Self-centeredness is the source of so much of what we experience. There is a verse in Proverbs 13 that you really ought to look up, because you wouldn't believe it if you didn't read it in your own Bible. Verse 10 says, “Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.” Many people at first would take issue with this and say, “Wait a minute. Pride can't be the only thing that causes contention or strife. Proverbs 17:14 says that contention is the beginning of strife, so strife has to be caused by more than just pride. It's what so-and-so has done to me.” Others will say, “You don't understand; this is just the type of person I am.” No, the scripture says that only by pride comes contention. It's not one of the leading causes; it's the only cause. Some people again would take issue and say, “I've got all kinds of problems, but pride isn't one of them. If anything, I've got such low self-esteem, there's no way anybody can accuse me of pride.”

We have to redefine what pride is. It's not just thinking you're better than somebody else, but in the simplest terms, it is seeing yourself as the center of everything. Self-centeredness is really the root of all pride. In Numbers 12:2, Miriam and Aaron, Moses' sister and brother, came against him, criticizing him because of an interracial marriage, saying, “Hath the Lord indeed spoken only to Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?” The Scripture then says in parentheses in verse 3 that Moses was the meekest man on the face of the earth. Instead of taking offense at what they said, he began to pray and intercede for them.

When it says Moses was the meekest man on the face of the earth, stop and think about that. We don't know how many people there were on earth, but surely there were millions, and Moses was the meekest man of all these people. What makes this a really amazing statement is that he was the one who wrote it. Most people think if you're truly humble or meek, you won't even know it. That's a false impression of what arrogance really is. Pride isn't just thinking you're better than everybody else—it's self-centeredness. It's like having a stick with arrogance on one side and low self-esteem on the other side. Those are opposite expressions of the same thing, but they're both on the same stick. It's self-centeredness. It doesn't matter if you think you're better than everyone else or worse than everyone else, you're absolutely self-centered. Everything gets filtered through that. A timid, shy person is very proud and self-centered, thinking only about self.

The point I'm making is that self-centeredness is really the root of all pride, and if you plug that back into Proverbs 13:10, “Only by pride cometh contention,” what this says is that it is our own self-centeredness that makes us angry, not what people do to us. It's our self-centeredness that causes us to react to what people do. You will never be able to stop people from rubbing you the wrong way;
it can't happen. Faith is not to control other people but to help you deal with yourself and deal with the things that are inside you. So it doesn't matter what people do to you.

As Jesus was being crucified, He was able to turn to the very people who were crucifying Him and say, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” He didn't control those people but instead had control over Himself. It's self-centeredness that makes us angry. Jesus didn't come here for Himself, but He so loved the world that He came here for us. He thought of His mother as He hung on the cross and spoke to one of His disciples about taking care of her. The reason Jesus was able to forgive and operate in love—in the midst of intense agony, injustice, and everything that came His way—was because He was not self-centered.

It's your own selfishness that makes you angry, yet the Scripture says you're supposed to be dead to yourself. If I had a corpse in front of me, I could insult it, kick it, spit on it, or ignore it, but if it's truly a corpse, it wouldn't respond. The reason you respond the way you do to the things around you is not because of those external things but because of what's on the inside of you. You will never be so strong in faith that you can remove all obstacles and everything that rubs you the wrong way, but you can deal with yourself. You can come to a place where you make Jesus Lord of your life and love Him, His kingdom, and other people more than you love yourself. You'll find that when you do that and deal with self that the strife and contention in your life will cease.

One of the great keys for applying all of these things God has done in your life is to realize that He didn't give you the kingdom for selfish purposes. He didn't do these things just so you could have every need supplied. You need to learn it's in denying yourself and losing your life that you really begin to find out what life is all about. It's in loving other people and God more than yourself that you'll begin to defuse your anger and hurt, all those things that are inside you.

I pray that God will take these few things I've said and use them to open your heart to realize that it's your own self-centeredness that causes you grief. Instead of placing the blame somewhere else, you need to accept the responsibility, face it, humble yourself before God, and ask Him to come in and make Himself big in your life. That's the way for you to walk in victory.
LESSON 1  SELF-CENTEREDNESS

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Read Mark 9:33-34. What were the disciples arguing about on the road going to Capernaum?

2. Does this reflect the selfishness in all of us?

3. Read Mark 9:35. According to this scripture, if someone wants to be first, they must become what?


5. Read Proverbs 13:10. What is the only thing that causes contention?

SCRIPTURES TO USE WITH QUESTIONS

MARK 9:33-35 – And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? [34] But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. [35] And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

LUKE 22:24-27 – And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. [25] And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. [26] But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. [27] For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

PROVERBS 13:10 – Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.
LESSON 1                             SELF-CENTEREDNESS

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

6. Read Galatians 2:20. How should we live our lives?

7. Read Matthew 7:12. What is the antidote for self-centeredness?

SCRIPTURES TO USE WITH QUESTIONS

GALATIANS 2:20 – I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

MATTHEW 7:12 – Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.
1. Read Mark 9:33-34. What were the disciples arguing about on the road going to Capernaum? They argued about who was the greatest

2. Does this reflect the selfishness in all of us? Yes

3. Read Mark 9:35. According to this scripture, if someone wants to be first, they must become what? Servant of all

4. Explain in detail Jesus’ teaching in Luke 22:24-27. “And they began to argue among themselves as to who would be the greatest in the coming Kingdom. Jesus told them, ‘In this world the kings and great men order their people around, and yet they are called “friends of the people.” But among you, those who are the greatest should take the lowest rank, and the leader should be like a servant. Normally the master sits at the table and is served by his servants. But not here! For I am your servant’” (Luke 22:24-27, New Living Translation)

5. Read Proverbs 13:10. What is the only thing that causes contention? Pride

6. Read Galatians 2:20. How should we live our lives? By the faith of Christ (or faith in Christ), not centered on our own strengths or weaknesses

7. Read Matthew 7:12. What is the antidote for self-centeredness? To be God centered and others centered. Treat others like we want to be treated
The word *meditate* means “to muse over, ponder, to plan in the mind, to purpose, or intend.” The Greek word implies “to revolve something in the mind” and is also translated to imagine.

