The recipient receives authority and spiritual gifts necessary to carry on the work (Nu. 27:20-21; I Time. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6).

- A. Joshua. Moses prepared Joshua for leadership. Num. 27:15-23
 - 1. God specifically chose Joshua to receive the laying on of hands. vs. 18
 - 2. Moses brought Joshua before all the people before laying hands on him. vs. 22
 - 3. Joshua received honor, authority and wisdom. vs, 20-21; Deu. 34:9
- B. Levites. The people of Israel prepared the Levites. Nu. 8:6-15
 - 1. The Levites were to be purified. vs. 6-7
 - 2. All the Israelites were assembled to place their hands on the Levites. vs. 9-10
 - 3. The Levites were then an offering to the Lord to serve in the Tabernacle. vs. 13-15
- C. Deacons. To handle areas of practical ministry, the church chose men “whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them,” (Ac. 6:6). This New Testament practice is foreshadowed in the Old Testament by Deuteronomy 1:9-17.
 - 1. Deacons should first prove themselves. 1 Tim. 3:8-10
 - 2. Their wives are to be women worthy of respect, and the deacons must manage their households well. 1 Tim. 3:11-12
 - 3. Following this biblical pattern will result in the Word of God going forth to make disciples. Ac. 6:7
 - 4. Two great men of God resulted from this practice—Stephen and Philip. Ac. 6:5, 8, 8:5

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe how the early church set aside deacons.

- D. Ministers. “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, ‘Separate for me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.’ And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.” (Ac. 13: 2-3)
 - 1. It was God the Holy Spirit that specifically chose Paul and Barnabas for service. vs. 2
 - 2. We confirm that calling through the laying on of hands. vs. 3
 - 3. Diligence and care was shown through prayer and fasting to be sure that this was what the spirit was saying. vs. 3

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe how the early church chose and prepared men to go forth.

IV. Laying on of Hands for Ministering to other People's Needs The Holy Spirit has chosen believers to be the instrument through which He works. In this area all Christians are called to lay on hands to minister to both the Body of Christ and to the World as the Spirit of God prompts. "Heal the sick, clean the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received, freely give." (Matt 10:8)

- A. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit. God uses men to impart the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. In three out of five cases of people receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, hands were laid on those receiving.
 - 1. Peter and John laid hands on Paul to impart the Holy Spirit. Ac. 8:15-17
 - 2. Ananias laid hands on Paul to impart the Holy Spirit. Ac. 9:17
 - 3. Paul then imparted the Baptism in the Holy Spirit to the Ephesian converts through his hands. Ac. 19:6

IMPORTANT POINTS

In the book of Acts, when did God use men to impart the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

- B. Healing. God uses men to impart healing to others by the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. Jesus ministered healing by the laying on of hands. Mk. 5:23, 6:5, 7:32; Lu. 4:40, 13:13
 - 2. At other times Jesus ministered healing through His touch. Matt. 8:3, 9:29, 20:34; Mk. 7:33; Lu. 22:51
 - 3. Paul followed this example of the Lord by healing through the laying on of hands. Ac. 28:8
 - 4. Every Christian who will believe can lay hands on the sick and see them recover. Mk. 16:17-18; Lu. 10:9; Jn. 14:12-14

IMPORTANT POINTS

When did God use Christians to heal others?

V. Point of Decision The ministry of the laying on of hands gets every individual involved with the ministry of the authority and powers of the Holy Spirit. We must submit to the laying on of hands for our own filling and healing, and then be ready to turn and minister that to others. In the area of authority, we must recognize that those who have been set before the church and ordained (by valid ministry) through the laying on of hands have received both authority and wisdom to lead and serve the Body of Christ.

PERSONAL APPLICATION - LAYING ON OF HANDS

1. Can God use me to impart the baptism in the Holy Ghost to someone desiring to receive?
Why?

2. Will the Lord Jesus use my hands to heal the sick of those around me?

3. At this point of decision, I desire to get involved and prepare myself to impart ministry to others by...

Laying the Foundations—Part 6

Resurrection of the Dead

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed,” (I Cor. 15:51-52). At salvation a person is birthed into eternal life. This eternal life is not just for the spirit and soul, but for the body also. No other religion even feigns to offer the resurrection of the body. As a matter of fact, no head of any other religion was able to overcome death, only Jesus. He was the first-fruits and all who are saved shall follow His pattern.

I. The Empty Grave “But now Christ has been raised from the dead,” (I Cor. 15:20). When we speak of the cross, we also must include the resurrection of Christ and what that means.

A. The Grave is Judgment. Physical death is a result of sin. Rom. 6:23.

1. From the beginning, God told man that if he chose to sin he would die. (Gen. 2:17).
2. Since the time of Adam, God has declared that every soul that sins will die. (Eze. 18:4).
3. Sin reigns in death. (Rom. 5:21).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why is there death in the world?

B. The Judgment was Paid. Jesus died physically in our place. (I Cor. 15:3-4).

1. He who knew no sin became sin for us. (II Cor. 5:21).
2. Jesus became the sacrifice for sin once for all. (Heb. 7:27).
3. When His body died we were redeemed. (I Pet. 2:24).

C. The Grave is Conquered. Because we have been bought back from death, it has no power over us. (Jn. 11:25-26).

1. His death and resurrection declared the chains of death to be broken. (I Cor. 15:54-55; Heb. 2:14-15).
2. Jesus conquered death. (II Tim. 1:10).
3. We shall follow Him in resurrection just as man has followed Adam in death. (I Cor. 15:22-23).
4. God promises resurrection.
 - a. The earth will give birth to her dead. (Isa. 26:19).
 - b. The multitudes who sleep in the dust will awake. (Dan. 12:2).
 - c. All who are in their graves will hear His voice. (Jn. 5:25-29).

IMPORTANT POINTS

How is it that death now has no power over the Christian?

II. What Happens at Death The state of those who have died is clearly revealed in scripture. Before the work of the cross, we can see the distinction between the place of the righteous dead and evil dead. However, both were bound by death in sheol, which in Hebrew is the place for the departed dead. The residence of the righteous dead has changed since the resurrection of Christ.

A. Before Jesus' Work of the Cross. A distinction is shown between the righteous and wicked in the place of death. Lu. 16:19-31.

1. The rich man went to hades. (vs. 23).
2. Hades is a place of torment. (vs. 24, 28).
3. He saw Lazarus in a place of rest, called Abraham's bosom. (vs. 23).
4. Between these two places God has fixed a great chasm which no one could cross. (vs. 26).

B. Jesus' Death. Mk. 15:37. Jesus descended into paradise, the place of the righteous dead.

1. Jesus descended into the lower parts of the earth. (Eph. 4:9).
2. He told the thief on the cross that he would be with Him in paradise. (Lu. 23:43).
3. There he encountered the spirits of the dead. (I Pet. 3:19, 4:6).
4. He rendered Satan powerless. (Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:15).
5. Nowhere does the Bible say that Jesus suffered in torment!

IMPORTANT POINTS

Where and in what state were the righteous dead before Jesus' resurrection?

C. After Jesus' Resurrection. Jesus emptied out the part of sheol known as Paradise.

1. The Spirit raised Jesus up from the dead. (Rom. 8:11).
2. He led the godly who were held in sheol as he ascended. (Eph. 4:8-10).
3. Now, when the righteous die, they go straight to heaven. (Ac. 7:55-60; II Cor. 5:6, 8; Phil. 1:21-24).

IMPORTANT POINTS

After Jesus' resurrection, what change has occurred with the righteous dead?

III. The Resurrection Occurs in Three Stages "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ first; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and authority and power," (I Cor. 15:22-24).

- A. Christ the First-fruits. The resurrection was foreshadowed in the Old Testament through the offering of the first-fruits. This offering basically involved waiving a sheaf of the first grain of the year, knowing that a full harvest would come. (Lev. 23:10-13; Nu. 28:26).
 - 1. Jesus being resurrected was the first fruit. (I Cor. 15:20-21).
 - 2. Jesus was the first-born from among the dead. (Col. 1:18).
 - 3. A handful of saints were resurrected in the first-fruits of the resurrection. (Matt. 27:50-53).
 - 4. A full harvest is coming. (I Thes. 4:16).

- B. Christ's Return. The second stage of the resurrection will occur at the return of Christ.
 - 1. One day Jesus will return. (Heb. 9:28).
 - a. No man can know the day or hour. (Matt. 24:36).
 - b. We can, however, know the season. (Matt. 32-33).
 - c. His return is at hand. (Ja. 5:8; Rom. 13:11).

 - 2. At this time the bodies of the righteous dead shall be resurrected. (I Thes. 4:14; Col. 3:4).

 - 3. The saints that are still alive will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. (I Thes. 4:16).

- C. The Third Resurrection. The evil dead will not receive their new body until much later. (Rev. 20:1-15).
 - 1. After the resurrection of the righteous, there will be a 1,000 year period of the reign of Christ in the earth. (vs. 2-3, 6).
 - 2. The righteous killed will be resurrected. (vs. 4).
 - 3. At the end of the 1,000 years Satan is cast into hell. (vs. 7, 10).
 - 4. The remaining dead are resurrected (since the righteous have already been resurrected). (vs. 11-13).
 - 5. They are judged and cast into the lake of fire. (vs. 14-15).

IV. The Nature of the Resurrected Body "But some man would say, 'How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?' Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened,

except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be,” (I Cor. 15:35-37).

- A. As Christ’s Body. Jesus will “change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body,” (Phil. 3:21). We know that Jesus had:
 - 1. The same body after His crucifixion. (Lu. 24:39).
 - 2. A body of flesh and bones, though of a different composition. (Jn. 20:26-27).
 - 3. A body that was without blood. (Jn. 19:34).
 - 4. A body with new powers. (Lu. 24:31).

- B. Other Changes.
 - 1. The natural body will be changed to a spiritual body to adapt to a different environment. (I Cor. 15:44, 50).
 - 2. It is changed from a perishable body to an imperishable one. (I Cor. 15:53).
 - 3. Our blood will no longer be the life-sustaining force, but we will receive life from the Spirit. (Rom. 8:11).

V. Point of Decision Jesus’ work on the cross has bought us a complete salvation. Salvation has not been finalized without the resurrection of our bodies. The believer looks with great joy to this day, and can testify, “I know my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another,” (Job 19:25-27).

PERSONAL APPLICATION – RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

1. What does the fact of Jesus’ grave being empty mean to me?

2. What will happen to me if I die before the Lord returns? When will my physical body be resurrected?

3. At this point of decision, I recognize the reality of my bodily resurrection with joy, and am looking forward to...

Laying the Foundations—Part 7

Eternal Judgment

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment,” (Heb. 9:27). All of mankind has an accountability to their creator. Although many live as though they will never face a day of reckoning, it will come as surely as death will come to every man. God’s judgment is based in His holiness, justice, and mercy. The cross of the Lord Jesus is a perfect example of God’s holiness being satisfied through the justice of the cross which was made available through His mercy. Justice was served because blood was shed. Mercy was shown by it being God’s own blood. As God judges each man, it will be based on that particular man’s response to God’s Word. God will show no partiality, but will treat every man equally. To the Christian judgment is joyous; to the sinner judgment is fearful.

I. Authority in Judgment “Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established that it shall be moved: He shall judge the people righteously,” (Ps. 96:10). God is the righteous judge over all the earth. His judgments are impartial and based on His Word.

A. Some Definitions.

1. Judgment. The Greek is krima.
 - a. Strong’s – a decision for or against (from a word meaning to distinguish, to decide, to try, condemn, punish).
 - b. Vine’s – primarily denotes a separating, then, a decision.
2. Righteous. The Greek is dikaiois.
 - a. Strong’s – just.
 - b. Vine’s – signifies just, without prejudice or partiality.
3. Just. The Greek is also dikaiois.
 - a. Strong’s – equitable (in character or act); by implication, innocent, holy.
 - b. Vine’s – said to God, it designates the perfect agreement between His nature and His acts (in which He is the standard for all men).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Define the words judgment, righteous, and just.

B. God the Judge. Ps. 75:7.

1. God’s judgment will be righteous. (Ps. 98:9; I Pet. 2:23; Jer. 11:20).
2. He is no respecter of persons. (Rom. 2:9-11, 10:12).
3. God has prepared His throne for judgment. (Ps. 9:7-8).

C. Jesus the Judge. God will judge through Jesus.

1. Jesus came for judgment. (Jn. 9:39).

2. Judgment was committed to Him by the Father. (Jn. 5:22-23, 26-27).
 3. He will sit upon the judgment seat. (II Cor. 5:10).
- D. The Word the Judge. The Word of God will be the standard for judgment.
1. Jesus has transferred judgment from His own person to the Word. (Jn. 12:47-48; Ps. 119:60).
 2. God's judgment is according to truth. (Rom. 2:2).
 3. God's Word will judge according to deeds. (Rom. 2:6; I Cor. 4:5; Heb. 4:12-13).
 4. Judgment will be according to light. (Rom. 1:20; Matt. 11:20-24).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the interrelationship between the Father, Jesus, and the Word dealing with judgment.

II. Judgment in History and Now In the past, it has been God who judged the nations and brought them low as they became more unrighteous (i.e. Babylon, Rome, and Germany). Presently, this same judgment can sometimes be seen in individuals' lives when they turn away from the Lord and suffer the results of their sin and evil deeds.

- A. Judgment to Nations. The history of the nation of Israel serves as an example of God's rewards and punishments based on obedience or disobedience. "And he shall judge among the nations," (Isa. 2:14).
1. The sword, famine, and plague are judgments of God. (Eze. 6:11).
 2. The land becomes the instrument of judgment. (Jer. 23:10).
 3. The nation who devours will be devoured. (Jer. 30:16).

IMPORTANT POINTS

How has God judged the nations in the past?

- B. Judgment to Individuals. We must realize that judgment is taking place in individuals' lives right now. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee," (Jer. 2:19).
1. If we sin in the flesh, we will now bear the consequences of that sin in our flesh. (Gal. 6:7-8).
 2. The individual Christian should judge himself. (I Cor. 11:31).
 3. God will judge His children. (I Cor. 11:32; Heb. 12:5-6).
 4. The church must judge those in the body. (Matt. 18:15-17;
 - a. I Cor. 5:11-13).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Is God judging individuals now in this life?

III. The Christian's Judgment Believers will not be judged as to whether they will go to heaven or hell. That judgment is clear as to their decision to follow Jesus or not. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death until life," (Jn. 5:24).

A. Believers Already Judged. The judgment of the Christian was passed (executed) on the cross.

1. His blood was the payment for the believer's sin. (Matt. 26:28).
2. We are not condemned because we have believed in Jesus and His sacrifice. (Jn. 3:18).
3. Now the believer is in a father/child relationship with God and not under God's wrath; He deals with the individual through discipline and correction. (Heb. 12:7-11; II Cor. 6:16-7:1).
4. This discipline and correction is not to judge us with the world, but to purify us while in this life. (I Cor. 11:32; Mal. 3:3-5).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why is a Christian already judged?

B. The Judgment Seat of Christ. This is a future event that tests the faithfulness and quality of each man's life in Christ. (I Cor. 3:11-15).

1. Our work and activity will be revealed with figurative light and fire.
 - a. (vs. 13).
2. There is a reward for the works that remain. (vs. 14). God inhabits this temple of people rather than a building on a corner. (Eph. 2:21-22; Ac. 17:24).
3. This is not a test of where one will spend eternity, for one may lose his works and still be saved – but only as one escaping through the flames. (vs. 15).
4. In view of His judgment seat, we have an accountability in Christ to walk in holiness. (Rom. 14:10-12; Ps. 17:3).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What happens at the Judgment Seat of Christ?

IV. The Sinner's Judgment After Satan has been cast into the lake of fire, God will then resurrect all the unrighteous dead that they might receive their judgment. This is known as the Great White Throne Judgment. "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away," (Rev. 20:11).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the judgment at the Great White Throne.

- A. The Last Judgment. Rev. 20:12-15.
 - 1. All the unrighteous dead are raised up for judgment. (vs. 13).
 - 2. Both the small and the great are judged according to what's written in the books. (vs. 12).
 - 3. Their names have not been in the book of life since the foundation of the world. (Rev. 17:8).

- B. The Final Judgment.
 - 1. The "second death" is to be sentenced to hell. (Rev. 21:8, 20:14).
 - 2. The fire of hell is literal. (Ps. 11:6; Matt. 18:9).
 - 3. God's judgment is eternal. (Mk. 3:29; II Thes. 1:9).
 - 4. It is not a place of sleep, but of torment. (Lu. 16:23).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is hell?

V. Point of Decision When we recognize the principles of this foundational teaching, “Eternal Judgment” gives us the proper perspective for this life. The Christian whose life has been fully given to serving Jesus has nothing to fear, but the unbeliever will suffer God’s full wrath. We must always be on watch, for “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night... the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,” (II Pet. 3:11-12).

PERSONAL APPLICATION – ETERNAL JUDGMENT

1. How can I learn to judge myself now as an individual to avoid God’s discipline and correction?

2. Can I consider God unjust in the sinner’s judgment even when he has sacrificed His only Son to give men the opportunity for salvation?

3. At this point of decision in my life, my work and activity would pass through the fire and out would come...

Part II: Building a Relationship with God

Introduction

Section two of this manual, as stated in the “Introduction,” is directed at helping you develop your relationship with the Lord. A key in any relationship is communication. We will study here the three main ways in which we communicate with the Lord: through His Word, prayer, and worship.

We want to look at these three topics not as many religious people do—that is, as duties. But we must see them as absolutely vital to the building up of our communication with Him, so that our relationship is increased. We draw our strength from Him as He reveals Himself through the Word, prayer, and in worship.

Therefore, it is to the utmost importance that we set aside time each day to communicate with our Father. If possible, this time may be best in the early morning, for the first hour of our day is by far the biggest. This “quiet time” set aside is vital for spiritual health and cleansing, and to find fresh direction from the Lord. However, the largest motivating factor should not be any of our own needs, great as they are, but simply the fact that God wants to meet with us.

Generally speaking, “quiet time” should consist of time spent waiting upon God until the glory of His presence seems to come over you. From waiting go on to reading and studying the Word. At this point you may want to keep a notebook to write down those things that are important to you from the Word. Now pray. Spend time worshiping and thanking the Lord for his wonderful deeds, and also intercede for yourself and others. Finally, be careful to obey those things that God has specifically spoken to you during this time, and share that message with others. Establishing this “quiet time” is not easy, but it is the natural result of allowing Jesus to be the Lord of your life.

Prayer—Part 1

Fervent Prayer

“And He said unto them, which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, ‘friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?’ And he from within shall answer and say, ‘Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed: I cannot rise and give thee.’ I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth,” (Lu. 11:5-8).

Jesus gives this simple parable in Luke 11 to teach us to pray persistently, and not to give up. This parable was specifically taught after the teaching on the Lord’s Prayer, which asks us to have our motives right (to seek God’s glory and not our own). Once this is worked into our lives, then the exhortation not to give up in what we are asking is applied.

I. Seeing the Needs The first point implied in the parable is that the host must have had an open and sensitive heart to have taken in a friend at midnight, and to have been concerned about his needs. In humility he recognizes that he did not have the ability to meet the need on his own, and he turned to his neighbor for help.

- A. A Sensitive Heart. We must open our eyes and recognize the needs of those around us. I Jn. 3:17-18.
 - 1. Jesus’ heart was broken as He saw the people’s need for God. Lu. 19:41-42; Mk. 6:34; Matt. 23:37.
 - 2. He touched the people at their point of need. Mk. 6:50; Matt. 14:14; Mk. 1:41.
 - 3. We must be willing to respond to the needs of those around us. Matt. 25:34-40; Lu. 10:33-37; Ac. 3:3-7.
 - 4. A sensitive heart will be quick to pray for others. I Tim. 2:1-4; Ja. 5:16.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is meant by having a sensitive heart in prayer?