Two reasons for biblical mediation are “to ponder over correct knowledge, also referred to as renewing the mind and to contact God behind His Word” through prayer, praise, and mediation; i.e., musing, pondering, and thinking about Him.

*Meditation can be done from topical study*—choosing a topic to ponder over. Example: baptism. Define the word from the Greek, Hebrew, or a good dictionary. Find the root word from which it is derived. Consider and ponder the context of verses and that will lead you to study other related subjects, such as remission (Acts 2:38), repentance (Acts 2:38), faith (Mark 16:16), the conscience (1 Pet. 3:21), calling on the Lord (Acts 22:16), etc.

You need to ponder questions that you have or that the Scripture raises, such as: Are there qualifications to be met before baptism? What is the purpose of baptism? When was it practiced? In what time frame?

*Meditation can be done from expositional study; i.e., a verse-by-verse study of a book of the Bible.* The key is to ponder and think over a book for so long that you become familiar with its content (verses and chapters).

*Meditation can be done through word studies.* What do certain words mean? What does it mean to believe? What does the word *Lord* mean? What does the word *Jesus* mean? What does the word *Christ* mean? What does the word *justify* mean, etc.

*You can meditate from paragraphs in the Bible.* A paragraph is a unit of thought in writing, usually containing several sentences. When an author changes the subject of emphasis in their writing, they usually begin a new paragraph.

When meditating through scriptures, look for punctuation such as question marks. Why is this question being asked? How does it relate to the context, etc?

Biblical meditation is not just looking at words, but for God behind the Word.
1. What does the word “meditate” mean?

2. What are two reasons for biblical meditation?

3. What is a topical study?

4. What is an expositional study of the Scriptures?

5. Read Luke 6:46. What do you think the word “Lord” means?

6. Read Matthew 1:21. What do you think the word “Jesus” means?


8. What is a paragraph?

9. Biblical meditation is not just looking at words, but for ____________.
LESSON 2 HOW TO MEDITATE ON GOD’S WORD

ANSWER KEY

1. What does the word “meditate” mean?  
   *To muse over, ponder, or to revolve something in one’s mind*

2. What are two reasons for biblical mediation?  
   *To ponder correct knowledge (to renew my mind) and to contact God behind His Word (by musing, pondering, and thinking about Him)*

3. What is a topical study?  
   *Choosing a topic from the Bible to study and think upon*

4. What is an expositional study of the Scriptures?  
   *A verse-by-verse study of a book of the Bible*

5. Read Luke 6:46. What do you think the word “Lord” means?  
   *Someone we obey (like a boss)*

6. Read Matthew 1:21. What do you think the word “Jesus” means?  
   *A Savior that saves others from their sins*

   *One anointed to be a king*

8. What is a paragraph?  
   *A unit of thought in writing*

9. Biblical meditation is not just looking at words, but for ___________________.  
   *Contacting God behind His Word*
Today we want to talk about renewing the mind. I’d like to read two passages. The first one is out of Philippians 4:8. It says, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” The Apostle Paul is obviously telling us that there are things we should think on. In other words, we can choose our thoughts. Now I know that we all have thoughts that are sometimes contrary to the Word of God, according to Romans, chapter 7, verses 22 and 23. The Law of sin that wars in us attacks our minds. But the Bible tells us out of Philippians that we don’t have to sit there and let our thoughts build a nest, that we can choose what we think on. The Bible also tells us that as a man thinks in his heart, so is he (Prov. 23:7). So it’s really important what we think on.

In Romans 12:1 and 2, the Bible says, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” The Bible says we can be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Did you know that when the Apollo spacecraft went up into space, they had to make a course correction every ten minutes? They went to the moon in kind of like a zigzag. And when they eventually landed, they had a 500-mile designated landing zone, and they just barely made it within that zone by a few feet. Yet the whole flight was successful. We need to set a course and make a total commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ by being a living sacrifice. The problem with a living sacrifice is that sometimes it wants to crawl off the altar, so we have to make course corrections in our thoughts. We have to have a heart that says, “God, I want You and I want Your way.”

Not only do we need to make a total commitment, but part of having a victorious Christian life requires that we take the next step and be transformed by the renewing of our minds. We can’t think like the world, if we don’t want the world’s results. As we read in Philippians 4:8, we can choose what to think on. Whatsoever is lovely, just, of good report, think on these things. What they would do in the Old Testament is take the Word of God and put it on their doorposts and on their garments. It was constantly in front of them. God instructed that they were to talk about the Word of God night and day that they might observe to do what it said. And they were also to tell all these things to their children. It’s very important what we think on. It’s very important that we keep the Word of God in front of us all the time in order to really have a life of victory. The opposite of thinking on what’s lovely, just, and of good report is to not
think on the things of God and the things of the Spirit. Romans 8:6 says “To be carnally minded is death,” but the next part of that verse says, “To be spiritually minded is life and peace.” It is life and it is peace to think on the things of the Spirit of God. But if we start thinking about adultery, the things of the world, money, covetousness, and so forth, do you know what will happen in our lives? As a man thinks in his heart, so is he. We’ll begin to act on those things. We’ll begin to play those things out in our lives, and it will destroy our lives. You see, the real spiritual warfare for the believer is really not resisting or rebuking the devil all the time, although there are times that we need to do that. But spiritual warfare has to do with what we’re thinking on and what we’re dwelling on.

The Bible says in Isaiah 26:3 that God will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon Him. There are times during the day that we all need to make course adjustments, just like it says in Romans 12. We need to say, “God, those are wrong thoughts. I need to turn around and renew my mind and start thinking about the things that are lovely, just, and of good report.”