- B. A Humble Heart. This attitude was necessary or the host would have been too embarrassed to go next door for help; or as in the case of prayer, we will be self-sufficient and not turn to God for help.
 - 1. Many men recognized their low position as compared to God’s. Gen. 18:27, 32:10; Ex. 3:11; I Sam. 9:21; I Ki. 3:7; Matt. 8:8; Mk. 1:7.
 - 2. God regards the prayer of the humble and the brokenhearted. Ps. 102:17, 51:17, 34:18.

3. It is God's movement in the lives of people that makes changes in them; it is not our own strength, or love, or willing hands. Ps. 44:3; Deu. 1:30; II Chr. 32:8.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why is a "humble heart" necessary in prayer?

II. Actively Asking The last hours in a person's life often have particular importance. Jesus' last hours with His disciples before His crucifixion were filled with invitations to pray. Jn. 14:13-14, 15:7-8, 16, 16:23-24.

- A. Verbalize Specific Requests. "Give me three loaves." When we pray specifically, we clearly see when and how God answers.
 1. Do not ask God at random for things, for every idle word will be judged. Matt. 12:36-37; Ecc. 5:2.
 2. When the blind man called out for Jesus, the Lord asked him specifically what he wanted. Mk. 10:51.
 3. Hannah prayed specifically for a son, and then could testify that the Lord answered her. I Sam. 1:27.
 4. It strengthens our faith when we see God move in response to our prayers. II Chr. 33:12-13; I Ki. 8:41-43.
- B. Examples. We have several examples of men praying for other Christians, asking God that they would:
 1. Be strengthened in the inner man to live righteously. Eph. 3:16-17a; I Thes. 3:13, 5:23.
 2. Know, experience, and move in God's love. II Thes. 3:5; Eph. 3:17b-19; I Thes. 3:12.
 3. Fully know God's will and enabled to do it. Ph. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9-12; Heb. 13:20-21; Col. 4:12.
 4. Know and trust God, and have the understanding of what He has made available. Eph. 1:17-19; Rom. 15:13.
 5. Be a fearless channel for the Holy Spirit in actively sharing the Gospel. Philemon 6; Eph. 6:19.
 6. Have good fellowship together. I Thes. 3:11; Rom. 1:10.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What were Paul and others specifically praying to God for?

III. Preparing for the Struggle Prayer is sometimes described as a fierce struggle (Col. 2:1, 4:12-13; Rom. 15:30), which the fainthearted will not finish. It took strength for the man to go next door at such a late hour. There are several steps necessary to prepare for the battle:

- A. Repent of Sin. Sin will keep God from hearing our prayers, and the work of the Cross must be appropriated. Isa. 59:1-2, 1:15-16; Ps. 66:18; Micah 3:4. Here are some common sins hindering answers to prayer:
 - 1. Selfish motives. Ja. 4:1-3.
 - 2. Not living according to any truth revealed in the Word. Pr. 21:13, 28:9; I Pet. 3:7.
 - 3. Long past disobedience unatoned for. II Sam. 21:1-14; II Sam. 12:13-20; Deu. 1:40-45; I Sam. 14:24-38.
 - 4. Lack of whole-hearted devotion and dependence. II Chr. 15:2; Zech. 7:12-13; Pr. 1:28-29; Lu. 18:9-14; Matt. 6:5.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Detail the sins listed which will hinder prayer.

- B. Be Ready for Bad Circumstances. The host was told he could not have his request, “The door is shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.”
 - 1. Our senses will often tell us that we cannot have what we ask of God, and those senses can nullify our faith. II Cor. 5:7; Mk. 5:35-36.
 - 2. Our faith must rest only on His Word. Rom. 4:19-20, 10:17.
 - 3. Thomas is an example of one who had to see before he could believe. Jn. 20:25-29.
- C. Pray Fervently. “...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,” (Ja. 5:16). This involves stirring up our spirit when praying, for it must overcome the weakness of the flesh. Mk. 14:37-38.
 - 1. Prayer is not measured by time as much as by fervency and right standing with God. Matt. 23:14; Lu. 20:47, 18:10-14.
 - 2. There are godly examples of prayer coming forth from the inner man anointed by the Holy Spirit. Ezra 10:1; Ac. 12:5; Ex. 32:31-32; Ja. 5:17-18; Esther 4:1-3; Lu. 22:44.
 - 3. Sometimes fasting is needed to stir up this prayer. Ezra 8:23.

- a. Jesus taught that prayer with fasting was necessary to bring God’s power. Matt. 17:21, 9:15.
 - b. There are definite times when God calls us to prayer and fasting. Joel 1:14; Matt. 4:1-2.
 - c. Fasting must be done as unto the Lord, and not to impress man. Matt. 6:16-18; Isa. 58:6-9.
 - d. Fasting is useless without also living right. Jer. 14:10-12; Zech. 7:4-6, 13; Isa. 58:3-5.
4. Sometimes prayer with other Christians is needed to stir up prayer ruled by the Spirit.
- a. Jesus revealed to us the power of joint prayer. Matt. 18:19-20.
 - b. The emphasis in praying together is to be of “one accord.” Ac. 1:14, 4:24; Ph. 2:2.
 - c. The church would gather together to pray about important matters. Ac. 12:5-12, 21:5.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is involved in stirring up the spirit within to really pray?

- D. Bind Satan. We must realize that prayer takes us into battle with Satan. It is in prayer that we can receive spiritual victory which can then be walked out and lived in the natural. Dan. 10:12-14.
- 1. To pray, we put on all the armor God has given us. Eph. 6:10-11, 13-18; I Th. 5:8.
 - 2. In prayer, we cease fighting with circumstances and with the attitudes and words of those around us, and we take our stand against our spiritual enemy. Eph. 6:12; II Cor. 10:3-5; Ps. 149:6-9.
 - 3. We have the necessary authority in Jesus to overcome Satan’s work. Lu. 10:19; Col. 2:10; Matt. 16:18; I Jn. 3:8.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the war that should be fought against Satan in prayer.

- E. Have Faith. Lack of faith in God will also keep our prayers from being answered. Matt. 17:19-20, 21:21-22; Mk. 11:22-24.
1. Do not go back and forth with believing and then doubting. Ja. 1:5-8.
 2. Trust in God's ability. Rom. 4:21; Lu. 1:34-38.
 3. God is willing to move on our behalf. Matt. 8:3.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the forms of doubt that will hinder prayer.

IV. Actively Waiting Many prayers go unanswered because we are willing to accept “no” as an answer from the enemy (Lu. 18:4-5). The host knocking at the friend’s door refused to give up. He was then rewarded with “as many as he needeth.”

- A. Perseverance. “And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened,” (Lu. 11:9-10). The Greek literally says to “ask and keep on asking.”
1. Jacob was determined to receive from God. Gen. 32:26.
 2. God is more than willing to give us all things in Christ. Rom. 5:6-11; Lu. 12:32; Matt. 7:11.
 3. If we do not grow weary in prayer, we will reap if we faint not. Gal. 6:9; Lu. 18:7-8; Matt. 15:22-28.
- B. God’s Abundant Provision. “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” (Lu. 11:13). By promising to give us the Holy Spirit, God has provided us with:
1. Power. Micah 3:8; Ac. 1:8; I Cor. 2:4; II Tim. 1:7; Rom. 15:19.
 2. Leading and direction. Matt. 4:1; Rom. 8:14; Lu. 2:27; Ac. 8:29, 16:7.
 3. Quickening of the Word in evangelism. Lu. 12:12; Jn. 14:26; Ac. 4:7-12.
 4. Freedom from sin. Rom. 8:1-5, 12-14; Gal. 5:16.
 5. Revelation. I Cor. 2:9-11; Ac. 11:28, 21:4.
 6. Gifts and fruit. I Cor. 12:1-8; Gal. 5:22.
 7. Help with prayer and worship. Rom. 8:26; Jn. 4:23-24.
 8. Conviction and salvation. Jn. 16:7-11; Rev. 22:17; Jn. 3:5-8.
 9. Sanctification and bring into the image of Jesus. II Th. 2:13; II Cor. 3:18; I Cor. 6:11.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe God’s abundant provision in promising the Holy Spirit.

V. Point of Decision Jesus challenges us in this parable to be fervent and persistent in prayer. It is when we realize our own inability to meet our needs of those around us that we will most diligently seek our God who can meet those needs. As long as we feel strong in ourselves, we will work and not pray. But when we catch a glimpse of the great need, our own inability to meet that need, and the vast resources and mercy of our God, we will begin to pray with diligence. We do this by allowing our inner man to be quickened by the Holy Spirit, and to keep away from sin and unbelief. As we actively wait on the Lord's promises, we find that, "No good thing does He withhold from those whose walk is blameless," (Ps. 84:11).

PERSONAL APPLICATION – FERVENT PRAYER

1. What changes can I make in my day to day living that will help me to know more of what to pray through an open and humble heart?

2. What specific steps should I take to prepare for the fierce struggle of prayer, and then to see answers to my prayers?

3. What has the Holy Spirit made available to me that I'm not taking advantage of?

4. At this point of decision, I see the need to move from “lazy prayer” to more earnest prayer quickened by the Spirit. In order to do this, I want to...

Prayer —Part 2

Life of Prayer

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for the saints,” (Eph. 6:18). One of the greatest hindrances to any relationship is a lack of communication. God, desiring that we would know Him intimately, gave us the means of prayer for knowing and communicating with Him. Phrases such as “say a prayer for me” or “did you say your prayers before you went to bed?” show the religious misconceptions people have about prayer. Prayer is not something you do to please God; it is a means of communication. You don’t get in so many hours of prayer to prove you love God. You communicate with Him through prayer to get to know Him better. The word prayer covers a wide range of communication ranging from a wish to an interview (as seen from Strong’s Concordance). This study is to help you see prayer as a way of communicating with God your Father through the Lord Jesus rather than religious duty to a God afar off.

I. The Definitions of Prayer The word prayer is used to translate a large number of Greek and Hebrew words. There are thirteen words in the Old Testament Hebrew translated as pray or prayer, and nine words in the New Testament Greek translated this way.

A. Old Testament words

1. Na – a primitive participle of incitement and entreaty
2. Palal – a primitive root, to judge (officially or mentally); by extension, to intercede, pray, entreat, judge, make supplication.
3. Luw – a wish, I would, would God that.
4. Anna – from a contraction from the words love and pray, I beseech thee.
5. Chanan – to favor, bestow, to implore.
6. Tsela – the sense of bowing, pray.
7. Paga – by importunity, come (betwixt), cause to entreat, fall upon, make intercession, entreat.
8. Athar – to burn incense in worship.
9. Siyach – to ponder, to converse with oneself and hence aloud, utter, commune, complain, declare, meditate, muse, pray, speak, talk with.
10. Shael – to inquire, to request, demand, ask counsel on, beg, borrow, lay to charge, consult, desire.
11. Chalah – to be rubbed or worn, hence to be weak, sick, afflicted, be grieved, be sorry, woman in travail, be weak, be wounded.
12. Tephillah – a hymn, a prayer.
13. Lachash – a whisper, a private prayer.

B. New Testament words

1. Proseuchomai – to pray to God, supplication, worship.
2. Deomai – to beg as binding oneself, petition, beseech, make a request.
3. Parakaleo – to call near, invite, invoke, beseech, call for.
4. Erotao – to interrogate, to request, ask, beseech, desire, entreat, pray.
5. Euchomai – to wish, to pray to God.
6. Deesis – from the word “to beg,” a prayer, request, supplication.
7. Eucho – a wish expressed as a petition to God, a prayer, a vow.
8. Enteuxis – an interview, supplication, intercession, a prayer.

9. Prosecho – to hold the mind toward, pay attention to, be cautious about, adhere to, apply oneself to, beware, be given to.

IMPORTANT POINTS

List some definitions of prayer.

II. The Call to Prayer Throughout history God has been calling men and women into fellowship with Him. Now, it is through the Lord Jesus that we can have the fullness of a relationship with our Father. Through the life of Jesus we can see more clearly the depth of that communication. “And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it to you,” (Jn. 16:23).

- A. God Desires Prayer. From the beginning, in the book of Genesis, it is established that God desires for man to communicate with Him.
 1. God would walk through the Garden of Eden to have close communion with man. Gen. 3:8-9.
 2. Both Enoch and Noah walked in close fellowship with the Lord. Gen. 5:22-24, 6:9.
 3. God appeared to Abraham and called for a relationship with him. Gen. 17:1-4.
- B. The Basis of Prayer. We now talk to God boldly through the name of Jesus because of the work of the cross.
 1. Because Jesus understands our weakness, we can come boldly into His presence. Heb. 4:15-16.
 2. It is in Jesus and through faith in Jesus that we come to the Father. Eph. 2:18.
 3. Specifically, it is because of the atonement of the cross for the remission of sins that warrants our boldness to come to God. Heb. 10:17-19.
 4. In the name of Jesus we may once again speak and talk with God. Mic. 4:5.

III. Prayers of Jesus Jesus prayed. Jesus maintained an intimate communion with God.

- A. He is found praying before major events in His life.
 1. After His baptism before the Holy Ghost descends. Lu. 3:21.
 2. The selection of the 12 apostles. Lu. 6:12-13.
 3. On the mount of transfiguration. Lu. 9:28-29.
 4. The Last Supper. Matt. 26:27.
 5. In Gethsemane. Lu. 22:39-46.
 6. On the cross at His death. Lu. 23:46.

- B. Prayer was prominent in His exercise of miracles.
 - 1. Healing the multitudes. Mk. 1:32-35.
 - 2. Feeding the five thousand. Mk. 6:41.
 - 3. Feeding the four thousand. Mk. 8:6.
 - 4. Healing the deaf mute. Mk. 7:34.
 - 5. Raising Lazarus from the dead. Jn. 11:41-42.
- C. Prayer was also heard from Jesus as He related with His disciples.
 - 1. At their confession of His Messiahship. Lu. 9:18
 - 2. On hearing their reports of evangelism. Lu. 10:21-22.
 - 3. The loving concern for Peter. Lu. 22:32.
 - 4. The great high-priestly prayer before He goes to die. Jn. 17:6-19.
 - 5. At the home of the disciples in Emmaus. Lu. 24:30.
- D. Finally, Jesus prays for the multitudes for whom He came to save.
 - 1. Before coming into conflict with the religious leaders. Lu. 5:16-17.
 - 2. In the discussion with the Greeks who came to see Him. Jn. 12:27-28.
 - 3. After sending away the five thousand who had been fed. Mk. 6:45-46.
 - 4. Blessing the little children. Mk. 10:16.
 - 5. For those who nailed Him to the cross. Lu. 23:34.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe Jesus' prayer life.

IV. The Openness of Prayer In prayer we get to know God and openly reveal our hearts to Him. Honesty is always an important part of a close relationship, so prayer should not involve some sort of superficial personality before God.

- A. Prayer for Knowing God. Moses is an example of one getting to know God through prayer. The Lord spoke face to face with Moses, denoting the intimacy through seeing each other's facial expressions. Ex. 33:11-23.
 - 1. Moses refers back to the things God has spoken to him. vs. 12.
 - 2. His request is to know God. vs. 13, 18.
 - 3. The Lord is quick to respond. vs. 14, 17.
 - 4. The result of Moses' praying was knowing more fully the name and glory of the Lord. vs. 19, 34:5-7.
- B. Prayer for Revealing our Hearts to God.
 - 1. The tax collector who openly revealed his heart went home justified before God. Lu. 18:9-14.
 - 2. This can be referred to as humbling ourselves before the Lord. II Chr. 33:11-13, 34:26-27.

3. The result of humbling ourselves before God is exaltation. Matt. 23:12; Ja. 4:10; I Pet. 5:6.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What need is there for openness in prayer?

V. Types of Prayer Throughout the day God leads us in several different types of prayer for different purposes and effects. If we stumble, He leads us toward repentance; if there is Satanic oppression, God leads us toward spiritual warfare. The results from the different types of prayer range from relieving anxiety to holding back God’s wrath.

- A. Petition. This is simply making a request before God.
 - 1. A petition was used in reference to coming before an earthly king to make a request. Est. 5:1-8; I Ki. 2:19-20.
 - 2. In the same way, we are to come before the King of the universe to make our petitions today. Dan. 6:7, 13; I Sam 1:17; Ps. 20:5.
 - 3. The effect of these petitions is God moving on our behalf. I Sam 1:27; I Jn. 5:15.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the role of petitioning in prayer.

- B. Communion. This King James Version word refers to talking things over with another.
 - 1. When two came together to discuss something, it was said that they “communed” together. Gen. 23:7-8 (KJV); I Sam. 9:25.
 - 2. We have the opportunity to have this communion with God. Ex. 25:22, 31:18; Lu. 24:15.
 - 3. Another way of seeing this is through “rehearsing” the matter before the Lord, as Samuel did. I Sam. 8:21.
 - 4. The result is a deeper understanding of the will of the Lord when He answers. I Sam. 8:22.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What are the purposes and effects of communion?

- C. Thanksgiving. In Christ we are called to abound with thanksgiving. Col. 2:7.
1. Whenever we receive good things from the Lord, it is cause for giving him thanks. Col. 1:12.
 2. However, we are still commanded to give thanks regardless of the situation. I Thes. 5:18; Col. 3:15; Eph. 5:20.
 3. We are also to give thanks in everything we do. Col. 3:17.
- D. Repentance. There are times in prayer where we seek God's forgiveness and a change of heart.
1. Repentance has a definite place in our prayer life. Hos. 14:1-2; Isa. 30:15; Jer. 31:9.
 2. God's response to our penitence is forgiveness. Isa. 55:7; I Jn. 1:9.
 3. The result is greater purity in our lives. II Tim. 2:20-21.

IMPORTANT POINTS

While repenting in prayer, what are the results?

- E. Intercession. This is standing before God on behalf of another.
1. God is looking for men who will intercede for others' unrighteousness. Isa. 59:16; Eze. 22:30.
 2. We have the opportunity today to intercede just as others have in the past. Deu. 9:25-26; I Sam. 7:5.
 3. The result can be that God's judgment will be held back. Ps. 106:23.
- F. Spiritual Warfare. This is confronting and breaking the influence of the powers of darkness.
1. We have authority to overcome all of the enemy's attack and maneuvers. Lu. 10:19; I Jn. 4:4.
 2. We are not able to carry off those that are bound by the Devil unless we first bind his power. Matt. 12:29; Isa. 42:22.

3. Spiritual warfare is carrying out our authority in prayer to bind the Devil's attempts to thwart God's purposes. Matt. 16:19, 18:18.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is spiritual warfare?

VI. Forms of Prayer Ideally, prayer begins early and alone with God when we wake up in the morning. However, it is not to end there. We can continue in prayer in many different postures, places, and methods.

A. Postures.

1. Bowing down. Ex. 34:8.
2. Kneeling. I Ki. 8:54; Ezra 9:5; Ac. 20:36.
3. On the face. Nu. 20:6; Josh. 5:14; Matt. 26:39.
4. Standing. I Ki. 8:22-23; Mk. 11:25.
5. Sitting. Ezra 9:3.

B. Places.

1. Quiet and alone. Ps. 4:4; Matt. 6:6.
2. With groups in public. Lu. 1:10.
3. Before a meal. I Sam. 9:13; Ac. 27:35.
4. With our families. Ac. 1:14; 21:5.
5. Everywhere. I Tim. 2:8.

C. Methods.

1. Eyes opened. Lu. 9:16.
2. Silent. I Sam. 1:12-15.
3. Brief. I Ki. 18:36-37; Matt. 6:7.
4. Loud. Neh. 9:4; Ac. 7:60.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the different places and methods of prayer.