So if you’ve got a stronghold, if you’re in bondage, if you find yourself thinking things that you shouldn’t be thinking, you need to catch yourself immediately. The Bible says, If we will draw near to God, He will draw near to us. If we resist the enemy, he will flee from us. There are times in my life when I’ve let things slip and let depression rise up. At those times, it’s hard to pick up the Bible and sit down and take a passage and say, “God, this is what You say about me. This is who You say that I am. You are my strength.” Did you know that your victory is just that simple? You need to say, “I’m going to resist what I’m letting the enemy do to me right now. I’m going to sit down and open the Bible, and I’m not going to just read some words on these pages, but I’m going to connect with the God behind these words. I’m going to let my mind be stayed upon Him. And, Lord, this is what You say about me. You say that I’m forgiven. You say that I’m cleansed. You say that nothing can separate me from Your love.” When you sit there and just think about all of the good things that God has done for you, in just a few moments, you’re going to forget about those other things.

Let me use an illustration. I heard a man one time say, “Now, I’m just admonishing you to not think about pink elephants for the next ten minutes.” Do you know what happened? For the next ten minutes, all we did was think about pink elephants. Then he asked, “What color is the Statue of Liberty?” Somebody said green. And he said, “Well, which arm is the Statue of Liberty holding up?” And somebody said it was the right arm. Then he asked, “What does the Statue of Liberty have in her hand?” And someone said it was a torch. Then the man said, “What happened to your thoughts about pink elephants?” They were gone. You see, it’s not a matter of saying, “Now, don’t you think these thoughts,” because you know you’ll think those thoughts. The Scripture is really telling us that we need to replace those thoughts with God’s thoughts, and when we see these things coming against us and we’re thinking something we shouldn’t think, we need to immediately call to mind our new identity. We need to immediately turn to the Lord, connect with Him, not just with words on a page, but with the God behind those words. And the Bible tells us in Romans 8:6 that as we do, we will see the transformation the
life and peace of God gives, as our minds are stayed upon Him and the things of the Spirit. Think on these things, my brethren, and walk this day in the liberty and freedom that Christ has purchased for you.
LESSON 3 RENEWING THE MIND

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Read Romans 12:1. What are we to do with our bodies?

2. Read Romans 12:2. This scripture is telling us that we should be different than ________________.

3. Read Acts 17:11. We must make our thinking line up with?

4. Read Romans 8:5-6. To be spiritually minded is ________________.

5. Read Romans 12:1-2. What two things do we need to do, according to these verses?

6. Read Isaiah 26:3. How do we stay in perfect peace?

7. Read Isaiah 26:3. What are some ways we can keep our minds on the Lord?

SCRIPTURES TO USE WITH QUESTIONS

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

ACTS 17:11 – These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

ROMANS 8:5-6 – For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. [6] For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

ISAIAH 26:3-4 – Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. [4] Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.
LESSON 3   RENEWING THE MIND

ANSWER KEY

1. Read Romans 12:1. What are we to do with our bodies?
   Present, or offer, them to God

2. Read Romans 12:2. This scripture is telling us that we should be different than
   The world, or unbelievers

3. Read Acts 17:11. We must make our thinking line up with?
   The Scriptures, God’s Word

4. Read Romans 8:5-6. To be spiritually minded is ________________.
   Life and peace

5. Read Romans 12:1-2. What two things do we need to do, according to these verses?
   Commit ourselves to God as a living sacrifice and begin to renew our minds

6. Read Isaiah 26:3. How do we stay in perfect peace?
   By keeping our minds on the Lord

7. Read Isaiah 26:3-4. What are some ways we can keep our minds on the Lord?
   Prayer, praise, meditation on the Word, giving thanks, etc.
Today we're talking about the importance of Christ's church. I'd like to read a scripture out of Hebrews 10:25. It says, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” As we look into the importance of Christ's church, my question is, “What is the church?”

I took the Discipleship Evangelism program into a local church in Colorado Springs, Colorado. We trained people how to use it, and we used it out in the field. Within six weeks of working with this local church, we had established twenty Bible studies outside of that local congregation. For months, we were working with these people in the Bible studies. The pastor really confused me one day when he said, “You know, the Bible says that the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Why aren't we seeing these people from the Bible studies come into our church?”

When we were out in the field, people were being saved and they were being discipled and ministered to. But what the pastor really meant was, “Why aren't they coming to meet together on Sunday morning in this building?” My concept of the church was a little off too. What the pastor said really troubled me, and I didn't know what to do. I thought, Is the Discipleship Evangelism program really working? Are we really reaching people's lives? I knew we were reaching many people, but what confused me was why they were not coming to the Sunday morning service.

I decided to do a study on the word “church.” What's covered in this lesson is what I discovered. In Romans 16:3, 1 Corinthians 16:19, Colossians 4:15, Philemon 2, Acts 5:42, and Acts 20:20, the Bible primarily speaks about the early New Testament church meeting in someone's home. I know that there are all kinds of churches. There are home churches, churches with small and large congregations, and very large mega-churches. The one thing that really caught my attention in the Scripture was that the New Testament church seemed to meet together in small congregations in people's homes.

The Expository Dictionary of Bible Words by Lawrence O. Richards (p. 164) says, “Anyone may be excused for being a bit confused about the meaning of the word, 'church'; we use the word in so many ways. It means a particular building (e.g., the church on 4th street), a denomination or organized faith (the Reformed Church in America) [or the Baptist Church], and even a Sunday meeting (e.g., did you go to church today). None of these uses is particularly
LESSON 4 THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST’S CHURCH

Biblical.” And I got to thinking, What does this really mean? What does the word “church” really mean? I’m going to quote further. It says, “Since many persons think of a church as a building for religious services rather than a congregation engaging in worship, the rendering church can be misleading.” The Greek word for “church” is  

\( \text{ekklesia} \) and literally means an assembly of people together for the purpose of worship or prayer or praise or just looking unto God. I’m going to read some other things here. It says, “Ecclesia in the New Testament can encompass any number of believers. It can be used of small groups that met in homes (Rom. 16:5). It encompasses all believers living in a large city (Acts 11:22), or a large geographical district, such as Asia or Galatia.” It goes on to say, “The typical meeting of the church was in a home. When such a congregation met ‘everyone [had] a hymn, a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation’ (1 Cor. 14:26). Individuals shared and others ‘weighed carefully what was said’ (1 Cor. 14:29)...such sharing remains essential to the very existence of the church as a community of faith...Each person was expected to contribute and to serve others with his or her spiritual gift(s).”