VII. Continual Prayer Just as communication with a friend is constant, although it takes on different forms, we are to be in continual prayer unto and with God. “Pray without ceasing,” (I Thes. 5:17).

A. Continual Prayer Commanded.

1. The church is called to be both faithful and devoted to prayer. Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2.
2. It takes clear-mindedness and self-control to pray throughout the day. I Pet. 4:7.
3. These various types of prayer are to be made for everyone. I Tim. 2:1.

B. Continual Prayer Exemplified.

1. Jesus demonstrated a constant prayer life. Heb. 5:7.
2. The early disciples themselves were devoted to prayer. Ac. 2:42.
3. Paul said he was bound to always give thanks to God. II Thes. 1:3, 2:13.
4. He testified that he did in fact make continual prayer for the churches. I Thes. 1:2, 2:13, 3:10; II Thes. 1:11.

VIII. Point of Decision Based on God’s desire to communicate with us and the work of the cross, we can walk in continual contact with God through various forms of prayer. If we choose this lifestyle of continual praying, we will grow in our knowledge and obedience to Him. “But it is good for me to draw near to God...” (Ps. 73:28).

PERSONAL APPLICATION – THE LIFE OF PRAYER

1. How is Jesus’ prayer life an example for me?

2. Have I been open and honest before the Lord in prayer?

3. What specific types of prayer have I not pursued though I should?

4. At this point of decision, I desire to obtain a continual prayer life by...

Prayer – Part 3

The Lord's Prayer

“Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And led us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen,” (Matt. 6:9-13)

Jesus was a man of prayer on this earth. The disciples saw the results of Jesus' prayer life, and in this context they asked Jesus to teach them to pray. We have this same teaching today in the passage of Scripture above. You will miss the meaning in this outline of prayer by merely reciting it, as is often done. This would be contrary to Luke 11 (where this passage is also found), when the disciples asked Jesus to “teach us to pray,” not “teach us a prayer.” Upon examining these five verses, we find that within them is every element of prayer that we are to follow.

- I. “Our Father which Art in Heaven” This encompasses recognizing the presence of God.
 - A. “Our” is the first word, which speaks of unselfishness that we should have in prayer.
 1. The words I, me, or my are not found in this model prayer, or in many other prayers in the Bible. Ezra 9:6-15; Dan. 9; Ex. 34:9.
 2. It is not wrong to pray for ourselves, but the Word asks us to seek also the good of others. I Cor. 10:24; Ph. 2:4.
 3. Often young children know only what they want, and are not aware of the needs of others. I Cor. 13:11.
 4. We must recognize that we are part of the Body of Christ, and we belong to each other as well as to God, and we are not to pray independently of each other. Eph. 2:18-19; I Jn. 5:14-16.
 - B. “Father” speaks of the intimacy of relationship we have with God.
 1. Although God is our Creator, we were all once children of the Devil. Rev. 4:11; Jn. 8:42-47
 2. Because of the Father's grace, He rescued us from the kingdom of darkness, and has brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves. Col. 1:13; Rom. 8:15.
 3. Praying to God as “Father” implies that we should always thank Him for redeeming us as His children. Lu. 10:20.
 4. As we recognize God as our Father, there is built an absolute trust in Him which is followed by submission and obedience. Isa. 64:8.
 - C. “Which art in Heaven”
 1. This speaks of seeing the exalted position of God. Ac. 7:56; Ps. 46:10.
 2. He is sovereign over all the earth and universe. Isa. 40:22; Eph. 1:20-22.
 3. In this exalted position in heaven, He has all the resources to do all that we ask of Him. Jer. 32:17, 27.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why are the words I, me, or my not found in the Lord's prayer?

II. “Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom Come, thy Will be Done, on Earth as it is in Heaven.”

We will see from the following three requests in this model that prayer is not meant to change God as much as it is to change us. In each of these first three requests, “thy” is emphasized: “Thy name... Thy kingdom... Thy will.” All these prayers change us inwardly. The starting place for these prayers is first of all in our own lives, that His kingdom would come, and that His will would consume our own. Then, as we ask these things for those in our local church, our family, neighborhood, city... Our interests, plans, and habits will soon change as we seek first His kingdom.

- A. “Hallowed be thy Name” – The word hallowed means to sanctify and make holy. It comes from the Greek hagiozo.
1. As we pray this we are asking that His name be revered and regarded as holy. Ps. 111:9, 8:1.
 2. His Name encompasses all His nature, or all He is. Ph. 2:9-11; Ps. 9:10.
 3. Our number one purpose for praying is so that “the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified,” II Thes. 1:12; Zech. 14:9.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the importance of Peter’s revelation of Jesus as the Rock.

- B. “Thy Kingdom Come”
1. The kingdom of God is the extension of God’s rule or dominion in the earth and universe. Ps. 47:7.
 2. Jesus is the King of this kingdom. Rev. 1:5; Matt. 28:18.
 3. The kingdom of God has come wherever Jesus of Nazareth is Lord through:
 - a. Conversion. Repentance is the door through which the life of Christ is imparted to us. Matt. 4:17; Lu. 17:20-21.
 - b. Commitment. In the Christian life there is a daily decision of whether we will bow our knee to His Lordship in every way, or please ourselves. Col. 1:10; Lu. 9:23; II Tim. 2:19.
 - c. Consummation. This is when He returns and the kingdoms of the world will become the kingdoms of our God. Rev. 11:15-17.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe God's kingdom.

C. "Thy Will be Done"

1. "Thy will" emphasizes His plans and desires, and not our own, which are often different. Isa. 55:8.
2. Praying right is not letting God in on our plans, but calling for God to fulfill His own. Lu. 22:42.
3. This request involves purging and purifying, because we must line up our desires and purposes with His eternal purposes. II Tim. 2:20-21; Ps. 139:23-24, 51:10.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Explain why God desires man to emphasize His will in prayer.

D. "On Earth as it is in Heaven"

1. God's will is always done in heaven, but not on earth; if God's will were always done, we would not need to pray this. Ps. 103:20.
2. We have the right to refuse certain situations in the world that are not God's will, for persistently praying is an act of rebellion against the world and its abnormality. Lu. 18:1-8.

III. "Give us this Day our daily Bread, and Forgive us our Debts, as We Forgive our Debtors. And Lead us not into Temptation, but Deliver us from Evil." After having focused on God, we may now turn toward the believer. Once God has been given the proper place, then we have the proper perspective toward ourselves.

A. "Give us this Day our daily Bread"

1. "Give us" is something we may say with confidence and without shame. I Jn. 3:21-22, 5:14.
2. "This day" speaks of a daily relationship with the Father in which we ask Him to meet this day's needs.
3. "Bread" is really a broad term encompassing all of man's physical and spiritual needs, but not necessarily luxuries. Isa. 33:16; Jn 6:32-35.

4. There is true humility in daily asking God to meet these basic needs, without trusting in our own ability to provide for ourselves. Pr. 30:8-9; Matt. 6:25-34.
5. It is to the glory of God that He gives us bread. Jer. 20:13.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why should a believer ask God to give him daily bread?

- B. “And Forgive us our Debts”
 1. This is a cry for purity. Ps. 139:23; Jer. 17:10.
 2. God forgives us as we openly confess our sins, ending our relationship to it. Pr. 28:13; I Jn. 1:9.
 3. We must seek forgiveness now to avoid His judgment later. II Chr. 32:25-26; Matt. 18:23-25, 6:14-15.
 4. If we search our hearts and live in a desire for holiness and to expose all sin, we would not come under God’s discipline and judgment. I Cor. 11:31; I Jn. 3:3.
 5. It is to the glory of God that He forgives. Ps. 25:11; Dan. 9:19; Isa. 43:25.

- C. “As we Forgive our Debtors” – This is a statement of commitment to obey and live by God’s Word: “We have and will continue to forgive others, as your Word says... We have and will continue to lay down our lives for each other, as your Word says...”
 1. We are able to love because He has first loved us. I Jn. 4:10.
 2. Forgiveness is a part of love. I Cor. 13:5.
 3. Therefore, we are also able to forgive since He has first forgiven us. Eph. 4:32; Matt. 9:2.
 4. What Jesus has done for us we must do for others. Jn. 13:12-15, 34.
 5. We should commit ourselves to doing these things in prayer before God. Ps. 119:17, 60, 106.

- D. “And Lead us not into Temptation, but Deliver us from Evil”
 1. We must be led by the Spirit and follow Jesus’ voice. Isa. 48:17; Jn. 10:3-4; Isa. 30:21.
 2. God will only lead us into His righteousness. Ja. 1:13-14.
 3. When we are led by Him, He is able to deliver us from evil. Gal. 5:16; I Cor. 10:13.
 4. He leads us because of His glory (or His name’s sake). Ps. 31:3, 23:3.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is the meaning behind praying “lead us...”?

IV. “For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever. Amen.” Here again, emphasis is on God, His kingdom, His power, and His glory. I Tim. 1:17.

- A. “For thine is the Kingdom”
1. God’s kingdom rules over all other kingdoms, past, present, and future. Ps. 103:19, 22:28, 145:13.
 2. His ways and His purposes prevail. Isa. 46:10; Ps. 135:6.
 3. It must be established in our hearts that as King of the universe, God is able to complete His purposes through our prayers. Deu. 4:39; Jn. 14:13-14.
- B. “For thine is... the Power” – God has all the power to do even what is impossible with man. Matt. 28:18, 19:26. He has the power to:
1. Bring about complete salvation in someone’s life. Heb. 7:25.
 - a. Forgiveness of sins. Matt. 9:6.
 - b. Healing. Ac. 10:38.
 - c. Deliverance. Dan. 3:17.
 - d. Preserve in righteousness. Rom. 16:25; Jude 24.
 - e. Bring one into the image of Jesus. Ph. 3:21; II Cor. 3:18.
 2. To fulfill all His promises. Rom. 4:21.
 3. To do more than all we can ask or imagine. Eph. 3:20.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Specifically, what does God have the power to do?

- C. “For thine is... the Glory” – God has the power to do all these things as the King of the kingdom, but it is essential to see that it is for His glory.
1. We are to bring glory to Him for His righteous acts. Rev. 15:4.
 2. He is the only one worthy to receive glory. Rev. 4:11.
 3. God will not share this glory with another. Isa. 42:8; Ps. 115:1.
 4. We must firmly recognize that all glory is toward Him. I Chr. 29:11.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why does God receive glory?

V. Point of Decision An unknown author has written:

I cannot pray: ...if I:

“Our” live only for myself.
“Father” do not try to act like His child.
“who art in Heaven” am not laying up treasure there.
“Hallowed be thy Name” am not striving for holiness.
“Thy Kingdome Come” am not doing everything in my power to hasten it.
“Thy Will be Done” am disobedient to the Word.
“In Earth as it is in Heaven” do not serve Him here and now.
“Give us this Day our daily Bread” am dishonest and seeking subterfuge.
“Forgive us our Debts” harbor a grudge.
“Lead us not into Temptation” deliberately place myself in its path.
“Deliver us from Evil” do not put on the whole armor of God.
“Thine is the Kingdom” do not give the King loyalty.
“and the Power” fear man.
“and the Glory” seek my own honor.
“Forever” am bounded completely by time.

PERSONAL APPLICATION – AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHURCH

1. Praying to God as “Father” means that I...

2. What is happening in my inner man as I pray that God’s name, kingdom, and will be exalted?

3. Why am I to ask God to forgive my debts?

4. At this point of decision, I desire to follow Jesus' first teaching on prayer. This will mean changing my prayer life from... to...

The Bible—Part 1

Knowing God Through the Bible

“Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you,” (James 4:8). This study begins the sub-section on the Word of God. Although the Bible serves as an answer book and a guide book for living, its primary purpose is that we might know Him and come into ever deepened relationship. As we read and study the Word, we must look for an understanding of God and His desires for man. We must not just look for answers; we must see how those answers relate to God’s heart. God has a desire to be intimate with each of his children. One of the ways He promotes this intimacy is through His written Word, the Bible. In it He reveals who He really is and His heart’s desires. He shows His purposes and the ways for accomplishing those purposes. As we study the Word to get to know God and his ways, we will begin to live like sons of God, just as little children become like their father. We will get to know Him, and in knowing Him experience true life eternal. The first division of this study shows how God desires each man to seek relationship with Him. The second division relates to how the Bible reveals God to us. And finally, the third section shows how God became flesh and walked the Word out so we could know Him.

I. God Desires Relationship God wants each person to seek relationship with Him. He designed man as the only creature who could relate with God, and through the Word exhorts all people to draw close to Himself.

A. God seeks Man. By creation man was designed to commune with God.

1. Man was created in the image of God (with the ability to communicate). (Gen. 1: 26-27, 5:1; Eph. 4:24).
2. God determines the exact places and times for men that they might reach out to Him. (Acts 17:26-27).
3. He also designed the created world to point man toward Himself. (Ps. 19:1-3; Rom.1:19-20).
4. Man will not find satisfaction until he enters into the relationship he was created for. (Isa. 55:2).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is there in the Word that shows God desires relationship with Man?

B. Man is to Seek God. Seeking God is a central truth of the Bible.

1. In addition to seeking God’s promises, we should seek His face (To the Hebrew, to seek the face was to know another’s heart.) (Ps. 27:8; 105:4).
2. New Testament scriptures encourage us to know God. (Jn. 17:3; Phil. 3:10).
3. We must seek God not only with our head but also our heart. (Jer. 29:13; 1 Chr. 22: 19).

4. Now is the time to seek God. (Isa. 55:6; Hosea 10:12).

C. Results of Seeking God. Many rewards accompany seeking God.

1. Most importantly, He is found. (II Chr. 15:15; I Chr. 28:9).
2. You will know Him. (Heb. 8:10-11).
3. Rejoicing will spring forth. (Ps. 70:4, 105:3).
4. You are not forsaken. (Ps. 9:10).
5. You shall not want. (Ps. 34:10).

IMPORTANT POINTS

List a few of the results for seeking God.

D. The Bible is a Meeting Place. Because both God and man seek relationship with each other, God has put His Word in written form that all might remember Him.

1. God originally wrote the Word on stone tablets. (Deut. 4:13).
2. Moses, Joshua and many others following also wrote down the words of God. (Ex. 34:28; Josh. 8:32).
3. Deuteronomy chapter eight shows several areas of why God wrote the Word, wanting Israel to remember:
 - a. That way God had led them. (vs. 2).
 - b. That man lives by God's Word. (vs. 3).
 - c. God's faithfulness. (vs. 4).
 - d. How God deals with man. (vs. 5).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What can we learn of God's nature and character through the Word?

II. God Reveals Himself through the Word. The Bible is a very important means for us to seek God. It reveals the knowledge about God's nature, character and ways. It should be emphasized that the following lists are just a few examples of the ways we come to know God through the Word. You can add to them for the rest of your life as you come to know Him and His ways. This knowledge about God becomes knowledge of God through meditation of the Word.

A. Nature of God. We can learn about God's nature through the Bible. It shows us He is:

1. Eternal. God's existence and kingdom will never come to an end. (Rev. 1:8; Ps. 145:13).

2. Ever-present. The Lord, in His omnipresence, is always near us. (Ps. 139:7-8; Ac. 17:27).
3. All knowing. His understanding has no limit. (Ps. 147:5; I Jn. 3:20).
4. Father. We are all sons of God the Father. (Rom. 8:15).
5. Son. In the God-head there is the Son, whose name is fully revealed in the New Testament. (Pr. 30:4; Matt. 1:21).
6. Holy Spirit. The third person of the Trinity is at work today preparing the church. (Jn. 16:13-15).

B. Character of God. We can also learn about His character.

1. Loving. The extent of God's love is immeasurable to our minds. (Jer. 31:3; Rom. 5:8).
2. Just. In no way does God show favoritism. (Ac. 10:34-35).
3. Holy. God is feared and glorified because of His holiness. (Rev. 15:4).
4. Merciful. God, in his mercy, offers men the forgiveness of sins. (Micah 7:18; Titus 3:5).

C. Ways of God. We can also learn of His ways.

1. How He deals with sons. God has compassion on His people. (Ex. 3:7).
2. How He deals with sinners. Sin will provoke the Lord to anger and judgment. (Hosea 12:14).
3. How He does battle. His hand moves to both bless and destroy. (Ezra 7:8-9; Deut. 2:15).
4. What He likes. God is pleased when men do what is righteous. (Heb. 13:16; I Thes. 4:1-3).
5. Who He likes to be with. He invites those to Himself who are in need. (Matt. 11:28).

IMPORTANT POINTS

List a few of God's ways that the Bible reveals.

III. God Walked His Word Out. God desires so much to reveal Himself to us that He put on flesh and walked out His Word that we might understand Him more fully. In this way He revealed the Father and broke all communication barriers.

A. Jesus the Word. Jesus came to earth and was recognized as the Word of God.

(Jn. 1)

1. The Word was with God and was God. (vs. 1; Rev. 19:13).
2. All things were made by Him. (vs. 3).
3. In Him was life and the light of men. (vs. 4).
4. He came into the world. (vs. 10-11).
5. He came in the flesh. (vs. 14; Gal. 4:4).

B. Jesus in the Father. Jesus was the revelation of the Father.

1. Seeing Jesus was equivalent to seeing the Father. (Jn. 14:9).
2. Jesus spoke the words the Father had given Him. (Jn. 8:28).
3. Jesus showed us God's love. (Jn. 13:1-3).
4. Jesus showed us God's judgment. (Jn. 2:14-16).
5. Jesus showed us God's grace and truth. (Jn. 1:14).

IMPORTANT POINTS

In what ways did Jesus reveal the Father?

C. Jesus in Man. Jesus came to break any communication barriers.

1. He has felt our suffering. (Heb. 5:8).
2. He knows the temptations we have had. (Heb. 2:17-18).
3. He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. (Heb. 4:15).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What communication barriers did Jesus break?

IV. Point of Decision. God tells us through His Word that He desires us to seek Him in order to walk in communion with Him as we were created to. He desired so much for us to know Him that He put on flesh to reveal so that we might come into an intimate relationship with Him.

Personal Application: Knowing God through the Bible

1. Why do I need a relationship with the Lord?

2. What areas concerning God's nature, character and ways would I like to study?

3. What has Jesus shown me about walking out the Word?

4. At this point of decision, I want to deepen my knowledge and love for God through...

The Bible – Part 2

The Effects of the Bible

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified,” (Acts 20:32). God has given us His pure Word for all eternity in written form. As a living thing, it is able to produce in us a close relationship with the Lord, the steady change toward the image of Christ, the restoration of our whole being, and the proper character of Christians. In short, the Word of God is able to take use from salvation to our full inheritance.

I. The Fellowship from the Word. The Word is our basis for moving in relationship with God. As we walk in fellowship with Him, it is the Bible that brings us into the fuller knowledge of Him, gives meaning toward our life-decisions, and then blesses as we obey its direction.

A. Knowing God. In order for us to grow in our relationship with the Lord, we must continually learn more about Him from His Word.

1. It was through fellowship with the Word that God revealed Himself to Samuel. (I Sam. 3:21).
2. We will know God as His Word is truly in our hearts and minds. (Jer. 31:33-34).
3. It is through our knowledge of Him that we find grace for victory. (II Pet. 1:2; Dan. 11:32).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the means provided for men to know God.

B. Wisdom. This is not just knowledge in our heads, but a timely application of what the Word says.

1. God’s Word leads us in straight paths of wisdom. (Prov. 4:10-11).
2. Though we are simple and foolish, the Lord’s statutes can make us wise. (Ps.19:7).
3. His Word teaches us the differences between right and wrong. (Heb. 5:12-14).
4. As God quickens to us wisdom from the Bible, we are protected from sin. (Prov. 2:12, 16).

C. Guidance. When faced with the many decisions of our life with the Lord, the Bible gives us the needed direction.

1. The Lord’s statutes are as our counselors. (Ps. 119:24).
2. The Word gives us the needed light to walk in the truth. (Ps. 19: 8, 119:105; II Pt. 1:19).

3. The Bible is filled with both warning and encouragement to guide us in God's ways. (I Cor. 10:11; Rom. 15:4).

D. Answered Prayer. Finding what God wants to do from His Word is the basis for answered prayer.

1. When we remain obedient to God's Word, He promises to answer our prayers. (Jn. 15:7).
2. We may ask Him for anything, but as a loving Father He gives those things that are according to His will. (I Ki. 3:5; I Jn. 5:14-15).
3. Repeatedly hearing His Word will also increase our faith to appropriate His promises. (Rom. 10:17; Jn. 2:22; II Tim. 3:15).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What relationship is there between the Word and answered prayer?

E. Success. The Lord will prosper our work motivated from His Word.

1. Biblical success necessitates a full devotion to the Word. (Josh 1:8; I Chr. 22:13; Deut. 29:9).
2. When we follow the direction that the Lord gives us from His Word, He often blesses our activity. (Ps. 1:2-3; James 1:25).
3. However, our activity must be within the framework of the Word for Him to bless. (II Chr. 31:21).

II. The Changing toward Godliness from the Word. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," (II Tim. 3:16). As young Christians, the way toward maturity is studying and practicing the Word of God so that its doctrine might be understood. As the light of the Word comes in, it will spotlight what needs changing in our thoughts and actions. After this conviction, the Word of God gives the formula for corrections and the continued instruction for complete victory.

A. Doctrine. The Greek is didaskalia which refers to the substance of what is taught.

1. The Jews were astonished at the doctrine, or teaching, of Jesus. (Mk. 1:22, 11:18).
2. All doctrine of the church must be founded on the Word of God. (I Tim. 1:10-11; Titus 2:1).
3. False teachings come through evil men who do not know God. (I Tim. 4:1-2, 6:3-4).
4. We are to use the doctrine from the Bible to encourage and train up younger believers and to refute those who oppose the Gospel. (Titus 1:9).

B. Reproof. The Greek is elegchos, a courtroom term dealing with evidence presented in a case, and means a proof, a conviction, that by which a thing is tested or proved.

1. The Word of God is the evidence that judges whether or not we are living according to its commandments. (II Ki. 22:10-13).

2. The Word is the light that will expose sin in our lives. (Jn. 3:20; Eph. 5:11-14).
3. The Holy Spirit will be the one using the Word of God to convict wrongdoers. (Jn. 16:7-8).

IMPORTANT POINTS

How is the Word of God used for reproof?

- C. Correction. Epanorthosis means a straightening up again, rectification, reformation, correction.
1. When God sees sin in our lives, He not only shows it but also seeks to correct it. (Ps. 39:11; Pr. 15:10).
 2. We are not to despise or try to avoid God’s offered correction from His Word. (Job 5:17; Pr. 3:11-12).
 3. Instead we should invite it. (Jer. 10:24; Heb. 12:9-10).

IMPORTANT POINTS

After God reproves, explain the process of correction and instruction from the Word.

- D. Instruction. The Greek is paideia, tutorage, education or training, instruction, nurture.
1. God will instruct us in His ways. (Ac. 18:25-26).
 2. God is willing to teach us again and again the instruction we need for victory. (Jer. 32:32-33).
 3. Jesus was regularly giving instruction to people in the temple courts. (Lu. 19:47; Jn. 7:14, 8:2).
 4. Today He gives instruction to us through His Word. (Pr. 1:1-3).

III. The Restoration from the Word. The Lord Jesus did a complete work on the cross by purchasing a salvation for the whole person with His blood. Salvation is continually appropriate through the Word. “And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be presented blameless,” (I Thes. 5:23).

- A. The Spirit. Our inner man must be fed the Word in order to grow.
1. It is not natural food that gives us true life, but His Word. (Deut. 8:3; Job 23:12).
 2. The Word is like milk that causes a baby to grow. (I Pt. 2:2).

3. Without feeding ourselves the milk of the Word, our spirits will not be able to grow up and handle the meat of the Word. (I Cor. 3:1-2).

B. The Soul. The mind is an area of the soul that must be renewed by the Word of God. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul,” (Ps. 19:7).

1. We have the promise for wholeness in our thought-life through the mind of Christ. (I Cor. 2:16).
2. The Word is a cleansing agent that purifies. (Eph. 5:26; Jn. 15:3).
3. With the scriptures, our minds do not have to be fixed on what the sinful nature desires. (Rom. 8:5-8; II Pt. 3:1).

C. The Body. The Word heals our bodies and keeps them healthy.

1. Healing is a direct result of the Word of God. (Ps. 107:20; Matt. 8:8).
2. The words of Jesus often commanded healing. (Matt. 8:3; Mk. 5:41-42).
3. As the Word is near us, it is not only our healing, but also our health. (Pr. 4:20-22).

IV. The Kingdom from the Word. As we seek to develop the Lord’s character in our lives, we find that it is the Holy Bible that plays a part in this change. “For the kingdom of God is...righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,” (Rom. 14:17).

A. Righteousness. This righteousness is the result of our obedience to what God has written.

1. It was by quoting the Word in temptation that Jesus maintained His righteousness. (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10).
2. Jesus prayed that we would be sanctified, or made righteous, through the Word. (Jn. 17:17).
3. Our purity is found in living according to His Word. (Ps. 119:9; I Pt. 1:22).

B. Peace. Worrying is often a problem with Christians, but God’s peace from the Word is intended to guard our hearts and minds. (Phil. 4:7).

1. Jesus is the King of peace. (Isa. 9:6; II Thes. 3:16).
2. Jesus gave His words to the disciples that they could have peace. (Jn. 16:33).
3. The scriptural means for attaining peace is through loving God’s Word. (Ps. 119:165).

C. Joy. The believer’s joy is not to be completely dependent on favorable circumstances, but on the Bible. (Hab. 3:17-18).

1. The Bible gives joy. (Jn. 15:11, 17:13; I Jn. 1:4).
2. Because the Word is eternal, the Christian’s joy is everlasting and not temporary like the world’s. (Ps. 119:89; Isa. 35:9-10; Job 20:4-5).
3. When God’s Word comes to us, we should make it our joy and heart’s delight. (Jer. 15:16; Ps. 19:8, 119:111).

V. Point of Decision. As we truly receive God’s written Word into our hearts, a changed life should become very evident. Clearly God has not given His Word to order His people around and suppress them, but it is for our own good that He has spoken these things. “And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commands of the Lord, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” (Deut. 10:12-13).

Personal Application: The Effects of the Bible

1. Have I been coming to know God with an understanding of His ways through His Word?

2. Has the Word been able to reprove, correct and instruct me away from sin regularly?

3. Do I see a relationship between the amount of time I spend in God's Word and the degree that I go about my day with peace and joy?

4. At this point of decision, I recognize the provision God has given through His Word, and I want to especially pursue an increase of...

5. Describe how the inner man is to grow.

6. How is the mind able to be renewed?

7. What role does the Word play in walking out righteousness toward God?

8. How is the believer to receive joy?

The Bible – Part 3

Obedience to the Word

"A sower went out to sow his seed, and as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock, and as soon as it was sprung up it withered away because it lacked moisture and some fell among the thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. And other fell on the ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold.... Now the parable is this: the seed is the Word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the Devil, and taketh away the Word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they which, when they hear receive the Word with joy, and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in the time of temptation fall away, And that which fell among the thorns are they which when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in a honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," (Lu. 8:5-8, 12-15).

In the last Bible study, "The Effects of the Bible," we saw some of the results that come from receiving the Word of God into our lives. However, those results are not automatic. This parable lists the necessary steps required for the Word of God to yield its fruit, the first of which is to till the soil so that the seed (the Word) can come in. After that, the seed must be allowed to take root into the ground, and then any weeds and thorns must be pulled out that could choke the plant. As we seek to be conformed to the Lord and His ways during our private Bible study time, we must follow each of these steps carefully.

I. Till the Soil The first thing that kept the Word from producing in someone's life was a hardened heart. To soften the soil we would need to break the self-righteousness that pride allows. Then as we draw near to love the Word, having faith, the Devil cannot take it away. Lu. 8:5, 12.

- A. Protect against Self-righteousness. The silent Bible points to the deaf listener. The Word will only speak to those who are willing to humble themselves.
1. Sometimes the Bible describes the self-righteous as being wise in their own eyes. Pr. 3:7, 26:12.
 2. The result is that we cannot then detect and turn from sin. Ps. 36:2; Pr. 28:14
 3. It is easy to "nod the head" when we hear the Word, assuming we know it and are already doing it, though at the same time being in rebellion. Exe 12:2; Zech. 7:11
 4. If we would allow the Bible to speak and point out sin without hiding it, we would be walking in humility. 1 Ki. 21:25-29

IMPORTANT POINTS

How can self-righteousness block the Word from coming in the heart?

B. Love the Word. God responds and reveals Himself to the degree that we hunger after Him and his Word. As we hold His Word dear, it is very difficult for it to be stolen.

1. David often declared his love for the Word. Ps 119:163, 97.
2. The Bible is to be treasured more than the wealth of the world. Ps 119:72, 19:10
3. This love is not to be self-seeking, such as coming to the Word just to have the emotions tickled. Eze. 33:31-32
4. God's Word then becomes a delight. Ps. 119:47, 1:2.

C. Have Faith. Being ruled by our intellect will allow the Devil to rob us of the Word which we hear if it does not fit into our own limited understanding.

1. We are commanded to repent and believe the Gospel. Mk. 1:15.
2. God groups those who are slow of heart to believe with the foolish. Lu. 24:25.
3. Wanting to see signs and miracles is not a cure for doubting God's Word. Lu. 16:31; 1 Cor. 1:18, 22-23.
4. The Word must be dwelling in us for faith to spring forth. Jn. 5:38.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What are and are not the solutions for a lack of faith?

II. Allow the Seed to Take Root The Word takes root in our lives through a process called meditation (Ps. 1:2; Josh. 1:8). This does not involve Eastern religion, for biblical meditation is bringing the Word before our minds repeatedly that it might go deeper in the heart. Meditation involves being still, listening, and then applying the Word of God. Lu. 8:6, 13.

A. Be Still. Not a picturesque mountain-type stillness, but this is mostly dealing with the inner noise so that we can focus on the scriptures.

1. The Ethiopian eunuch took advantage of a personal trip to read the Word. Ac. 8:26-28
2. It is often a requirement to be still before the Lord can speak to us. 1 Ki. 19:12-13; Num. 9:8.
3. Samuel asked people to stand still for hearing the Word of the Lord. 1 Sam. 9:27.
4. In this stillness we come to know God for who He is. Ps. 46:10.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is biblical meditation?

B. Listen Attentively. Now we want to find out exactly what the passage is saying (i.e., from Galatians 5:13, we would seek to understand what serving someone involves). A helpful tool is trying to reword the scripture in such a way that will keep the meaning the same.

1. God often spoke to Israel asking that they would hear the Word of the Lord. Deu. 6:4; Ps. 78:1.
2. The eunuch sought to understand what the scripture's meaning was. Ac. 8:30-31.
3. While "listening" in our Bible study, we must pay close attention to every word to catch the full meaning. Eze. 44:5; Heb. 2:1.
4. This is where the Word comes into the mind. 1 Chr. 16:15; Deu. 11:18.
5. As we reflect on what the Lord has written, He gives us the understanding of the passage. 2 Tim. 2-7; Gal. 1:12.

C. Apply toward Action. The truth we understand having listened is now spoken directly to us in our present lives and situations. We take the underlying principles understood from the scriptures and specifically plan to act on them (i.e., who will I personally serve and at what time today?).

1. Philip related the meaning of the scripture to the eunuch and applied it to his need for salvation. Ac. 8:34-35.
2. By applying toward action the Word comes into the heart. Deu. 6:6; Eze. 3:10.
3. After acting on a scripture, we must stay in the Word to allow it to continually mature us. 1 Thes. 4:1-2.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why is it important to personally apply the Word of God?

III. Pull up Thorns Even if the Word can get into our hearts and begin to take root, the parable shows that if one is just partially caught up and motivated by the cares, riches and pleasures of this life, then the full fruit of the Word is choked out and over-powered, We must identify those activities that wrongly take away our time from the Word (i.e., a companion, a career, food, TV) and choose between them. Lu. 8:7, 14.

IMPORTANT POINTS

How do the cares of the world fit the analogy of weeds and thorns choking a plant's fruit?

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- A. Cast off Cares. The Greek word for cares here is merimna, which means a division, or distraction causing care or worry.
1. Martha is a great example of one distracted away from listening to the Word of God because of her cares and worries. Lu. 10:38-42.
 2. Paul favored a man and a woman remaining unmarried just to protect against an increase toward the cares of this world. 1 Cor. 7:32-35.
 3. These cares only weigh our hearts down so that we will not be ready for His return. Lu 21:34.
 4. All of these cares are to be given to the Lord. 1 Pet. 5:7; Phil. 4:6.
- B. Do not Serve Riches. The Greek for riches is ploutos, that is, wealth, money, possessions, abundance, richness, valuable bestowment.
1. The rich man's desire for possessions kept him from fully following the Lord's commandment. Matt. 19:16-24.
 2. Having money can prompt us to live in luxury and self-indulgence. Ja. 5:3-5; Lu 12:16-21.
 3. People who strive to get rich will allow the Word to be choked out. Pr. 23:4-5, 1 Tim. 6:9-10.
 4. We cannot serve and seek after both God and money. Matt. 6:24.
 5. Those who have riches are to practice what the Word says the same as others do. 1 Tim. 6:17-19.

IMPORTANT POINTS

How can the love of money be a source of diversion from the Word?

- C. Deny worldly Pleasures. The Greek for pleasures is edone, which is sensual delight, lust, pleasure.
1. There are permissible, pleasurable activities for a believer, but they are not to control him or take him away from the Word. 1 Cor. 6:12.
 2. Loving the world and its pleasures is actually choosing to not love God. 1 Jn. 2:15-17; Ja. 4:4.
 3. The pleasures of this life are hollow and unfulfilling. 1 Tim. 5:6; HEB. 11:25.
 4. Eternal pleasure is found only with God. Ps. 16:11.

IV. Do the Word Jesus only considered those who had heard the Word and acted on it as those who had a noble heart. This involves remembering the Word we had meditated on earlier in the

day so that we really do act on it and become obedient to the Bible. Lu. 8:8, 15.

- A. Remember the Word. Often times our faint forgetfulness will hinder us from truly doing what we have committed ourselves to.
 - 1. The disciples remembered the words of the Lord and applied them to their current situations. Ac 11:15-16, 20:35.
 - 2. Remembering God's Word can keep us from falling in temptation. Lu. 22:61; Num. 15:39.
 - 3. The Holy Spirit is to aid us in this remembrance. Jn. 14:26.

- B. Keep the Word. The emphasis on the scriptures, however, is not on remembering the Word, but on doing it.
 - 1. The eunuch acted on the scriptures he read by believing and being baptized. Ac. 8:36-38.
 - 2. Doing the Word requires wisdom and courage to keep all His Word. Josh. 1:7-9, 23:6; 1 Chr. 22:12.
 - 3. Not those who just hear, but those who obey the Word are declared righteous. Lu. 11:28; Jn. 13:17; Rev. 22:7.
 - 4. Whether or not we do the Word is the basis of whether or not we are obedient to God. Ex. 24:7; Isa. 42:24.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Explain the necessity of keeping the Word.

- C. Have Patience. We must have perseverance to not only do the Word when it is pleasing or profitable, but to act on the scripture consistently without wavering.
 - 1. Patience is necessary in order to continue to do the Word while waiting to receive the promise. Heb. 10:36; Gal. 6:9.
 - 2. Those who are truly Jesus' disciples will continue in His Word. Jn. 8:31.
 - 3. The early disciples did indeed continue in His Word. Ac. 2:42.
 - 4. The disciples of today must also continue in what they have learned and become convinced of. 2 Tim. 3:14-15.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why do the scriptures need to be acted on with perseverance?

V. Point of Decision From this Bible study we can get a vision for what true and profitable study of the Word will involve. The believer is to humble himself for true love and faith of the Word to spring forth. The Word then must go deep as we meditate—as we see what the scriptures are saying and their implications to our lives. To maintain this growth by applying the Word to our lives, we must guard our limited time well so that other activities and interests are not choking the Word. Finally, we become obedient children by doing what God has spoken to us from His Bible. “but be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves,” (Ja. 1:22).

PERSONAL APPLICATION – OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD

1. What will I need to start “tilling” in my life?

2. How can I begin to meditate in the Word?

3. What could I identify in my life as weeds and thorns that are diverting me away from the Word?

4. At this point of decision, I desire to be obedient to the Word by being a “doer” through...

Worship—Part 1

Praise and Worship

In addition to the Word and prayer, worship is a very important aspect of developing communication with your heavenly Father. Jesus said, "...the hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him," (John 4:23). The empty forms of religion are no substitute for true worship. God is seeking out a people who will truly worship Him from their hearts.

I. Avenues to Worship The true worshippers will worship God in Spirit and in truth. "God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth," (John 4:24). A person who is filled with the Spirit of God will allow the Holy Spirit to illuminate the scriptures and lead him or her into the true biblical worship.

A. Worship in Spirit.

1. The Spirit guides us into the truth, including the truth of worship. (John 16:13; Ph. 3:3)
2. We must follow the leading from within that calls out for God. (1 John 2:27; Ps. 42:1)
3. The Spirit will guide our mouths in worship. (Luke 12:12; Ps. 81:10)

B. Worship in Truth.

1. The Word of God is truth. (John 17:17)
2. In fact, it is the foundation for all sound teaching. (2 Tim. 3:16)
3. The Bible, quickened by the Spirit, will show us the way in worshipping. (Isaiah 30:21; John 14:26)

II. Worship in the Old and New Testaments The Old Testament can be used to determine how to worship God. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning..." (Rom. 15:4)

A. The New Testament scriptures tell us to use Old Testament Scriptures.

1. Old Testament scriptures are written as examples to us. (Acts 24:14; 1 Cor. 10:11; 2 Tim. 3:15)
2. Old Testament scriptures are shadows of what is to come. (Col. 2:17; Heb. 10:1)

B. The Tabernacle of David in the Old Testament is an example or shadow of worship. The books of Psalms, Chronicles, and Kings describe worship as it was during the time of David's Tabernacle.

1. God promised in the Old Testament that the Tabernacle of David would be restored. (Amos 9:11)
2. God affirms in the New Testament this Tabernacle's restoration. (Acts 15:16-17).
3. We can study the Tabernacle of David to see the kind of worship God wants us to have today.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why are the Old Testament scriptures relevant for ways to worship today?

C. Ways to Worship.

1. Singing. (Ps. 30:4, 95:1, 47:6)
2. Kneeling. (Ps. 95:6; Acts 20:36; Luke 22:41)
3. Standing. (Ps. 134:1; Deut. 10:8)
4. Lifting up hands. (Ps. 134:2; 1 Tim. 2:8; Ps. 63:4)
5. Clapping. (Ps. 47:1)
6. Dancing. (Ps. 149:3, 150:4; 2 Sam. 6:14-16)
7. Shouting. (Ps. 35:27, Jos. 6:20)
8. Musical instruments. (Ps. 150:3-5; 2 Sam. 6:5; Isaiah 38:20)
9. Silence. (Hab. 2:20; Zech. 2:13; Rev. 8:1)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the various ways to worship God from both Testaments.

III. How to Worship the Lord As we allow the Spirit and the Word to guide us into the pattern of worship from the Old and New Testaments, we will enter into His presence and see Him.