In Hebrews 10:25 it says, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.” The church is an assembly of people coming together for the purpose of looking to Jesus, praising the Lord, to receive direction from the Lord, to follow through with that direction. The primary purpose of the early New Testament church was edification. They met together for the purpose of building each other up in the faith.

The early church was an evangelistic church. People were scattered everywhere, sharing their faith in Jesus Christ, and as they did, the Lord added to the church—not to a building—but added to the people of God as they repented and believed. Then they assembled themselves together to encourage one another, to exercise their spiritual gifts, to serve one another, and to have a time of fellowship with one another by sharing a meal together. When they were together, they exercised their spiritual gifts to edify one another. Then they would go out and preach the Word, and the whole cycle would begin again. They believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and they assembled themselves together. It didn’t matter where they assembled. It could’ve been in a building or someone’s home. It could’ve been a large amount of people, or it could’ve been a small number of people meeting in homes. It didn’t really matter, as long as they met together in the name of the Lord for the purpose of exercising their gifts, to encourage one another, and to fellowship with one another with the end result being edification, or building, each other up.

I discovered that what we were doing with the Discipleship Evangelism program through the local church I mentioned earlier, by meeting in twenty different Bible studies throughout the city, is we were meeting in twenty different churches. It wasn’t church as we know it today, but we were meeting as “the church,” twenty times a week, because we were meeting together in the name of the Lord Jesus to encourage one another, to look to the Lord Jesus, to be instructed out of the Word of God, and to exercise our spiritual gifts.

No matter what church you go to—no matter if you’re in a denominational church or a non-denominational church, if you are meeting in a mega-church or a small home group—the
LESSON 4  THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST’S CHURCH

Scripture is telling us that as you see the Day approaching, and as sin abounds, the grace of God much more abounds. Grace is going to abound within these assemblies of God’s people. In the church where each believer has a part of the ministry of Jesus Christ, you can minister to one another, exhort one another, and encourage one another as you exercise your spiritual gift with one another.

We would all benefit by meeting with a group of believers in this way. Even if it’s just two or three that are meeting in the name of the Lord Jesus, we need to meet together on a regular basis. It is good to meet together to use our spiritual gifts, to exhort one another, to encourage one another, to look to Jesus together, and to pray for one another. There’s a lot we could say about the church. We could talk about the elders, overseers, pastors, and church government, but that’s not the purpose of this teaching. The purpose of this teaching is to know the purpose of the church and to know we do not have to be isolated like one man on an island all to himself. We cannot survive that way. When we received salvation, God put us in the body of Christ—the universal body of believers. We need one another, and we need to meet together as God’s church to encourage one another and serve one another with the spiritual gifts that God has given us. I encourage you, meet together today with God’s people.
LESSON 4  THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST’S CHURCH

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Read Hebrews 10:25. What are we not to forsake?

2. Read Acts 5:42. Daily in the temple and in every home Jesus was ______________ and ______________.

3. Read Acts 2:42. What four things did the early church continue to do?

4. Read Acts 2:44-45. True or false: The early church continued to give money to build a church parking lot.

5. Read 1 Corinthians 12:28. List eight different kinds of gifts that God has placed in His church.

6. Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. When the people of God meet together as the church, there was freedom to express their gifts. Name five things that happened when they met.

SCRIPTURES TO USE WITH QUESTIONS

HEBREWS 10:25 – Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

ACTS 5:42 – And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

ACTS 2:42 – And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

ACTS 2:44-45 – And all that believed were together, and had all things common; [45] And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:28 – And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:26 – How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

8. Read James 1:27. The only kind of religion that God cares about is the religion that ____________________.

9. Read 1 Timothy 5:9-11. Widows who were supported by the early New Testament church had to meet what criteria?

10. Read 1 Corinthians 9:14. Besides the church supporting widows, orphans, and the poor, it also supported ____________________.

ACTS 6:1 - And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

JAMES 1:27 – Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

1 TIMOTHY 5:9-11 – Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, [10] Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have washed the saints’ feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. [11] But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:14 – Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.
11. Read Matthew 25:35-40. Why do people think giving money in an offering plate is the only way to give to God?

**MATTHEW 25:35-40 – For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: [36] Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. [37] Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? [38] When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? [39] Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? [40] And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.**

**ACTS 4:32-35** – And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. [33] And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. [34] Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, [35] And laid them down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

**PROVERBS 3:9-10** – Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: [10] So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.
1. Read Hebrews 10:25. What are we not to forsake?
   *The assembling of ourselves together as believers*

2. Read Acts 5:42. Daily in the temple and in every home, Jesus was ________________ and ________________.
   *Taught and preached*

3. Read Acts 2:42. What four things did the early church continue to do?
   *They continued in the apostles’ teachings, fellowship, breaking of bread (eating together and sharing communion), and prayer*

4. Read Acts 2:44-45. True or false: The early church continued to give money to build a church parking lot.
   *False*

5. Read 1 Corinthians 12:28. List eight different kinds of gifts that God has placed in His church.
   *Apostles, prophets, teachers, those who do miracles, those who have the gifts of healing, helps, those with gifts of administration, and those who speak in unknown tongues*

6. Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. When the people of God meet together as the church, there was freedom to express their gifts. Name five things that happened when they met.
   *One person had a song, another a teaching, another would tell some revelation God had given, one would speak in an unknown tongue, and another would explain what the unknown tongue meant*