A. Entering into His presence.

1. We are to come before the presence of God with: (Ps. 100:2, 4)
 - a. Singing.
 - b. Thanksgiving.
 - c. Praising.
 - d. Blessing His name.
2. Each believer is called to praise the Lord. (Ps. 150:6; Rom. 15:11)
3. This should be a verbalization (not just in your heart). (Ps. 66:8, 145:21)
4. We are to praise Him openly, or in public. (Ps. 22:5, 22; Acts 2:11)
5. This praise is to be continual, and not just at church. (Ps. 34:1, 149:5, 35:28)

B. Seeing Jesus. With our hearts focused on Jesus, the Spirit of God will give us revelation of the exalted Christ. (Lev. 10:3)

1. The Spirit always shows us Jesus. (John 16:14)
2. When we see Jesus, our natural response is to worship Him. (Matt. 28:17; Ps. 84:4).
3. It is by faith, or believing, that we see Jesus. (John 9:38)

4. When the believing disciples saw Jesus in all His glory, their reaction was true worship. (Luke 24:51-53; Matt. 28:9)

IMPORTANT POINTS

What happens when our hearts are focused on worshipping Jesus?

C. The Results of True Worship.

1. God dwells in the praises of (us) His people. (Ps. 22:3)
2. The believer is filled with great joy. (Luke 24:52; John 20:20)
3. It will be a sign to unbelievers. (Ps. 40:3)
4. As we testify of Jesus through words in worship, prophecy (God’s revelation for the hour) is released and we see revelation of Jesus. (Rev. 19:10)
5. God will pour out a rain of new souls saved. (Zech. 14:17; Isaiah 45:18)

IMPORTANT POINTS

List the results of true worship.

IV. There is also a False Worship The Lord Jesus does not receive all worship given to Him, but only that which is from a true heart and life. (Mark 15:16-19)

- A. A True Heart. Honoring and praising the Lord with our mouths while our hearts are far from Him is not worship. (Mark 7:6; Matt. 15:8-9) “Worship” comes from the Greek *proskuneo*, which literally means to kiss toward.
 1. Worship must come from a heart that loves Him. (Ps. 18:1, 84:2, 116:1)
 2. Sin, the love of the world, will prevent us from loving God. (1 John 2:15-16; James 4:4; Ezekiel. 33:31)
 3. It takes a pure heart to worship the Lord. (Ps. 24:3-4)
 4. There should be a consuming desire for the Lord. (Ps. 73:25)
- B. A True Life. To open our mouths and sing praises, yet let our lives bring a curse to God is hypocrisy.
 1. Worship must be a verbalization or extension of what our actions are. (Rom. 12:1-2)

2. Someone who is a hearer of the Word only, not a doer, will not be blessed in worship. (James 1:22-25)
- C. Common Hindrances to Worship. Unbelief, pride, and a mere form will destroy worship.
1. Doubting kept some disciples from worshipping Jesus as their risen Lord. (Matt. 28:17; Mark 16:14)
 2. It was an act of humility that caused Israel to bow down in worship. (Neh. 8:6; Ps. 95:6; Ex. 34:8)
 3. As we seek to worship according to the biblical pattern, it is essential that we never permit our worship to become a mere ritual or religious form. (Mark 7:7)

V. The Worship Service When any number of believers come together to worship the Lord, the Spirit may lead them into a new song, prophecy or tongues.

- A. A New Song. At some point during a worship service, a member of the music ministry or an individual in the congregation may sing out with a spontaneous “new song” from the Lord.
1. The song may come from the Lord. (Ps. 40:3)
 2. The song may be accompanied by the instruments. (Ps. 144:9, 33:3)
 3. In the book of Revelation, some sang out with a new song. (Rev. 5:9, 14:3)
- B. Prophecy. At some point during the service, prophecy (a supernatural message from God) may be given by an individual.
1. Prophecy was promised in the Old Testament. (Joel 2:28)
 2. This prophecy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when 120 disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:1-4)
 3. The purpose of prophecy is for our: (1 Cor. 14:3)
 - a. Edification (to build us up).
 - b. Exhortation (to stir us up).
 - c. Comfort (to cheer us up).
 4. True prophecy from the heart of God will lead us to deeper worship. (2 Chr. 20:13-19)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the purpose of prophecy.

- C. Tongues. Many times when the Spirit of God moves, an individual or the whole group may use the gift of tongues. (Acts 10:44-46)
1. The gift of tongues.
 - a. A sign to fellow believers. (Mark 16:17)
 - b. Fulfilled in the book of Acts. (Acts 2:1-4, 19:1-6)

2. There are two uses for the gift of tongues.
 - a. Similar to prophecy and must be interpreted with the purpose of building up the church. (1 Cor. 14:27)
 - b. As an individual prayer spoken to God for building up oneself. (1 Cor. 14:2)

IMPORTANT POINTS

What use do tongues have during the worship service?

VI. The Sacrifice of Praise Today the priests of God do not offer up sacrifices of sheep and oxen, but a continual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving despite any bad circumstances.

- A. The Duty of Priests. As New Testament priests, we are called to offer a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. (1 Peter 2:5; Ps. 116:17)
 1. This sacrifice is to be verbal (from the fruit of our lips). (Heb. 13:15)
 2. It is given in the heavenly house of the Lord. (Jer. 17:26, 33:11)
 3. We are to bring God the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving regardless of feelings or circumstances we may face. (2 Cor. 5:7; Jonah 2:9)
- B. Examples. There are examples of men who sacrificed praise and thanksgiving regardless of situations.
 1. Paul and Silas after they had been flogged and thrown in prison. (Acts 16:22-25)
 2. The result was great deliverance for both Paul and Silas and all those around them. (Acts 16:25-34)
 3. King Jehoshaphat and Judah were being threatened by a great army. (2 Chr. 20:1-3)
 4. The result, again, was great deliverance as they sacrificed praise and thanksgiving. (2 Chr. 20:22-28)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe God's request for a sacrifice of praise.

VII. Point of Decision According to Acts the Tabernacle of David will be restored by the New Testament church. That is happening in our generation as true worshippers are learning to praise

and worship God from their hearts. As we learn to worship God, He is “inhabiting our praises”. As we build this house of praise, the glory of the Lord will come forth and fill the whole congregation.

“It came to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, ‘For He is good; for His mercy endureth forever,’ that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God,” (2 Chr. 5:13-14).

PERSONAL APPLICATION – PRAISE AND WORSHIP

1. How are the Spirit of God and the Bible to guide me when I seek to worship God?

2. Have there been times when I was hindered from truly worshipping the Lord? If so, what was the cause of the problem?

3. In what new ways can I worship God that I haven’t used before?

Worship—Part 2

Adoration and Gratitude

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing the praises unto thy name, O most High," (Ps. 92:1). Just as prayer is not simply a religious duty, so thanksgiving, praise and worship are not only an exercise. They are the means of expressing our gratitude and adoration to God for what He has done and who He is. It is the revelation of our hearts' attitude toward God.

Thanksgiving and praise are directed more at the things God has done, while worship centers in on who He is. God is worthy of our attention in both of these areas—His works and His character. This study reveals the basic definitions (from Strong's Concordance) of thanksgiving, praise and worship, along with basic teaching about each.

I. Thanksgiving Just as we are taught to be grateful when we are young, the Bible teaches it is good to give thanks. We are to give thanks for His provision for us, and then continue in thanksgiving with our attitudes.

A. Some Definitions. We can learn from these definitions that thankfulness is an acclamation of gratefulness to God to bless Him. It can include the raising of hands, grateful language, a shout or kneeling.

1. There are three Hebrew and three Greek words rendered "thanks".
 - a. Yada—to use or hold out the hand, especially to revere or worship with extended hands.
 - b. Towdah—an extension of the hand, avowal, or usually adoration.
 - c. Yeda—to praise.
 - d. Exomologeō—to acknowledge or agree fully.
 - e. Charis—graciousness of manner or act.
 - f. Eucharistēō—to be grateful, to express gratitude toward, especially to say grace at a meal.
2. A Hebrew word for "thanked" is barak—to kneel, to bless God as an act of adoration.
3. The Greek for "thankful" is eucharistos—well favored, grateful.
4. There are two Greek words used here for "thank".
 - a. Anthomologeomai—to confess in turn, respond in praise.
 - b. Eucharistia—gratitude, grateful language.
5. The Hebrew for "thanksgiving" is huyedah—an acclaim, a choir of singers.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the many meanings of the word "thanks".

B. Give Thanks. Thanks is a result of seeing God's gifts to us. We are to give thanks for:

1. Friends and Christian brothers and sisters. (Acts 28:15; 1 Thes. 1:2)
2. Victory. (2 Sam. 22:49-51; 2 Cor. 2:14)
3. God for ruling. (Rev. 11:17)
4. Daily provision. (Matt. 15:36; John 6:11)

IMPORTANT POINTS

List a few of the things that God receives thanks for.

- C. An Attitude of Thanksgiving. Our general attitude can and should always be one of thanksgiving.
1. When man rebelled, he became unthankful. (Rom. 1:21)
 2. The last days will be characterized by unthankfulness. (2 Tim 3:1-2)
 3. Our old attitudes should be replaced with thanksgiving. (Eph. 5:4)
 4. Our thanks should be continual. (Eph. 5:20; 2 Thes. 2:13)
 5. In every situation we should maintain thankfulness. (1 Thes. 5:18; Rom. 8:28)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the attitude of thanksgiving in every day life.

II. Praise Just as it is good to give thanks to the Lord, it is also good to sing praises unto His name. God has ordained praise for His people, and it should naturally flow as an extension of thanksgiving.

- A. Some Definitions. We can see from these definitions that praise overlaps thanksgiving. In fact, the words “thanks” and “praise” are often used interchangeably to translate the same Hebrew words. Thanksgiving extends into singing, using instruments, and generally making more of a show of your heart of thanks.
1. There are 10 Hebrew words used to translate “praise”.
 - a. Yada—to use or hold out the hand, especially to revere or worship with extended hands.
 - b. Towdah—an extension of the hand, avowal, or usually adoration.
 - c. Hilluw—a celebration of thanksgiving for harvest.
 - d. Tehillah—laudation, a hymn.
 - e. Barak—to kneel, to bless God as an act of adoration.
 - f. Halal—to be clear (originally of sound, but usually of color), to shine, hence to make show, to boast, and thus to be clamorously foolish, to rave, to celebrate, also to stultify.

- g. Zamar—to touch the strings or part of a musical instrument, i.e., play upon it, to make music, accompanied by the voice, hence to celebrate in song and music.
 - h. Shabach—to address in a loud tone, to pacify as if by words.
 - i. Shebach—to adulate, to adore.
 - j. Mahalal—fame.
2. There are six Greek words translated in this way.
- a. Aineo—to praise.
 - b. Ainos—a story, but used in the sense of praise.
 - c. Doxa—glory (as very apparent).
 - d. Epaino—to applaud.
 - e. Epainos—laudation, a commendable thing.
 - f. Humneo—to hymn, sing a religious ode, to celebrate God in song.

IMPORTANT POINTS

List the various meanings for the word “praise”.

- B. Praise from Thanksgiving. Praise naturally flows as an extension of thanksgiving.
- 1. They are found together quite often. (1 Chr. 23:30; Neh. 12:46)
 - 2. We praise God for what we have seen and heard about Him. (Luke 2:20, 19:37)
 - 3. A few of the many ways that praise can give animation to a heart of thanks are:
 - a. Clapping. (Isaiah 55:12)
 - b. Shouting. (Ezra 3:11; 2 Chr. 15:14)
 - c. Singing. (2 Chr. 20:21; James 5:13)
 - d. Playing instruments. (Ezra 3:10; 2 Chr. 5:13)

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is the relationship between praise and thanksgiving?

- C. God ordained Praise. In every place and in all periods of time God has ordained praise for Himself.
- 1. He set aside the Levites to praise Him. (2 Chr. 29:30)
 - 2. Everything that hath breath should praise Him. (Ps. 150:6)
 - 3. All nations should praise Him. (Ps. 117:1, 67:3)

4. All generations should praise Him. (Ps. 79:13)
5. He will be praised forever. (Ps. 44:8)
6. He is praised in the earth. (Ps. 148:7)
7. He is praised in the heavens. (Ps. 148:1; Luke 2:13-14)
8. He is praised in the congregation. (Ps. 149:1)
9. All the saints praise Him. (Ps. 148:14)

III. Worship Worship is drawn out of us as we get a revelation of God’s character. Thanksgiving and praise are an expression of gratitude for things or works of God; worship centers in on God Himself. Worship is a reality that has value which should not be misused.

A. Some Definitions. The definitions here show that worship is an acknowledging of the greatness of God compared to ourselves. It is when we are “in the face of” Him that we are bowed or prostrated in homage.

1. We list three words in the Hebrew for “worship”.
 - a. Shachah—to depress, prostrate in homage to royalty or God.
 - b. Atsab—to carve, fabricate of fashion.
 - c. Segid—from the word to prostrate oneself in homage.
2. There are six words from the Greek.
 - a. Proskuneo—to kiss, like a dog licking his master’s hand, to fawn or crouch to, prostrate oneself in homage, do reverence to, adore.
 - b. Sebomai—to revere, adore.
 - c. Enopion—in the face of.
 - d. Doxa—glory (as very apparent).
 - e. Latreuo—to minister to God, render religious homage from a hired menial.
 - f. Eusebeo—to be pious, (toward God) to worship or (toward parents) to respect, support.

IMPORTANT POINTS

List the various meanings for the word “worship”.

B. Worship of God. Worship is directed at God’s person and character.

- a. He is worshiped in the beauty of His character of holiness. (1 Chr. 16:29; Ps. 29:2)
- b. It is before His face that we worship. (Deut. 26:10)
- c. Many times the phrase “worship God” (or “Him”) occurs. (Rev. 4:10)

C. The Realities of Worship. The forms of worship are not nearly so important as the reality in worship. (John 4:21-24)

1. The place of worship is not important. (vs. 21)
2. Worship is in the spirit realm. (vs. 23-24)
3. Worship is based in the truth of God’s Word. (vs. 23-24)

4. God is searching for people to worship Him. (vs. 23)

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the realities in worship.

- D. The Value of Worship. (Matt. 4:8-10)
 1. Satan was willing to trade the world if Jesus would only worship him. (vs. 8-9)
 2. Jesus knew only God was worthy of worship (vs. 10)

- E. The Misuse of Worship. Evil men will worship other things besides God.
 1. Other Gods. (Jer. 2:11, 11:12)
 2. Other men. (Acts 12:22-23, 28:6)
 3. Themselves. (Ex. 5:2; 2 Chr. 32:25)
 4. Creation. (Rom. 1:25)
 5. The works of their own hands. (Deut. 4:28; Isaiah 40:19-20)

IV. Point of Decision We live in an age characterized by unthankfulness and greed. As Christians, we can have our hearts changed into hearts of true gratefulness. While our hearts are changed, thanksgiving and praise will flow out of our beings. As we continue with our hearts toward Him, we will become awed in His presence and find ourselves prostrated before Him in humble adoration of His holy, loving character.

PERSONAL APPLICATION – GRATITUDE AND ADORATION

1. In what areas of my life do I lack true thanksgiving?

2. As I develop thanksgiving, how can I also give Him praise?

3. How do I develop worship in my life?

4. At this point of decision, I wish to move from unthankfulness and greed toward the full appreciation and revelation of God through...

Becoming a Body and Reaching Others

Introduction

This third and last section of studies is directed at helping you to understand the horizontal relationships that will result from God living inside of you. The first part of this section deals with the church, which will be your primary source of friendship and communion in common goals. The second part deals with the extending of ourselves, much as Jesus did, to the rest of the world through loving evangelism and ministry.

The Bible shows clearly that we can understand how our relationship with God is by how we relate to those around us. Especially if Christ is in us, we will relate properly to those Christians with whom He has placed us.

One of the keys to relationship is the laying down of our independence. Many people believe they get along fine with God, but they will never be faithfully committed to the local church. Being committed to God includes being specifically committed to His people. A person who is moving independent of the church is generally moving independent of God. Also, one of the ways God ministers to Christians is through fellow believers. The Bible says that we are all part of one another and that we need each other.

The second part of this section shows still further how we can “move with God.” As we grow in Him, we will take on His heart. That heart as revealed long ago when He loved us enough, while we were unlovely, to come and die for us. When we take on His heart, we will take on His actions. We will love enough to “Go” and share this with others. One of the last requests made by Jesus was for us to go into all the world and declare His kingdom. Declaring His kingdom is done both through our lifestyles as well as our words. We are “Christ” to the world.

Hopefully you have seen the progression of this manual. First, He has loved us and drawn us unto Himself. Next we have grown in and through our relationship with Him. Now we are able to minister out of that which we have received to both believers and unbelievers.

The Church—Part 1

An Overview of the Church

“...Christ is the head of the church, and He is the savior of the body,” (Eph. 5:23). The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is founded on His work while in the earth. As we see His act of love as the pattern for the church, we will understand that it is not a building, a denomination or movement, or any other temporal expression. Instead, the church, following the pattern of Jesus, is a people who are joined together, laying their lives down for others. Most people have a distorted picture of what the church is because of the traditions of men. A clear distinction must be drawn between the traditions of men and the real activity of the Body of Christ, the church.

I. The Foundation of the Church The foundation, or substructure on which the church is built is the realization that Jesus is the anointed Son of God. This is the beginning of understanding the church; “...Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,” (Matt. 16:18).

- A. Christ the Rock. Peter had a revelation of what the church was founded on. Matt. 16:13-19.
 - 1. Others did not know that Jesus was the Christ. (vs. 13-14)
 - 2. Peter knew that Jesus was the Christ. (vs. 15-16)
 - 3. This was a revelation from God. (vs. 17)
 - 4. It is on this revelation that “Jesus is the Christ” that the church is founded. (vs. 18-19)
 - 5. The church founded in Christ will have all authority and power. (vs. 18-19).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the importance of Peter’s revelation of Jesus as the Rock.

- B. Christ the Life. Paul understood that the foundation of the church was the life of Christ.
 - 1. Jesus is called the foundation. (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11)
 - 2. Jesus is called the cornerstone. (Ps. 118:22; Ac. 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:6; Isa. 28:16)

IMPORTANT POINTS

How is it that Jesus is the life?

II. Purposes of the Body of Christ The church is the channel through which God is accomplishing His works in the earth today. “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.” (Eph. 3:10) This wisdom includes His purposes to:

A. Show forth His Glory and Praises. (1 Pet. 2:9) This is done through:

1. Supernatural gifts of the Spirit. (Matt. 15:31; Ac. 4:21-22).
2. Answered prayer. (Jn. 14:13; 11 Thes. 1:11-12).
3. Completing His work. (Jn. 17:4; 1 Pet. 4:11).
4. Entire consecration. (1 Cor. 6:20; Jn. 21:19; Rom. 12:1).
5. Good works. (Matt. 5:14-16; 1 Pet. 2:12; 1 Tim. 5:25).
6. Unity. (Jn. 17:22-23; Rom. 15:5-6).

IMPORTANT POINTS

In what ways does the church show forth God’s glory and praise?

B. Show forth His Word. We are to establish the kingdom of God in other people’s lives. (Lu. 5:10, 9:60; Jn. 17:18)

1. Jesus prayed that the church would show the world that the Father sent Him. (Jn. 17:23)
2. A short time later His command was to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. (Mk. 16:15).
3. The early church was obedient to this command. (Ac. 8:4-5; Ph. 2:16).
4. Even as the Lord called Paul to be His witness, so He also calls us—individually and corporately as a church. (Ac. 9:15-16, 22:14-15).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why should the church show forth His Word?

III. Portraits of the Church The word church comes from the Greek ekklesia which means “a calling out, a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation.” The form in which the “called out” people of God come together in is described by several types.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is the meaning of the word church?