   *Widows*

8. Read James 1:27. The only kind of religion that God cares about is the religion that ________________.
   *Cares for orphans and widows in their troubles*

9. Read 1 Timothy 5:9-11. Widows who were supported by the early New Testament church had to meet what criteria?
   *“A widow who is put on the list for support must be a woman who is at least sixty years old and was faithful to her husband. She must be well respected by everyone because of the good she has done. Has she brought up her children well? Has she been kind to strangers? Has she served other Christians humbly? Has she helped those who are in trouble? Has she always been ready to do good? The younger widows should not be on the list.’’* (1 Timothy 5:9-11, New Living Translation)

10. Read 1 Corinthians 9:14. Besides the church supporting widows, orphans, and the poor, it also supported ________________.
    *Those who minister the Word*
ANSWER KEY

11. Read Matthew 25:35-40. Why do people think giving money in an offering plate is the only way to give to God?
   Because that’s what they have been taught

   Gave to those in need, honoring the Lord with the giving
Today we’re going to talk about demonology. Jesus spent His ministry on earth casting out demons, healing the sick, raising the dead, and doing other miracles. About one-fourth of His ministry was spent expelling evil spirits from people. The Bible tells us in Acts 10:38, “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him.” Also, 1 John 3:8 says, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” I used to have a different view of demonology—that demons, evil spirits, unclean spirits, devils, whatever you want to call them—only appeared in India or third-world countries where the people don’t worship the True and Living God but worship idols. I was wrong.

I want to tell you about an experience I had a few years ago in a church in Dallas, Texas. All the people were singing when all of a sudden this girl just fell on the floor. It looked like she was having a seizure. There happened to be a medical doctor there whose name was Dr. Rice. Some people in the church had a home about a block from the church, and he said to take her there so he could examine her. When we got her to their home, this girl was like a wildcat! Her eyes were dilated, and there was a strong masculine voice speaking out of this little bitty teenage girl, who probably weighed less than a hundred pounds. Suddenly, this thing began to attack me verbally, saying things like, “YOU’RE GOING TO HELL!” I said, “No, I’m not.” I was scared because I’d never seen anything like this before. It said, “YES, YOU ARE GOING TO HELL,” and I said, “No, I’m not. I’m not going to hell.” It seemed to have power or authority over me, and I didn’t know what to do or how to deal with the thing that was in this girl.

One of my good friends was so scared that he left right away. So, there I was. I thought, What in the world do I do? The girl had supernatural strength, and she began to speak something like German that she had never learned—all kinds of wild manifestations of the devil came out of her. She was demon-possessed, and though I didn’t know what to do, I’d always believed the Bible has power. It’s like when you were a kid and watched those scary Dracula horror movies. The vampire would come toward the person, and all of a sudden, the person would pull out a cross and the vampire would go “ARRRGH!” That’s the way I thought about the Bible. I knew it had power, but I didn’t know how to get the power out of the Bible. The grace of God helped me, because I’d never experienced anything like this before. I opened my Bible to the New Testament and happened to turn to the book of Philippians. I began to read in chapter 2 verses 8-11: “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name
which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

The demon said, “Don't say that! I can't stand those words! Don't say that!” I thought, What a reaction! So I said, “Well, at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow—things in heaven, things on earth, and things under the earth.” “Don't say that! I can't stand those words! Don't say that, don't say that!” she yelled. I thought, This devil is going crazy inside this girl, and all I'm doing is reading the Word of God! So I read it again, “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.” Again, there was the same reaction; “Don't say that, I can't stand those words, don't say that!” Then the devil grabbed the girl by her ears, and she said, “Don't say that! I can't stand those words, don't say that!” The devil threw the girl down before me, and she began to bow at the name of Jesus. And I said, “At the name of Jesus every knee will bow, whether in heaven or in earth or under the earth.”

Just moments before, that devil had authority and power over me. I thought he was going to whip me, beat me up, throw me out of there—I didn't know! All I knew was that the Bible has power, and I opened it and began to read. The Bible says in Ephesians 6:17, “And take…the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” You see, there is an offensive weapon which is like a sword that will cut and hurt the enemy. It is the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Do you remember when Jesus was tempted? The devil came to Him and said, “I'll give you all the kingdoms of the world if you will bow down and worship me.” Jesus said, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matt. 4:10). Then the devil tempted Him, and tempted Him again, and Jesus said “It is written, Satan...it is written,” and then quoted the Word of God. He used the Sword of the Spirit, and the Bible says the devil took off and left Him for a season.

The only weapon we have to defeat the enemy is the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Do you know what I learned from that? I learned this: Every time I want to study the Word, I think about how hungry I am and have to go find something to eat, or I think about all the things I didn't do that day. I know that those in a discipleship class will have all sorts of excuses why they can't be there. I finally figured out why. There's something in the Bible that God wants us to know and the devil doesn't want us to know. So every time you come to study God's Word, or do a discipleship class, there's something in the Word of God the enemy doesn't want you to know—he doesn't want you to know the God behind these words.

There is a kingdom of darkness, and there is the kingdom of God's dear Son. In Colossians 1:13, it says, “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” What kingdom are you in? A kingdom is where someone has the rule and reign. Jesus Christ is a king. Have you ever given your life to Him? Are you following Him today, or are you letting other things have priority in your life? Jesus said this in Luke 6:46: “And
why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” He wants to be preeminent in your life, to be number one. There is a kingdom of darkness that is trying to keep Him from that preeminence, that place of reigning in your life. The reason for this is the enemy wants to rise up in that place of preeminence. Turn to Jesus today with all your heart, and realize there is an enemy. His name is Satan and he has demonic power, but the Bible tells us we have authority over him.

Jesus said in Matthew 10:8, 

“Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.” Preach the Gospel of the kingdom, and as you go you have authority over the enemy. Don't let the enemy talk you out of what God has for your life any longer. Make Jesus Lord and number one in your life. You will never regret it.
DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Read Ephesians 6:12. How does this verse describe our spiritual conflict with the demonic realm?