- A. The Bride. The organization which we call a church is a bride.
 - a. Jesus is our bridegroom. (Matt. 9:15; Jn. 3:29)
 - b. We are promised to Christ in marriage. (Rom. 7:4; 11Cor. 11:2; Hos. 2:19-20)
 - c. We are to be a ready and pure bride. (Rev. 19:7-8; Eph. 5:28-32; Ps. 45:10-15; Song of Solomon 4:7).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the church through the portrait of a bride.

- B. The Temple. We are the place where God dwells by His Spirit.
 - 1. The word temple is used to describe:
 - a. Jesus. (Jn. 2:19-21).
 - b. Every individual. (1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19).
 - c. Christians joined together. (11 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:19-22).
 - 2. God inhabits this temple of people rather than a building on a corner. (Eph. 2:21-22; Ac. 17:24).
- C. The Body. We are the body of Christ with Jesus as our Head. (Col. 1:18, 24; Eph. 1:22-23).
 - 1. Christians are not just the body which belongs to Christ, but the actual functioning Christ in the earth today. (11 Cor. 5:20; Jn. 20:21).
 - 2. Each Christian is a particular member of the functioning Body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:14-27).
 - 3. Each part needs the other. (Eph. 4:15-16).
- D. The Branches. Jesus is the Vine and we are branches. (Jn. 15:1-8).
 - 1. He is the Vine. (vs. 1)
 - 2. We are the branches (vs. 5)

3. As we abide together in relationship with Christ and each other, we bring forth fruit. (vs. 2, 4, 7-8; Ac. 2:42-47).

E. The Army. The church is an army at war.

1. Christians are called
 - a. As soldiers. (1 Tim. 2:3-4).
 - b. To fight. (1 Tim. 6:12; 11 Tim. 4:7).
 - c. In an army. (Joel 2:1-11)
2. Jesus is our King and Commander. (Deu. 20:3-4; Rev. 19:11, 14-16).
3. The battle we fight is a spiritual battle. (Matt. 11:12; 11 Cor. 10:3-6; 1 Thes. 5:8).
4. We must fight with the full armor of God. (Eph. 6:11-17; Rom. 13:12; 1 Thes. 5:8).
5. God's army has been given the victory to overcome. (1 Cor. 15:57; Rev. 12:11; 1 Jn. 5:4-5).

IMPORTANT POINTS

How is the church a fighting army?

F. The Family. Christians are in a family relationship with God and each other. (Matt. 12:50; Mk. 3:33-35; Lu. 8:21)

1. God is our Father. (Isa. 63:16, 64:8; Matt. 6:9, 7:11; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6).
2. We are called sons. (Rom. 8:14, 16; Jn. 1:12-13; Gal. 4:7; Hos. 1:10).
3. We are called the family of God. (Eph. 3:14-15, 2:19).

IV. Point of Decision The church, then, is all of the activity which results from a foundation in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the daily lives of those people called Christians acting as God's representatives and showing forth His wisdom and glory in the earth. It can be painted as a called out family which is the temple or abiding place of God, becoming the beautiful bride, growing together like a vine and functioning like a single body to establish the kingdom through war.

PERSONAL APPLICATION – AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHURCH

1. My church should be built on the foundation of ...

2. My overall purpose of being a part of the body of Christ includes....

3. At this point of decision in my life, I especially see myself as the church
portrait of

The Church—Part 2

Church Formation

“...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 the increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love,” (Eph. 4:16). Knowing how the church is formed will give a completely different view of the church from most contemporary ideas. The key word in the forming of a church is relationship. The church is formed as relationships are developed. This forming is not so much along the lines of corporate organization. Instead, it is an organic growth of knitting people together in love. As each individual finds a relationship with Jesus, then he will begin to meet others in relationship with Him. As each person is added to the groups of relationships, he brings his own special gifts and building materials.

I. The Basic Stone The basic unit in the body of Christ is the individual member. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house...” (1 Pet. 2:5). As each stone is built on the foundational life of Jesus, each can see his or her own individual importance and place in the body.

- A. The Stones’ Life. Each individual received life from Jesus. (Jn. 11:25, 14:6; 1Jn. 5:11-12).
 - 1. Every member must be in relationship with Jesus before he can relate to others (I Jn. 1:3, 7; Eph. 4:32).
 - 2. It is through relating with Christ that we learn love. (Jn. 13:34-35; I Jn. 4:9-11).
 - 3. We must draw our life from Him if we are going to have anything to give to others. (I Thes. 4:9-10; Ac. 4:13; Jn. 15:4-5).
 - 4. Jesus is made manifest when believers come together. (Matt. 18:20; Lu. 24:15).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe how each stone is to draw its own life.

- B. The Stone’s Importance. Each individual is important. (I Cor. 12:14-27).
 - 1. Each was redeemed by the Cross. (I Cor. 1:18; Jn. 19:16-17).
 - 2. Each is in the image of Christ. (Rom. 8:29; II Cor. 3:18).
 - 3. Each is to be given special attention and ministry. (Heb. 13:3; I Cor. 12:7, 11).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why is each stone important?

-
-
- C. The Stone's Place. Each individual is placed by God in the body. (Eph. 1:11-12).
1. People don't just join; God adds them. (Ac. 5:13-14, 2:47, 13:48).
 2. God gives each member a place. (I Cor. 12:18).

II. The Cementing Together of Stones As we live our lives together with a common goal, we are drawn together and forged into a working body. (Eph. 2:19-22).

- A. Drawn Together. The stones do not remain independent of one another.
1. The body is fitly joined and compacted. (Eph. 4:16).
 - a. Joined comes from the Greek sunarmologeō—"render closely jointed together, organize compactly, be fitly framed together," (Strong's).
 - b. Compacted comes from the Greek sumbibazo—"to force, to drive together, unite; to infer, show or teach." (Strong's).
 2. By the effectual working of every member. (I Pet. 4:10; I Cor. 12:20-25).
 3. Building the body up in love. (I Cor. 8:1; Eph. 5:21, 4:25; Col. 3:12-13, 16).

IMPORTANT POINTS

How is each stone drawn together?

- B. Forged Together. We are knit together in love. (Col. 3:14).
1. This knitting together results in lasting relationships. (Ruth 1:16; II Kings 2:2; Ac. 2:42).
 2. This bond of love is strong. (Song of Solomon 8:6-7; I Cor. 12:26).

III. Each Stone Alike There are certain calls which each stone holds in common. We must meet together under the direction of Jesus to fulfill these callings.

- A. Encouraging (Exhorting) one another. (I Thes. 5:11).
1. This protects us from hardening our hearts. (Heb. 3:13)
 2. We encourage one another with great patience and careful instruction. (II Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:9).
 3. Godly examples: (Lu. 3:18; Ac. 11:23, 14:22, 15:32).

IMPORTANT POINTS

How can a Christian encourage another?

B. Financially serving one another. (II Cor. 8:1-5; Lev. 27:30; Mal. 3:10).

1. Each one should give whatever he has decided in his heart to give. (II Cor. 9:7; Ex. 35:5).
2. If the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has. (Deu. 16:17; II Cor. 8:12-15).
3. This liberality in giving results in praise to God. (II Cor. 9:13; I Chr. 29:9; II Chr. 31:5, 8).
4. Godly examples: (Ac. 11:29; Ezra 2:68-69; Ex. 36:3; Lu. 21:1-4).

C. Meeting physical needs. (Matt. 25:31-46, Lu. 6:30-31; Matt. 10:8).

1. We must have an open heart that does not avoid the needs of others. (Lu. 10:30-37; Lev. 25:35; Deu. 15:7-8; Gal. 6:10).
2. This should not be done to gain recognition from men. (Matt. 6:1-4).
3. Godly examples: (Job 29:15-16; Ac. 4:34-37; Ph. 2:28-30; II Tim. 1:16-18; Jn. 13:5, 14-15).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What principles should be followed in meeting another's physical and financial needs?

D. Loving one another. (Jn. 15:12).

1. This love between each other is to continue and increase. (Heb. 13:1; I Thes. 3:12; Ph. 1:9).
2. Our love for each other shows that we are His disciples. (Jn. 13:35; I Jn. 4:12).
3. Godly examples: (Ph. 1:8; Ac. 20:38).

E. Bearing one another's Burdens. (Gal. 6:2).

1. We must be willing to volunteer ourselves to another's life. (Ph. 4:3; Neh. 11:2; I Pet. 5:2).
2. This is lending strength to another while he is weak. (Rom. 15:1-3; Ac. 20:35).
3. Godly examples: (II Chr. 28:15; Ezra 1:2-6; Ex. 17:9-13; Isa. 53:4; I Pet. 2:24).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is meant by “bearing another’s burdens?”

IV. Each Stone Different Every stone has specific gifts to contribute with others cannot.

- A. Motivational Gifts. Romans 12:6-8 gives what is commonly known as the motivational gifts. We each have the responsibility to “take heed to the ministry which [we] have received in the Lord, that [we] fulfill it,” (Col. 4:17).
 - 1. Prophecy. A person with this gift generally sees things in black and white and can deliver a message from and by the Spirit of God. (Ac. 11:27-29, 21:10-11).
 - 2. Ministry. A better word would be serving. This person has a keen eye for needs and can meet them. (II Tim. 1:16-18; Ac. 6:1-3).
 - 3. Teaching. This person is gifted by God to explain things so people can understand. (Ac. 18:24-28).
 - 4. Exhorting. This person knows how to motivate people to do God’s word. (I Sam. 23:15-17; I Thes. 2:11-12).
 - 5. Giving. A person with the gift of giving as a motivation is able to be a good steward with his possessions and meet physical/financial needs. (Ac. 9:36, 39, 10:2).
 - 6. Ruling. A ruling gift manifests itself in an ability to keep people informed and directed in the right way, understanding God-given authority. (Ac. 15:22-31).
 - 7. Showing mercy. This person is able to go the extra mile with people who need extra help. (II Cor. 2:5-10).

IMPORTANT POINTS

List and briefly describe the motivational gifts.

- B. Functional Gifts. I Corinthians 12:4-10 lists nine gifts of function which are manifested through the Body of Christ. We each have the responsibility to “stir up the gift of God” within for His glory. II Tim. 1:6.
 - 1. Word of wisdom. This is an impartation of God showing us what to do or how to do something. (Ac. 9:12, 10:20, 8:29).

2. Word of knowledge. In this case knowledge is given which would have been hidden to our natural senses. (Ac. 9:11, 10:29).
3. Faith. Here God imparts faith where there was previously little or no faith, that we might receive His promises in any number of areas. (I Cor. 13:2; II Cor. 4:13; Ac. 3:16).
4. Gifts of healings. This is when God restores a physical body which was previously sick or damaged. (Ac. 5:15, 14:10, 19:11-12).
5. Working of miracles. This includes any number of supernatural things, such as a healing in which something was created which was formerly not there, and the casting out of demons. (Ac. 8:6-7, 14:3, 15:12, 16:25-26).
6. Prophecy. The mind of the Spirit is here spoken through the natural speech organs for the purpose of stirring up the church and giving direction for meetings. (I Cor. 14:3; I Tim. 1:18, 4:14; II Sam. 23:2; Matt. 22:43).
7. Discerning of spirits. The discernment reveals the Holy Spirit, angels, demons, or a brother's spirit. (Lu. 1:11-12; Ac. 16:18, 14:9).
8. Divers kinds of tongues. Here is a supernatural utterance in a language not understood in the mind of a speaker. (Ac. 2:4-12; Dan.5:5-9).
9. Interpretation of tongues. This gift reveals what was shown forth in tongues. (I Cor. 14:13-16, 27; Dan. 5:10-12, 25-28).

IMPORTANT POINTS

List and briefly describe the functional gifts.

V. Point of Decision So, the church is not formed through an organization which sticks people into slots; instead, it is formed as each member grows in his relationship to the Lord and other Christians. As this organic growth takes place, bonds are formed which Satan cannot break. The organization of the church then is based on love rather than selfish greed for power, recognition, or money.

PERSONAL APPLICATION — HOW THE CHURCH IS FORMED

1. As an individual stone (or member) of the church, I am to be fitted and joined together with others by....

2. This week, how can I fulfill some of the common areas of service that each member is to give?

3. At this point of decision, I desire to seek which specific motivational and functional gifts that Jesus wants me to come forth in. Right now they seem to be....

The Church—Part 3

Church Structure

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren,” (1 Jn. 3:16). This Bible study discusses church structure from the most basic relationship to the more involved. In all relationships we are to show His love. Church structure must be understood with respect to the various relationships involved, because it is as we are “knit together” that the body is formed. Being grafted into the body of Christ is not joining an organization, it is forming relationships— first with Jesus, then with the rest of the Body. As people find themselves added to the church, they must consider questions such as, “Who should I look to for guidance? Who should be my friends, and what is my responsibility to others in the church?”

I. The Most Important Relationship Our personal relationship with Jesus through the Word, prayer and worship takes priority over every other relationship.

- A. Needing Jesus. We relate to Jesus the most.
 - 1. The greatest commandment is to love God. (Mk. 12:30; Deut. 6:5; 10:12; Ps. 31:23).
 - 2. It is only by being in relationship with Him that we can give to others. (Phil. 2:1-5).
 - 3. He alone is our high priest. (Heb. 2:17, 3:1, 4:14-15, 5:5, 6:20, 7:26, 8:1, 9:11, 10:21).
 - 4. We can love (be in relationship with others) because He has first loved us. (1 Jn. 4:19).

- B. Meeting Jesus. This relationship is cultivated by:
 - 1. The Word. (1 Sam. 3:21)
 - 2. Prayer. Speaking with God and not to God. (Ex. 33:11; Num. 12:8).
 - 3. Worship. (Jn. 4:23-24).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the Christian’s most important relationship and how to develop it.

II. The Family Relationship The home is a basic substructure of the church. People need to have their relationships at home in order before they consider other relationships.

- A. The Man’s Role. The man is the head of the wife. (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23).
 - 1. He teaches her. (1 Tim. 2:11; 1 Cor. 14:35).
 - 2. He rejoices over her. (Pr. 5:18; Ecc. 9:9).
 - 3. He lays his life down for her. (Eph. 5:25; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 Cor. 7:33).
 - 4. He meets her physical needs. (1 Tim. 5:8).

- B. The Woman's Role. The woman submits to the husband. (1 Pet. 3:5; Eph. 5:22).
1. The submission is to be similar to the church's submission to Christ. (Eph. 5:24; Col. 3:18).
 2. Her submission is a testimony to the husband. (1 Pet. 3:1; Pr. 12:4).
 3. This submission results in purity in the woman. (1 Pet. 3:1-2).
 4. The older women are then to train the younger women to be submissive and love their families. (Titus 2:3-5; Pr. 31:26).
- C. The Children's Role. The children obey the parents. (Co. 3:20).
1. The children are to give honor to their parents. (Eph. 6:2; Pr. 31:28; Deut. 5:16).
 2. Children obey the parents in the Lord. (Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20).
 3. Disobedience is judged by the Lord. (Pr. 30:17; Deut. 21:18-21; Lev. 20:9; Mk. 7:9-13).
- D. The Parent's Role. Parents have a responsibility to the children to:
1. Teach them how to walk in the way of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:7; Pr. 22:6; Ps. 78:5).
 2. Give them encouragement to walk in His way. (1 Thes. 2:11-12).
 3. Teach them right from wrong. (Pr. 13:24, 19:18, 22:15, 23:13, 29:15).
 4. Provide for physical needs. (11 Cor. 12:14).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the family relationship that Christians have with each other.

III. The General Relationship with Each Other “Fellowshipping is Christians coming together under the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ. As each believer is in a close relationship with Jesus, we have unity of mind and purpose. (1 Jn. 1:7; Rom. 15:5-6; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3, Ps. 133:1).

- A. Same Family. All Christians are a part of the same family.
1. Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers. (Heb. 2:11-12; Jn. 20:17; Matt. 12:50; Rom. 8:29).
 2. We are the Father's children. (1 Jn. 3:1; Rom. 9:26, 8:16).
 3. We all have a family relationship with each other. (1 Tim. 5:1-2; Matt. 23:8; Rom. 12:5).
- B. Same Submission. Christians should submit their lives one to another. (Eph. 5:21; 1 Cor. 16:15-16). This involves opening one's life to others for:
1. Confession of secret sins. (Ja. 5:16).
 2. Instruction. (Rom. 15:14)
 3. The order for submission is first to the Lord, then to each other. (11 Cor 8:5)

- C. Same Concern. Christians should care for one another and build each other up. (Rom. 14:19, 15:2). This involves:
1. Speaking encouraging words. (Eph. 4:29, 5:19; 1 Thes. 5:11).
 2. Practicing hospitality. (1 Pet. 4:9; Rom. 12:13, 16:16; Lu. 3:11).
 3. Not doing evil against each other. (Ja. 4:11, 5:11; Rom. 14:13; Co. 3:9)
 4. Serving in practical areas. (1 Pet. 4:10; Gal. 5:13).

IV. The Close Relationships Each member should know how to develop close relationships with a few people. This is between people who are of the same age in the Lord, but also needs to be with those who are older and more mature.

- A. Close Relationships. We need close friends to:
1. Have an increase in strength. (Deut. 32:30; Ecc. 4:9-12; Lu. 10:1).
 2. Learn from to grow in maturity. (Pr. 13:20, 27:17).
 3. Point out sins in our lives. (Pr. 27:6; Gal. 2:11-14, 6:1).
- B. Discipleship Relationships. Discipleship is when an older person in the Lord raises up a younger believer. Paul taught Timothy and Titus to be disciples.
1. Paul had a spiritual father-son relationship with Timothy and Titus. (1 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4).
 2. Paul took them along and showed them his way of life. (Gal. 2:3; 1 Cor. 4:17; 11 Tim. 3:10-11).
 3. Paul desired their company more than anyone else's. (11 Tim. 1:3-4, 4:9; Titus 3:12; 11 Cor. 2:12-13; Ac. 17:15).
 4. He gave them personal instructions to help them learn to minister out. (1Tim. 1:18-19; Titus 2:1-15).
 5. Timothy took on Paul's heart. (Ph. 2:19-22).
 6. The discipleship relationship involved Timothy and Titus in:
 - a. Accompanying Paul and ministering to his needs, as did John. (Mark Ac. 15:37-38, 20:4, 18:5).
 - b. Preaching with Paul. (11 Cor. 1:19).
 - c. Taking on Paul's heart. (Phil. 2:19-22; 11 Cor. 8:16).
 - d. Being sent out to preach. (1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:5; 1 Thes. 3:2).
 - e. Attaining to the same anointing as Paul. (1 Cor. 16:10; Heb. 13:23).
 - f. They in turn raising up other faithful men. (11 Tim. 2:2).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Explain the progression of the discipleship relationship that Paul had with Timothy and Titus.

V. Relationships with Elders Each member should know who to look to for guidance and instruction.

A. Qualifications for Elders.

1. Elders are older, more mature Christians. (1 Tim. 1:6-7).
 - a. Elders don't argue. (1 Tim. 2:23-26).
 - b. They have their finances in order. (1 Tim. 3:3; 1 Pet. 5:2).
 - c. They know how to relate in a family. (Titus 1:6; 1 Tim. 3:4-5).
 - d. They must be blameless in overcoming the flesh. (Titus 1:7-8; 1 Tim. 3:2-3).
2. They are appointed in each city, and set in by authority. (Ac. 14:23; Titus 1:5).
3. The elders minister to two groups of people. (Titus 1:9).
 - a. Believers. (Ja. 5:14).
 - b. Unbelievers. (Titus 1:10-11; 1 Tim. 1:3-4).

B. The Elder's Responsibility. Elders are set up for oversight of the body, much as the watchman of the Old Testament.

1. Elders are to watch over the flock in a righteous way. (Ac. 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-2; Isa. 56:10-11; Eze. 34:2-3).
2. They are to be watchmen who call out to people. (Eze. 33:1-9, 3:17-21; Isa. 62:6; Hos. 9:8; Jer. 31:6; Isa. 52:8).
3. They must give an account for the souls they watch over. (Heb. 13:17; Eze. 33:6).
4. Elders set an example for the people to follow. (1 Thes. 3:9; 1 Pet. 5:3; Act. 20:35).

C. The Member's Responsibility. Members have a responsibility to the elders.

1. In the Old Testament, provision was made for priests from the people in several areas. (Lev. 2:3, 10:13, 27:21; Num. 3:48, 5:9, 18:9, 12, 21; Deut. 18:3; 1 Ki. 12:16).
2. The body of Christ has a financial obligation to the elders. (1 Cor. 9:6-14; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17-18).
3. Members are to submit to the elders' authority. (Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:5; Act. 16:4).
4. Members must respect them and hold them in the highest regard. (1 Thes. 5:12-13).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is the purpose of elders?

Expound on the member's responsibility toward elders.

VI. Relationships with Deacons When areas of practical need arise, faithful men are chosen to serve. Deacon comes from the Greek diakonos, which means to be a servant.

- A. Qualifications for Deacons. (1 Tim. 3:8-13).
 - 1. Deacons are to be men with a pure heart and proper character. (vs. 8-9).
 - 2. They are to be tested before they are set in office. (vs. 10).
 - 3. Their families are also to be in proper order. (vs. 11-12).
 - 4. Deacons who have served well are rewarded. (vs. 13; 11 Sam. 23:3-4).

- B. The Pattern for Deacons. (Ac. 6:1-7).
 - 1. There were practical needs in the Body of Christ that the elders could not tend to without neglecting the ministry of the Word. (vs. 1-2)
 - 2. To fulfill these needs, the brothers chose men who were going on with God. (vs. 3-5).
 - 3. They were set in office by authority and with prayer. (vs. 6).
 - 4. This order caused the kingdom to advance. (vs. 7).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is the purpose for deacons?

VII. Relationships with Offices of Ministry There are special gifts of ministry to the church for building up the body. “And the Lord 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; 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 fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:11-13).

- A. Defining the Ministry. God has appointed five areas of ministry. (Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:27-28).

1. Apostles. These men go through great suffering as they lay down the foundation in churches. (1 Cor. 9:1; 4:9-13; Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:10).
2. Prophets. These men speak both of things to come and things presently. (Act. 11:27-30, 21:10-11).
3. Evangelists. (An evangelist brings the Gospel to the masses and to individuals while training the local church to do the same. (Ac. 21:8, 8:5-6, 34-35).
4. Pastors. In the New Testament church, this was not just one man but a group of elders (shepherds). (Ac. 20:17, 28).
5. Teachers. These men have a thorough knowledge of the scriptures in bringing forth the Word. (Ac. 18:24-28; Ja. 3:1; Ecc. 12:9).

B. Receiving Ministry. These ministries build up the church members.

1. The authority these men receive is for building men up and not for pulling them down. (11 Cor. 10:8; 12:19).
2. They train up the body much as a child is subject to guardians until he is old enough to inherit the estate. (Gal. 4:1-2; Eph. 4:14; 1 Cor. 3:1-2).
3. The instrument these ministries use for building up the body is the Word of God. (Col. 1:25; Ac. 20:32, 1 Thes. 2:4; 1 Tim. 1:11; Titus 1:3).

C. Giving Ministry. Each individual is prepared to give after being equipped by these ministries. Each member is prepared to minister as they receive the teaching and training from these ministries.

1. In being a part of this five-fold ministry, Paul desired to present everyone perfect in Christ. (Col. 1:28).
2. The writer of Hebrews wanted the people to go on this point of perfections where they could teach others, and so leave the foundational things. (Heb. 6:1-3, 5:12).
3. At this point as a perfect man, we have unity with each other. (Eph. 4:13; 1 Cor. 1:10; 11 Cor. 13:11; Ac. 4:32).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the five offices of ministry.

Explain the purposes of these ministries.

VIII. Point of Decision As a Christian grows from being supported and trained by the body of Christ, friends, elders, and ministers, they will begin to minister to other new Christians. God desires that these areas of relationship would be strengthened and purified so that His church could become a functioning unit that is holy and separated from the world. As God continues to do this work, His church will be the instrument that wins the lost of the world. “For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself,” (Deut. 14:2).

PERSONAL APPLICATION — CHURCH STRUCTURE

1. According to the role(s) that I fit into, are my family relationships at home in order?

2. Am I making an effort to show the same submission and concern that other Christians are giving me?

3. How can I develop closer friendships and a better discipleship relationship to help me grow in the Lord?

4. At this point of decision, I desire to be trained by the five offices of ministry that I could give...

Reaching the Lost —Part 1

Preparing for Evangelism

“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,” (Mk. 16:15). The last words of Jesus to His apostles in the book of Matthew told them to go and share the Gospel with others. Earlier He prayed for His disciples, not that God would take them out of the world, but that they would be kept in the world. This is because Jesus has a purpose with our life, and ultimately that purpose is to glorify Himself through us. One aspect of this goal includes remaining on this earth to witness to those who do not know Him. We declare Jesus to the world not simply by words, but also by our life-styles and in power. As we begin to understand the dynamics of evangelism and lift up the name of the Lord to those around us, Jesus is glorified.

I. Foundation for Evangelism Our goal is not to just pump ourselves up to go out and witness once or twice a week, but to have a life-style of sharing. As we are abiding in Jesus and maintaining a servant’s heart, a life-style of sharing the Gospel will come forth.

A. Some Definitions.

1. Ministry. The Greek is *diakonia*.
 - a. Strong’s – attendance (as a servant), aid, service, to run errands, a waiter (at a table or in other menial duties).
 - b. Vine’s – of the service of believers.
2. Witness. The Greek is *martus*.
 - a. Strong’s – by analogy, a martyr, record, witness.
 - b. Vine’s – of those who witness for Christ by their deaths.
3. Testify. The Greek is *martureo*.
 - a. Strong’s – to be a witness, charge, give evidence, bear record, have good report.
 - b. Vine’s – frequently rendered to bear witness, to testify.
4. Testimony. The Greek is *marturia*.
 - a. Strong’s – Evidence given (judicially or general) record, report, testimony, witness.
 - b. Vine’s – witness, evidence.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Define the meaning behind the words ministry, witness, testify, and testimony.

B. Abiding in Jesus. (Jn. 15:1-16)

1. Jesus is the vine; we are the branches. (vs. 1, 5).
 - a. Those branches that do not abide and do not bring forth fruit are cut out and burned. (vs. 6).

- b. The branches that do bear fruit are pruned that they might bring forth more fruit. (vs. 2).
 - 2. It is through abiding in Jesus that we bring forth fruit. (vs. 7-8).
 - 3. We abide in Jesus through keeping His commands. (vs. 10; I Jn. 3:6).
 - 4. We have been ordained to go and bring forth fruit. (vs. 16).
- C. A Servant's Heart. Before we can faithfully minister to the lost, we must sacrifice our own preferences for others just as a servant would. (Matt. 20:25-28).
 - 1. Those in the world become great by exerting their authority over others. (vs. 25).
 - 2. Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve. (vs. 28).
 - 3. The Christians who want to be great are to be the servants and slaves. (vs. 26-27).
 - 4. We become other's servants for Jesus' sake. (II Cor. 4:5).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Explain why abiding in Jesus and having a servant's heart are the foundations for evangelism.

II. Essential Elements Involved in Evangelism. God has given His children the authority to go and preach the Gospel. We are exhorted to pray that people would receive the message, but it is the work of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that actually reveals and convicts others of their need for the Savior.

- A. Authority in Evangelism. Our authority stems from it being the Lord who has commanded us to share. "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life," (Ac. 5:20).
 - 1. Jesus introduced the Great Commission by first declaring He has all authority. (Matt. 28:18).
 - 2. The people recognized Jesus as one who spoke with authority. (Matt. 7:29; Mk. 1:27).
 - 3. He has given this authority to us that Satan might not hinder the work. (Lu. 10:19).
- B. The Word of God in Evangelism. It is God's Word that can cut through people's masks of self-deception and expose to them their real need. "For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart," (Heb. 4:12).
 - 1. The Word is likened to a sword. (Eph. 6:17).
 - 2. It is able to break through the rock of people's cold hearts. (Jer. 23:29).
 - 3. The early church understood the importance of speaking the Word while witnessing. (Ac. 4:29).

4. When believers turned away from sin and the world, the power in the Word was able to go forth strongly. (Ac. 19:18-20).
- C. Prayer in Evangelism. “Then saith He unto His disciples, the harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest,” (Matt. 9:37-38).
1. Paul realized it took prayer to open the door for the message of the Gospel. (Col. 4:3).
 2. After Peter and John had boldly shared the Gospel, they went back to their own people to pray. (Ac. 4:23-24).
 3. To intercede means to stand and plead on behalf of another. We should intercede for other’s salvation before God. (Ex. 32:32; I Sam. 7:5).
 4. If we do not intercede for those around us, God’s judgment will surely come. (Ps. 106:23; Eze. 22:30-31).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why are the Word of God and prayer essential elements in evangelism?

- D. The Holy Spirit in Evangelism. It is a work of the Spirit that takes the Word of God to an unbeliever, offering salvation. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing,” (Jn. 6:63).
1. The Spirit of God holds and applies the Sword, the Word of God. (Eph. 6:17).
 2. Conviction is the result of the Holy Spirit’s actions. (Jn. 16:8).
 3. Then it is the Holy Spirit that births one into salvation. (Jn. 3:5-8; Gal. 4:29).
 4. It is the work of the Spirit that strengthens the new believer toward maturity. (Eph. 3:16; II Cor. 3:17-18).
 5. The Spirit desires to use us in reaching the lost. (Ac. 16:5-10, 8:29).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What role does the Holy Spirit play in evangelism?

III. Ways to Witness We have opportunities each day to not only verbalize the Gospel, but also to live the Gospel before others and walk in the power of the Spirit. “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom. 10:14).

- A. By Our Words. “And they spoke unto him the Word of the Lord...” (Ac. 16:32).
 - 1. Jesus has given us the words of eternal life. (Jn. 6:63, 68, 17:8).
 - 2. God brings His Word to light through our words. (Titus 1:3).
 - 3. No unwholesome talk should come out of our mouths that would not build up believers and unbelievers around us. (Eph. 4:29).

- B. By Our Actions. By being a servant to other’s needs, our life in Him can clearly be seen. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven,” (Matt. 5:16).
 - 1. In order to shine as stars before the world, our behavior must be blameless and pure. (Ph. 2:15-16).
 - 2. Sometimes actions can speak louder than words. (Matt. 8:4).
 - 3. Christian wives were encouraged that they may win over an unbelieving husband by the way they lived their lives. (I Pet. 3:1-2).

IMPORTANT POINTS

How can witnessing be through one’s actions?

- C. By Power. “My speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit’s power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God,” (I Cor. 2:4-5).
 - 1. After Jesus had fasted, He entered Galilee in the power of the Spirit. (Lu. 4:14).
 - 2. The disciples were told that they would receive power when they received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. (Ac. 1:8).
 - 3. The disciples did indeed witness with great power. (Ac. 4:33, 6:8).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe a present-day application of the progression in witnessing in Acts. 1:8.

IV. Who We Should Witness to. There is a natural progression that Jesus has ordained that we should follow in seeking who to witness with. “And ye shall be My witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth,” (Ac. 1:8). Jerusalem and Judea can be regarded as our family and friends, and Samaria, located outside of Jerusalem, can be taken as our bosses, co-workers, neighborhoods and acquaintances. The uttermost parts of the earth are the men of all nations.

- A. Family. The apostle Andrew “first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, ‘we have found the Messiah,’” (Jn. 1:41).
 - 1. In the Old Testament, the sacrificial lamb was on behalf of each household, and not just for an individual. (Ex. 12:3).
 - 2. Rahab’s faith not only saved herself, but also her family. (Josh. 6:23)
 - 3. We have the promise in the New Testament for the salvation of our whole families. (Act. 16:31).
 - 4. Today, we must put priority in meeting our families’ spiritual needs. (1 Tim. 5:8).

- B. Friends. “Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, ‘Go home to thy friends, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee,’” (Mk. 5:19).
 - 1. Cornelius invited not only his family but also his close friends together to hear the Word of the Lord from Peter. (Ac. 10:24, 33).
 - 2. Often it is embarrassment or shame that will keep us from telling our friends about our faith. (II Tim. 1:8; Jn. 7:13).
 - 3. Fear of being excluded will hinder our confession. (Jn. 12:42).
 - 4. Because of the Lord’s comfort, there is no reason to fear man. (Isa. 51:12-13; Lu. 6:22-23).

- C. Employers. Those who work for another are to labor in such a way that others are attracted to the teaching of Jesus. “Exhort the servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things...that they may adorn the doctrine of God our savior in all things,” (Titus 2:9-10).
 - 1. Nehemiah prayed and then shared with the king about building God’s chosen city. (Neh. 1:11-2:8).
 - 2. The Lord will reward all the good that one does for his boss. (Eph. 6:5-8).

- D. Acquaintances. We should always be ready to share the Gospel with those whom we pass by and consider that God may have ordained such a meeting for the Gospel’s sake. “Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you for a reason of the hope that is in you,” (1 Pet. 3:15).
 - 1. Jesus, though being weary from His recent journey, shared the Gospel with a woman who was passing by. (Jn. 4:6-14).
 - 2. On the way to a place of prayer, Paul stopped to talk to some women in order to witness. (Ac. 16:13-14).
 - 3. Paul called out to his jailer and shared the good news with him. (Ac. 16:27-32).

- E. The Nations. The Lord spoke to Paul, “For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard,” (Ac. 22:15).
1. Because of the revelation of God seen at the cross and at the empty tomb, He desires that we make known to the nations what He has done. (Isa. 12:4; 1Chr. 16:8).
 2. Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all the nations. (Lu. 24:47).
 3. God is calling to all Gentile nations to receive His Word. (Ac. 15:7; Eph. 3:6; Ac. 28:28).
 4. The Gospel will in fact go into all the nations before the end will come. (Matt. 24:14; Mk. 13:10).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe God’s call on Christians to reach the nations.

List the major points of Peter’s witness to Cornelius.

V. Two Levels of Ministry There are two classes of people we share with: those who already are in a relationship with Jesus and those that are not. Our desire is to witness to all men, regardless of their particular area of need. “Having therefore obtained the help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great...” (Ac. 26:22).

- A. To the Sinner. The scriptural pattern in Acts was not to go around showing people the way of salvation, but to preach Jesus as Lord and as the risen savior. (Ac. 10:34-43).
1. Peter first pointed to the character of God. (vs. 34-35).
 2. He then focused on Jesus.
 - a. He is Lord of all. (vs. 36)
 - b. He was anointed by the Holy Spirit. (vs. 38).
 - c. He died on the cross. (vs. 39).
 - d. God the Father raised him up from the dead. (vs. 40).
 - e. This Jesus is now the judge of all men. (vs. 42).
 3. Peter referred to the scriptures to show that there is forgiveness of sins in Jesus. (vs. 43).

- B. To the Saved. We will want to encourage other Christians by bringing them into a deeper relationship with God by finding their needs and then helping to meet them. (Ac. 19:1-10).
1. He met about 12 disciples when he arrived in Ephesus. (vs. 1, 7).
 2. He found out their area of need.
 - a. They had not received the baptism in the Holy Ghost. (vs. 2).
 - b. They had not been baptized in Jesus' name. (vs. 3).
 3. Paul then ministered to them in these areas of need. (vs. 5-6).
 4. He continued to teach the disciples there for two years. (vs. 9-10).

VI. Point of Decision The life of Jesus within satisfies our desires as we understand His provision, draw close through the Word, prayer and worship, and function as a member of the Body of Christ. God's ministry to us, in turn, causes us to minister to others. "All thy works shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk to Thy power; to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom," (Ps. 145:10-12).

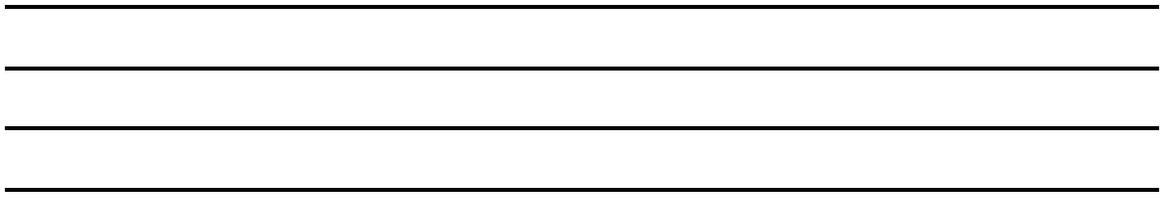
PERSONAL APPLICATION — PREPARATION FOR EVANGELISM

1. What essential elements of evangelism do I need to be more sensitive to?

2. In what specific ways can I be a witness to others?

3. To what groups of people have I witnessed to in the past, and to what groups does the Lord want me to witness to in the future (i.e., family, friends, employers)?

4. At this point of decision, I desire to be a witness of the Lord's truth to both the saved and the lost because...



Reaching the Lost—Part 2

Extending the Kingdom to Unbelievers

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe things whatsoever I have commanded you,” (Matt. 28:19-20). In the Great Commission we find not just the command to go out and witness, but also the principle that we are to make disciples (disciplined learners) of those who receive the Gospel. The question is not just whether we are actively witnessing, but whether we are actually reproducing ourselves. This is the goal of evangelism. Our purpose in sharing our faith with unbelievers is to find those who are willing to lay down their lives for the kingdom and then train them for a life of obedience to the Lord.

I. The Role of Children “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain,” (Jn. 15:16). God has called us to go and witness, to bring forth new believers, and to help the believers remain faithful to Him.

- A. Taking Dominion. The Lord desires to see His kingdom established in the hearts of men.
 - 1. God commanded man to be fruitful and multiply in a natural way, and later in a spiritual way through birthing others into a relationship with Jesus. (Gen. 1:22; Matt. 28:19-20).
 - 2. He promises that none of our men or women will be childless. (Due. 7:14).
 - 3. Through the process of multiplication, the least one can become a mighty nation. (Isa. 60:22).

- B. Demonstration of Jesus. By concentrating on a few men while He ministered to the masses, Jesus was able to prepare twelve to become the foundation for a mighty revival in the First Century church.
 - 1. When Jesus first began His ministry, He chose men to be with Him. (Ac. 1:21-23; Mk. 3:14).
 - 2. By seeing and experiencing how Jesus ministered, they would learn the secrets of the kingdom. (Lu. 8:9-10).
 - 3. This training rotated between instruction and assignment. (Mk. 6:30, 8:19).

- C. Children as an Inheritance. New believers are what the Lord provides Christians in order to continue taking dominion in the earth.
 - 1. Children are a gift from God. (Gen. 33:5, 48:9).
 - 2. They are esteemed and highly valued. (Ps. 127:3-5, 128:3).
 - 3. They bring great joy to parents. (III Jn. 4; Gen. 5:29; Col. 4:11).
 - 4. To not bear children is a disgrace. (Gen. 30:23; I Sam. 1:6-7, 2:1-11; Lu. 1:25).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What role do spiritual children play in the life of a Christian?

II. The Role of Compassion. Fear often hinders Christians from witnessing and reproducing themselves. But instead of focusing on themselves, believers should become preoccupied with the needs of those who do not know the Lord. When we see people's needs from this perspective, we are able to respond with compassion. "There is no fear in love," (I. Jn. 4:18).