2. Read Mark 16:17. What does this verse teach us about the authority of the believer?

3. Read James 4:7. What must a person seeking deliverance from demons do?

4. Read James 1:14. How does Satan deceive us into making something evil look desirable?

5. Read Romans 6:13. If a person fills their life with the things of Christ, demons will get uncomfortable and leave on their own. What does this verse tell us to do?

6. Read Romans 13:14. Demons feed on the works of the flesh, so starve them out by walking in God's ways of love and purity. We are to make no ___________ the flesh.
7. Read Luke 10:17-19. Jesus never tells us to pray to Him to cast out demons. He's given us authority. This verse tells us we have power and authority over _________________.

LUKE 10:17-19 – And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. [18] And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. [19] Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.
ANSWER KEY

1. Read Ephesians 6:12. How does this verse describe our spiritual conflict with the demonic realm?
   *It is described as wrestling*

2. Read Mark 16:17. What does this verse teach us about the authority of the believer?
   *We have the authority in Jesus’ name to cast out demons*

3. Read James 4:7. What must a person seeking deliverance from demons do?
   *Submit themselves to God and resist the devil*

4. Read James 1:14. How does Satan deceive us into making something evil look desirable?
   *He works with our own lust (to make something evil look desirable)*

5. Read Romans 6:13. If a person fills their life with the things of Christ, demons will get uncomfortable and leave on their own. What does this verse tell us to do?
   *Don’t yield to sin but yield to God. Yield our members (parts of our body) as instruments of right doing*

6. Read Romans 13:14. Demons feed on the works of the flesh, so starve them out by walking in God’s ways of love and purity. We are to make no ________________ for the flesh.
   *Provision*

7. Read Luke 10:17-19. Jesus never tells us to pray to Him to cast out demons. He’s given us authority. This verse tells us we have power and authority over ________________.
   *All the power of the enemy*
God has given us authority as believers. In order to address this, we’re going to have to deal not only with the authority we have but the authority of Satan. He has been blown out of proportion. Christians have been led to believe we are fighting a being whose power is superior to ours, and we are just barely are able to cope with him. That’s not what the Scripture teaches at all. It does say in Ephesians 6:12, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” So Satan is a factor; he does exist. He has a hierarchy of principalities and powers that we’re dealing with, but in the verse just prior to that, it says that we have to stand against the wiles of the devil. The only power Satan really has against us is deception. He doesn't have power to just overcome us.

In Genesis 3 we see that when the first temptation came against Adam and Eve, Satan didn't come with some superior force. For instance, instead of inhabiting a mammoth or an elephant, putting his foot on Adam’s head, threatening them, and saying “Serve me or else,” he inhabited a snake, the most subtle creature God made. The word “subtle” means “sly, deceptive, or cunning.” The reason Satan came through the snake was because he really didn't have the power to force Adam and Eve to do anything. He could only deceive. He came against the nature and character of God and began to criticize Him, saying, “God doesn't really love you—He's holding things back from you.” He used deception to tempt Adam and Eve to sin against God. They were the ones who had all the authority, and the reason Satan had to do it this way was because he didn't have power to come against God.

There’s so much more I don’t have time to go into, but one of the main points I want to get across is that concerning the authority of the believer, you have to recognize that Satan has zero power and authority over you. He is a defeated foe. His only power against you is to come against you with lies and deception. If your life is being destroyed, you can say “Satan is the one who is firing these shots at me,” but you are the one who is giving him the ammunition. You’re the one who has to respond to his lies and deception. If you didn’t yield to Satan, he would have no inroads or power against you. In 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 it says, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” These scriptures are talking about the weapons of your warfare, and every weapon mentioned refers to your mind, dealing with thoughts. Satan doesn't have the power to do anything to you except through deception.
I want to quickly summarize some things. In the beginning God, of course, had all authority. All power and authority has to emanate from God because He is the only one who has power in Himself. Everything else is delegated from Him. When He created the heavens and the earth, He had all power and authority. Then in Genesis 1:26, when God created Adam and Eve, He said, “Let them have dominion…over all the earth.” Put that together with Psalm 115:16, which says, “The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord’s: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” God had ownership of everything by right of being the Creator, but He gave dominion, or authority, over the earth to physical human beings. Satan has never had the right and power to rule over the earth. He took it through deceiving man to sin. God gave that power to mankind, and when man fell, he yielded his God-given authority and power over to the devil. Satan was never given power by God to oppress man or to rule this earth.

Scripture does say that Satan is the god of this world, but it’s not because God made him the god of this world. God never put Satan in a position above mankind. He gave mankind dominion and authority over this earth. The only reason Satan has ever been able to oppress, dominate, or cause the problems he does is because people yield their God-given authority to him. This posed a real problem for God, because He is a Spirit, and He gave authority over this earth to physical human beings. Only people who have physical bodies have the authority and power to rule and exercise influence in this earth. Satan has to come to us and get us to yield our authority to him. That’s the reason that he likes to inhabit a body. In Scripture, demons have to have a body to possess because Satan can’t do anything unless he is using a physical human body to work through. Because God is a Spirit and has given authority to physical human beings, now in a sense, He has His hands tied. It isn’t because God doesn’t have power and authority but because of His integrity. He gave authority to physical human beings, and to be true to His own Word, He can’t just take it back and say, “This isn’t the way I wanted it; time out, stop, we’re going to do it over.” No, God bound Himself by His own Word. Throughout history He looked for someone He could flow through, but the problem was that all men were corrupted and had yielded themselves to Satan. So what was He to do?

What God finally did was come to the earth Himself and become a man. This is tremendous when you understand it, because now the devil was in big trouble. He had been using mankind’s power, and God couldn’t intervene directly to solve all these problems, because man was willfully, legally yielding his God-given authority to Satan. Satan was wrong in what he did, but man gave him the authority and power that was theirs to give. But now, here came God, and He was no longer only the Spirit but was in the form of physical flesh. This put the devil in a bad situation, because God not only had authority in heaven, but becoming a man gave Him authority on the earth. Jesus said in John 5:26-27, “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.” He was referring to His physical body.

Jesus came and exercised God-given authority. The devil tempted Him, and Jesus never yielded to him. Satan lost in every battle with Him. Then Jesus took our sins, died for them, went
to hell, rose again, and said in Matthew 28:18, “All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” He won back the authority God had given mankind, which man misused, and as God in the flesh, Jesus now had all authority in heaven and in earth. In the very next verse He said, “Now you go, and you do these things.” In effect He was saying, “I now have all authority in heaven and earth, and I’m sharing it with you.” This time, however, there’s a unique difference in the authority God has given back to us as believers. It is joint authority between us and the Lord Jesus Christ. It’s no longer given to us solely as it was to Adam and Eve. They could give the authority away, allow the devil to oppress them, and basically be hopeless, but today our authority is shared with the Lord Jesus Christ. It’s like having a joint bank account that requires both signatures in order to cash a check. Our authority is shared with the Lord Jesus, and His authority is shared with the church.

Although we may fail, God is never again going to sign this authority over to the devil. Satan is absolutely powerless. He has no ability to do anything in your life except what he deceives you in and what you voluntarily yield to. You may give him authority in your life, you may suffer personally for it, but the God-given authority that was given to man will never again pass solely to the devil. It is now shared between us and the Lord Jesus, and He will remain faithful regardless. You need to recognize that you’re the one who now has authority and the power. Satan is fighting you with thoughts, and your weapons are such that you can take these thoughts captive. You can recognize that it’s wrong for the devil to oppress you physically and find out what the Scripture has to say about healing. John 8:32 says, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” You’re the one who has power and authority. God has given it to you, and the only thing that keeps you from exercising it is that you haven’t yet taken your thoughts captive. You haven’t used these spiritual weapons to renew your mind and to realize what you have. It’s encouraging to find out that you’re the one with authority and power.

I pray that you’ll take this, meditate on it, and God will give you the revelation that you’re the one Satan trembles at. You shouldn’t be trembling at Satan, because you are the one who has God-given power and authority. If you resist the devil, he will flee from you (James 4:7).
LESSON 6  AUTHORITY OF THE BELIEVER

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 3:1. Satan does exist, but his real power exists in his ability to deceive us. What did the serpent (the devil) try to get Eve to question?

2. Read Genesis 3:1. Why do you think Satan used deception?

3. Read Genesis 1:26, 28. Who gave man his authority?

4. Read Psalm 8:4-8. How did God create man?

SCRIPTURES TO USE WITH QUESTIONS

Genesis 3:1 – Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

Genesis 1:26 – And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Genesis 1:28 – And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Psalm 8:4-8 – What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? [5] For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour: [6] Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: [7] All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; [8] The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.
LESSON 6

AUTHORITY OF THE BELIEVER

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

5. Read 2 Corinthians 4:4. What does this scripture indicate happened?

6. Read Matthew 4:8-9. Do these verses strengthen this point?

7. Read Matthew 28:18. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, who now has all authority in heaven and in earth?

8. Read Matthew 28:18-19. To whom has authority been delegated to, according to this verse?

9. Read Ephesians 1:19. The exceeding greatness of God’s power is toward whom?

SCRIPTURES TO USE WITH QUESTIONS

2 CORINTHIANS 4:4 – In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

MATTHEW 4:8-9 – Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; [9] And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

MATTHEW 28:18-19 – And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. [19] Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

EPHESIANS 1:19 – And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.
1. Read Genesis 3:1. Satan does exist, but his real power exists in his ability to deceive us. What did the serpent (the devil) try to get Eve to question?  
   *God's Word (Has God indeed said?)*

2. Read Genesis 3:1. Why do you think Satan used deception?  
   *He could not make them disobey by force. He had to deceive them to give up their authority*

3. Read Genesis 1:26, 28. Who gave man his authority?  
   *God*

4. Read Psalm 8:4-8. How did God create man?  
   *With dominion over the works of His (God's) hands*

5. Read 2 Corinthians 4:4. What does this scripture indicate happened?  
   *That Satan took man's authority and became the god of this world (this system, or age)*

6. Read Matthew 4:8-9. Do these verses strengthen this point?  
   *Yes*

7. Read Matthew 28:18. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, who now has all authority in heaven and in earth?  
   *Jesus*

8. Read Matthew 28:18-19. To whom has authority been delegated to, according to this verse?  
   *The believer*

9. Read Ephesians 1:19. The exceeding greatness of God's power is toward whom?  
   *To us who believe*
LEVEL 2

LESSON 7
HEALING IS IN THE ATONEMENT
By Andrew Wommack

Jesus has already purchased healing for us. In Mark 2 and Luke 5 Jesus was teaching in a house so crowded that a paralyzed man was let down through the roof by friends and Jesus miraculously healed him. In Matthew 8:14-16, after Jesus had been healing people, the Bible says, “And when Jesus was come into Peter’s house, he saw his wife’s mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them. When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick.” Then verse 17 gives the reason for this happening: “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” In this instance, Jesus was healing many people, and it specifically refers back to and quotes from Isaiah 53:3-5: “He is despised and rejected of men [This is a prophecy about the Lord Jesus Christ]; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (brackets mine).

These are powerful passages of Scripture. Some people take them and say, “Wait a minute; this is talking in a spiritual sense.” The church I was brought up in didn’t believe in physical healing for the body. They would take a scripture like this and spiritualize it—use it to say we were wounded emotionally, and when we commit our lives to the Lord, He heals us. But if we put this passage together with the passages we started with, it forever ends that application of these scriptures. It’s true that Jesus will heal you emotionally and in other ways, but these scriptures are talking about physical healing for the body. You can see that because in Matthew 8:17, it says that these healings that took place were the fulfillment of the prophecy spoken by Isaiah we just read, “With his stripes we are healed.” It says this was the fulfillment that He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses. This is talking about physical sicknesses, hurts, and pains. Jesus healed people physically to fulfill the scripture that says we are healed by His stripes.