- A. The Father's Compassion. As we see the Father's compassion and broken heart for a dying world, we will become closer to Him and understand Him better.
 - 1. Throughout time, the Father shows compassion:
 - a. Past. (Ps. 78:38).
 - b. Present. (Ps. 86:15, 111:4, 145:8).
 - c. Future. (Lam. 3:32)
 - 2. He is committed to having compassion. (Mic. 7:19; Lam. 3:22; Eze. 16:5).
 - 3. God identifies with people's needs to the extent that He refers to them in the first person. Matt. 25:35-40; Ac. 21:7.
 - 4. He longs to be gracious and redeem. (Hos. 7:13; Isa. 30:18).
- B. The Son's Compassion. Clearly Jesus did not coldly preach the Gospel and minister to needs around Him, but became involved in His work.
 - 1. Jesus longed to gather the people together and shepherd them. (Lu. 13:34).
 - 2. Even at the death of Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, the Lord could respond to others' needs. (Matt. 14:9-14).
 - 3. Jesus' compassion led Him to act in meeting people's needs through:
 - a. Healing (Mk. 1:41).
 - b. Feeding (Matt. 15:32).
 - c. Teaching (Mk. 6:34).
 - d. Resurrecting (Lu. 7:13).
- C. The Church's Compassion. Rather than waiting for a feeling or "burden" to drive a believer to witness, the Christian should begin to simply obey the command to share the Gospel. The feeling of compassion will follow as a result.
 - 1. God's people are commanded to be compassionate. (Zech. 7:9; I Pet. 3:8).
 - 2. In fact, we are to clothe ourselves with compassion. (Col. 3:12).
 - 3. Compassion should be shown to one another. (Heb. 10:34; I Jn. 3:17).
- D. Paul's Compassion. If Christians are accustomed to having all their needs met, they will become so comfortable that they will be unable to reach out properly to the lost with compassion. Paul is an example of one who suffered before responding with compassion. (Ac. 21:26-40).
 - 1. Men stirred up the crowd against Paul by falsely accusing Him. (vs. 27-29).
 - 2. They surrounded Paul and shut him within the temple gates. (vs. 30).

3. The crowd then tried to kill him by beating Paul. (vs. 31-32).
4. When the soldiers rescued him, he had to be carried because of the violence of the crowd. (vs. 35-36).
5. At this point of rejection and pain from being beaten, Paul did not try to escape, but rather asked to speak to the people. (vs. 39).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the compassion which God and the church have shown to the lost

III. The Role of Prayer. It's to the degree and by the specificity with which we pray that God moves in the lives of men. First we pray to the Lord that He would increase us through new converts, then we break the bonds of Satan over those whom God chooses. Weeping is experienced as we wait for the fulfillment of these prayers.

- A. Prayer to God. In the lives of Sarah, Rebekkah, Leah, Rachel, Hannah, and Elizabeth, prayer to the Lord was a key to giving birth.
 1. Rachel wanted children so badly that she preferred to die than live without them. (Gen. 30:1).
 2. God answered her heart's desire twice, but during the second birth with Benjamin, she did in fact lose her life. (Gen. 35:16-20).
 3. Likewise, our prayer to bring forth spiritual children should become just as intense until we give birth. (I Sam. 1:1-20).

- B. Prayer Against Satan. Because we are in a spiritual battle for the souls of men, we must attack the influence of the Devil in the lives of those whom God is calling us to bring into the kingdom.
 1. The Devil has people bound and hid in prisons. (Isa. 42:22).
 2. Before we can release the prisoners, Satan must be bound. (Matt. 12:29; Isa. 49:24-25).
 3. In this way we break unbelievers' blindness that keeps them from salvation. (II Cor. 4:3-4; I Jn. 2:11; Isa. 59:10).
 4. As we take our authority, God is then able to give us spiritual children. (Isa. 43:6-8).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What attack must be made against Satan for souls to be saved?

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- C. Prayer through Weeping. As we become locked in prayer for those whom God takes us into battle, we may often experience weeping. This is not emotionalism, but a result of the Spirit working within.
1. Those who go out weeping, or with a right heart, are those who return with fruit. (Ps. 126:6).
 2. As Jesus approached Jerusalem, He was overcome by grief and broke down and wept. (Lu. 19:41-42).
 3. Likewise, Paul experienced great sorrow desiring the salvation of his own people. (Rom. 9:1-3).

IV. The Role of Purity. We must realize that our whole lifestyle is passed on to new believers with whom we spend time with. Our habits, good and bad, will become the pattern for the new Christian to base his life in. Therefore, our lives must be holy before we should work closely in training others. “Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit: but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit,” (Matt. 7:17).

- A. God Opening the Womb. As a believer walks in holiness, he will bear fruit.
1. Jesus taught that there must be a death to self before there is reproduction, or rather, multiplication of our lives. (Jn. 12:24).
 2. We died to the Law in order that we might bear fruit to Him. (Rom. 7:4).
 3. As long as the children of Israel followed the Lord’s command, He promised that they would live and increase. (Deu. 8:1).
 4. As we stay holy before Him, we will continue to bear fruit. (Jer. 17:7-8).
 5. Believers face God’s judgment when consistently not bearing fruit. (Lu. 13:6-9; Heb. 6:7-8; Isa. 5:1-7).
- B. God Closing the Womb. God has promised to answer our prayers. If He does not hear our requests to bring forth fruit, it becomes a wonderful thing in that He is speaking to us that there is something wrong.
1. Having no children could be a judgment from God. (Gen. 20:17-18).
 2. However, Elizabeth, a righteous woman, did not have children for much of her life. (Lu. 1:6-7).
 3. Before Manoah’s wife conceived, an angel spoke of the need for a blameless life and to do all that God commands. (Jug. 13:2-14).
 4. Because of the people’s sin, Hosea prophesied that people would have miscarrying wombs. (Hos. 9:9-14).

IMPORTANT POINTS

If someone has not brought forth fruit in the kingdom, are they in sin?

V. The Role of Weighing Costs. The disciples saw Jesus make sacrifices of time and effort for others, suffer the rejection of those He ministered to, and ultimately suffer His personal rights violated. The disciples were faithful to follow His example by suffering in the same areas to bring forth fruit. “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,” (Gal. 4:19).

- A. Sacrificing for Others. Believers should choose to sacrifice pleasure for the lost.
 - 1. We must be willing to have difficulty in finding time alone with God as He makes us a source of life to others.
 - a. Jesus. (Mk. 7:24; 1:35-37).
 - b. Disciples. (Mk. 3:20, 6:30-34).
 - 2. In the same way, rest and sleep will become difficult.
 - a. Jesus. (Mk. 1:35; Lu. 6:12)
 - b. Disciples. (II Cor. 7:5, 11:26-27; Ac. 16:25).
 - 3. Worldly treasures and relationships must be sacrificed.
 - a. Jesus. (Isa. 53:8; Matt. 8:20; II Cor. 8:9).
 - b. Disciples. (I Cor. 9:3-6, 4:11; Matt. 19:27-29).
 - 4. There should be a willingness to experience failure and disappointment.
 - a. Jesus. (Matt. 11:20-21; Jn. 6:70).
 - b. Disciples. (II Tim. 4:20; Ac. 8:1).
 - 5. Accompanying these disappointments is great sorrow.
 - a. Jesus. (Isa. 53:3; Jn. 11:33-35).
 - b. Disciples. (II Cor. 11:28-29, 1:8-9).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What type of sacrifices must be made for unbelievers?

- B. Persecution from Others. Many in the world will not receive our message and will turn on us.
 - 1. Men of God who are reaching out will be hated.
 - a. Jesus. (Jn. 15:24-25; Lu. 19:14).
 - b. Disciples. (Lu. 21:17; I Jn. 3:13; Isa. 66:5).
 - 2. They will be falsely accused.
 - a. Jesus. (Matt. 26:59-61; Lu. 23:2; 10).
 - b. Disciples. (Rom. 3:8; Ac. 6:13; 25:7).
 - 3. One of the cruelest ways to hurt someone can be through mocking and insulting.
 - a. Jesus. (Lu. 23:11, 36; Matt. 27:41-43).
 - b. Disciples. (Heb. 10:33; I Cor. 4:12-13).

4. Christians will be excluded and asked to leave others alone.
 - a. Jesus. (Mk. 15:6-13; Matt. 8:34).
 - b. Disciples. (Lu. 6:22; Ac. 18:6).
- C. Rights Violated by Others. There must be a willingness to risk our lives while proclaiming the Gospel.
1. Believers will be humiliated.
 - a. Jesus. (Lu. 2:7; Ac. 8:33).
 - b. Disciples. (I Cor. 4:9-11).
 2. Some will be thrown into prisons.
 - a. Jesus. (Jn. 18:12)
 - b. Disciples. (Ac. 4:3, 8:3, 16:24).
 3. Others will be physically beaten.
 - a. Jesus. (Matt. 27:28-30; Jn. 18:22).
 - b. Disciples. (II Cor. 11:23-27; Ac. 16:23).
 4. Many have even lost their life.
 - a. Jesus. (Jn. 19:30)
 - b. Disciples (Jn. 21:19; Ac. 12:2).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What rights may a Christian see violated?

VI. The Role of Parenting. As we see new believers come into the faith, there must be a commitment on our part to see them become established Christians. We nurse them as babies and then train them as children.

- A. Nursing. The description from the Bible of “follow-up” as a woman nursing her child emphasizes the tenderness of the relationship. (Num. 11:12; I Thes. 2:7).
 1. The Word pictures new Christians as new-born babies. (I Pet. 2:2).
 2. Just as with natural children, the church is to nurse these younger believers. (Isa. 60:16, 66:11).
 3. The milk that is transferred to the new believer is the Word of God. (I Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14).
 4. The nursing process for those who bring in a new believer is to take priority over other activities. (I Sam. 1:21-23).
 5. An open heart and a holy life are required before God can give the increase. (Lam. 4:3; Hos. 9:14-15).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the process of nursing a baby Christian.

- B. Teaching and Training. As believers become older in the Lord, they will require the teaching and discipline of parents. In Christ, we become spiritual fathers and mothers when we birth someone into the kingdom. “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.” (I Cor. 4:15).
1. A great amount of prayer should be offered for these spiritual children. (Gen. 17:18; II Sam. 12:16; Job. 1:5).
 2. They are to hear the Word of God, pray and rejoice right alongside older believers. (Josh. 8:35; II Chr. 20:13; Neh. 12:43).
 3. We correct them as we see best. (Pr. 13:24; I Thes. 2:11; Heb. 12:9-10).
 4. They have special responsibility to be obedient to us (just as God required Joshua to be obedient to Moses). Josh. 1:7; Pr. 4:1-4).
 5. Ultimately, God takes the responsibility of raising children. (Ex. 22:22-24; Pr. 27:10).

IMPORTANT POINTS

How are spiritual children to be raised?

VII. Point of Decision. God does not intend that His church would witness without a sense of purpose. Sharing your faith is more than a duty; it is an expression of the life of Christ within desiring to see others founded in God. Through grace, we fully train others in the ways that we ourselves have learned, that they in turn would teach a greater number. “Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 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,” (II Tim. 2:1-2).

PERSONAL APPLICATION – EXTENDING THE KINGDOM TO UNELIEVERS

1. Do I have compassion for the lost?

2. Am I regularly praying that unbelievers would see the light?

3. Am I prepared to pay the price for bringing others the message of the Gospel?

4. At this point of decision, I commit myself to the role of parenting, and will....

Reaching the Lost – Part 3

Going Forth in Evangelism

“But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee thence,” (Deut. 24:18). Just as the people of Israel, we were once a slave to this world system but have now been set free. This passage specifically asks us to remember the days before we were redeemed, that we might be able to properly relate to those who are still a slave to sin. As Christians, we need to be able to clearly explain to others what it means to be a part of the kingdom of God. Also, we should have a burning zeal to share this message of the good news with as many people as possible. The Holy Spirit is at work in the earth dealing with men and drawing them unto the Lord. We must actively make ourselves available to be used as channels through which the Word can be spoken.

I. Receiving a Vision. In order to run directly toward a set mark, we must clearly see the path to take. Before this loving evangelism is established in our lives, we must see the true state of the lost, our own responsibility, and God’s ability to meet their need through us. “Where there is no vision, the people perish,” (Prv. 29:18).

- A. A Vision of Men without Christ. In order for us to become faithful witnesses for Christ, we should first have a vision of men and women without God, lost and plunging head-long into hell. People are lost because of their choice of sin to please themselves apart from God. (Isa. 53:6; Eze. 18:4) Unbelief causes people to be condemned. (Mk. 16:16). God considers these men and women as lost sheep. (Jer. 50:6; Matt. 9:36).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the condition of men who do not receive the Gospel.

- B. A Vision of Our Responsibility. “Let the dead bury their death, but go THOU and preach the kingdom of God,” (Lu. 9:60).
 - 1. Three areas of responsibility are seen from John 15:16, “I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.
 - a. Go—to go out and share the Gospel.
 - b. Bring forth fruit—to bring people to Jesus.
 - c. Preserve that fruit—teach those to be disciples who are willing to lay down their lives.
 - 2. Once Isaiah had been purified, he was quick to ask the Lord to send him out. (Isa. 6:1-9).
 - 3. We also must follow the biblical pattern by taking responsibility for the salvation of those around us. (Ac. 27:21-26; Jn. 4:39-42).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What responsibility does the Christian have toward the lost around him?

C. A Vision of God Preparing Us. “And He saith unto them, follow Me, and I will make you fisher of men,” (Matt. 4:19).

1. As we walk with Jesus and see Him, we are equipped to share with others. (Jn. 15:27; Ac. 13:31).
2. God placed His desire in our hearts for the salvation of others. (Rom. 10:1; Ex. 32:32).
3. This desire is sometimes expressed through true sorrow for the lost. (Rom. 9:2-3).
4. God has already begun the good work of witnessing in us, and He will finish it. (Ph. 1:6).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe how God prepares a Christian to go forth.

II. Finding Someone to Witness to All around us we know that there are people who genuinely desire to know God, but do not understand the basis for true relationship with Him. At times the Spirit of God may point someone out to us whom He is drawing, or at another time a situation itself may open a door for the Word. We can also take opportunities by making appointments with others. There should be a balance between these means, with all three being used.

A. Led by the Spirit. The emphasis here is on making ourselves available to the tugging of the Holy Spirit toward another. The common prayer should be, “Lord, do you desire me to share with this person?”

1. Simon is an example of a man in touch with the Spirit of God and led by Him. (Lu. 2:25-27).
2. The Spirit told Peter to follow the men Cornelius sent in order to share His message. (Ac. 11:11-14).
3. The Spirit may withhold us from witnessing to someone as well. (Ac. 16:7).

B. Circumstances and Situations. There will certainly be times in our daily routines where an opportunity to witness for Christ will present itself.

1. Peter took advantage of the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit to preach Christ. (Ac. 2:1-14).

2. While Paul was waiting for his companions, he took the opportunity to preach in Athens. (Ac. 17:16-17).
3. We also must be very careful to make the most of each opportunity because the days are evil. (Eph. 5:15-16).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What type of situations give an opportunity for the Gospel?

C. Make an Appointment. Instead of waiting on and on for the right opportunity to witness with someone, we can set up a definite time for doing so.

1. It appears that Jesus had set aside definite times in which He would send out His disciples. (Lu. 9:1-2, 10:1-3).
2. After Paul and Barnabas first preached in Antioch, an appointment was made for them to come back on the next Sabbath. (Ac. 13:42).

III. Knowing What to Share When we have found someone with a spiritual need to witness to, we often need a point of “transition” where the conversation is turned from casual things to the Lordship of Jesus. The work at the Cross and His resurrection providing forgiveness should now become the emphasis of the conversation.

- A. The Gospel of the Cross. We are not called to just talk “religion” or church life with people, for the life of the Gospel is found only in the cross of Jesus.
 1. The Gospel of the cross is the power of God for our salvation. (Rom. 1:16).
 2. Jesus endured the cross for the joy of our salvation. (Heb. 12:2).
 3. Now the cross is the basis for our reconciliation and peace. (Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20).

- B. True-life Experiences. We will also desire to witness of those things we know from walking in relationship with Jesus. “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you,” (I Jn. 1:3). We know and have experienced: His love. (Isa. 63:7).
 1. His resurrection. (Ac. 1:22, 3:15, 4:33, 13:30-31).
 2. Repentance and forgiveness. (Ac. 5:31-32, 10:43; Lu. 24:47-48).
 3. Everything he did while on this earth. (Ac. 10:39-41).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What true-life experiences can one share while witnessing?

IV. Responding to Common Decisions. After the Gospel has been presented to the unbeliever, it is important that he or she be brought to a point of decision between following Christ or continuing in sin. People will then generally be left in one of three states. “And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; others said, we will hear again of this matter...howbeit certain men clave unto him and believed,” (Ac. 17: 32-34).

- A. Some Mocked. There will be those who flatly reject the Gospel.
 - 1. They mock because their minds are blinded and their understanding is darkened. (II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 4:18).
 - 2. There were people in the Bible who did not receive the witness of Jesus, and we should sometimes expect the same reaction. (Jn. 3:11, 15: 18-21).
 - 3. As we bring forth the message and walk in the power of the spirit, and unbeliever will have no excuse for his sin. (Jn. 15:22-25 12:48).
 - 4. There is no obligation to continue witnessing to mockers. (Matt. 7:6; Ac. 19:9).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What may be the Christian’s best response to someone who mocks?

- B. Some will want to Hear More. This is not always a bad response since it is important to first “count the cost” of following Jesus. A problem arises, however, when one procrastinates the sure conviction of the Holy Spirit. (Gen. 6:3).
 - 1. The Bible illustrates that before a man builds a tower, he first must sit down to make sure he is able to afford it. (Lu. 14:28-30).
 - 2. A person should not be hasty to utter words of commitment to the Lord. (Pr. 29:20; Ecc. 5:2).
 - 3. However, one cannot presume that he is guaranteed tomorrow. (Pr. 27:1; Ja. 4:14).
 - 4. This person should be brought to a point of decision before long. (I Ki. 18:21; Josh. 24:15).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What should be the Christian’s response to someone who wants to hear more?

- C. Some will Believe. Not everyone who makes a mental assertion to the Lordship of Jesus and then reads off a sinner’s prayer is going to heaven, but only those who lay down their lives once for all to follow Jesus. As people truly turn to the Lord, we must be prepared to “parent” them in the faith.
1. The person can receive man’s testimony when it is backed by God’s (I Jn. 5:9; Jn. 3:33-34).
 2. New Christians in the Bible received encouragement and strengthening from other. (Ac. 14:22, 15:32, 18:32, 20:1-2).
 3. It is necessary that the new convert be kept in close contact with for a period of adjustment and establishment within the local church. (Ac. 14:1, 3, 18:8-11, 19:9-10).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What changes should occur in the Christian’s life who has just led someone to the Lord?

V. Point of Decision. Many Christians feel a lack of joy in their lives and do not know why, yet there is a clear link between witnessing and receiving joy (Lu. 15:8; Jn. 4:36; Ac. 8:8, 16:34). It is often simply a fear of rejection that keeps the world from hearing of the saving grace and keeps ourselves from experiencing His joy. As we do begin to respond to the Lord’s desires, we do not go out to be “soul-winners” looking for notches to put on our spiritual belts. Instead, we go forth simply as His witnesses, looking to establish the kingdom of God in the dying earth. Form this perspective of urgency, we will not be able to resist the abundant opportunities to witness. “Then I said, ‘I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.’ But His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay,” (Jer. 20:9).

PERSONAL APPLICATION – GOING FORTH IN EVANGELISM

1. After praying about my responsibility to reach the lost, my vision of God preparing me to witness involves...

2. I plan on finding people to witness with this week through...

3. When I make the transition to spiritual things with these people, I will talk about...

4. At this point of decision in my life, I desire to see the kingdom of God established in the earth through my sacrifice to...