The Bible goes on to say in 1 Peter 2:24, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body, on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” This is in the past tense. Jesus came and part of what He came to do was heal our physical bodies. I am not diminishing the fact that He also came to forgive our sins. That’s important, and forgiveness of sins is like the doorway, the entrance to everything else, but He didn’t come only to forgive our sins. He also came to heal our bodies. In Greek, the word used for “salvation” in
LESSON 7
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the New Testament is *sozo*, an all-encompassing word that applies to many different things. But if you look it up, it’s also translated “healed.” James 5:14 states: “Is any sick among you? let them call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; And prayer of faith shall save the sick.” The word “save” there is the Greek word *sozo*, and it is talking about the sick being physically healed in their bodies. This same word that was translated forgiveness of sins hundreds of times in the New Testament was also translated healed.

When Jesus sent His disciples out in Matthew 10, the command He gave them was to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, and preach the Gospel. In the same breath that He told them to preach the Gospel, He told them to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and cast out devils. Healing is just as much a part of what Jesus came to accomplish in your life as forgiveness of sins.

In the same way you would never think that the Lord would want you to commit a sin to teach you that you could learn something through your sin, He would never want you to live in sickness. God is not the author of sickness in your life. Sometimes people say things like, “Well, this sickness is really a blessing from God because it turned me to Him.” It’s true that in crisis situations people turn to God, but He doesn't send sickness to teach you. He wouldn't do that anymore than He would put sin on you. Can you learn something if you go live in sin? If you live a life of adultery or homosexuality and get some disease, can you learn that the lifestyle was wrong? Certainly you can, but God didn't cause you to live that lifestyle. He didn't put sin in your life, yet you can learn from sinning. You can beat your head against the wall and learn that it’s not the thing to do, but you could also learn that without physically beating your head against the wall. You don't have to learn everything by hard knocks. God does not put sickness in your life to humble you and teach you something. Jesus died to forgive you of your sins and also to heal you of your diseases. He bore your sins in His own body, and by His stripes you were healed.

God’s supernatural divine healing is available to all of us and is part of the atonement that Jesus died to produce. If you aren't receiving your healing, God’s not upset with you. You don't have to be healed to love God. You can love God with your whole heart, not believe in healing, and still go to heaven. As a matter of fact, you'll probably get there quicker because you don't know how to walk in health. But you know what—it’s available to you. Jesus died to produce it. God wants you to be well.
LESSON 7  HEALING IS IN THE ATONEMENT

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Read Matthew 8:16-17. How many people did Jesus heal?

2. Read Isaiah 53:3-5. What type of healing are these verses talking about?

3. Read Matthew 8:17. What happened to our sicknesses and infirmity?

4. Read 1 Peter 2:24. What two things does this verse say Jesus did for us?

SCRIPTURES TO USE WITH QUESTIONS

MATTHEW 8:16-17 – When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: [17] That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

ISAIAH 53:3-5 – He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. [4] Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. [5] But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

1 PETER 2:24 – Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.
5. Read James 5:14-15. The word “saved” in verse 15 is the Greek word sozo, which is translated “to deliver, protect, heal, preserve, be whole.” It is the same word the Bible refers to as “salvation.” According to these verses and the Greek definition for salvation, what is included in salvation?

6. Read Matthew 10:7. When Jesus sent out His disciples, what did He tell them to say?

7. Read Matthew 10:8. What did Jesus tell them to do?

8. Read Mark 16:15. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do?

9. Read Mark 16:16. Those that respond to the Gospel will do what?

10. Read Mark 16:17. What signs will follow the believer?

11. Read Mark 16:18. What other signs follow believers?

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**JAMES 5:14-15** – Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: [15] And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

**MATTHEW 10:7-8** – And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. [8] Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

**MARK 16:15-18** – And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. [16] He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. [17] And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. [18] They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.
1. Read Matthew 8:16-17. How many people did Jesus heal? 
   *All that came to Him*

2. Read Isaiah 53:3-5. What type of healing are these verses talking about? 
   *All types of healing (including physical)*

3. Read Matthew 8:17. What happened to our sicknesses and infirmity? 
   *Jesus bore them*

4. Read 1 Peter 2:24. What two things does this verse say Jesus did for us? 
   *He bore our sins in His body and took stripes for our healing*

5. Read James 5:14-15. The word “saved” in verse 15 is the Greek word *sozo*, which is translated “to deliver, protect, heal, preserve, be whole.” It is the same word the Bible refers to as “salvation.” According to these verses and the Greek definition for salvation, what is included in salvation? 
   *Healing*

6. Read Matthew 10:7. When Jesus sent out His disciples, what did He tell them to say? 
   *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*

7. Read Matthew 10:8. What did Jesus tell them to do? 
   *Heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out demons*

8. Read Mark 16:15. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do? 
   *To go into all the nations and preach the Gospel to everyone*

9. Read Mark 16:16. Those that respond to the Gospel will do what? 
   *Believe and be baptized*

10. Read Mark 16:17. What signs will follow the believer? 
    *They will cast out demons and speak with tongues*

11. Read Mark 16:18. What other signs follow believers? 
    *Laying hands on the sick and seeing them recover*
LESSON 8
HINDRANCES TO HEALING
By Andrew Wommack

In the previous lesson, I talked about the fact that it is God's will to heal, and that healing is part of the atonement. Much more could be said, because even if you accept it and have seen it in the Scriptures, it still raises a lot of questions such as, “If it’s God’s will to heal us, why isn’t everyone healed?” There are many reasons, and I’m just scratching the surface on the things I know. There is a lot of information that I simply am not able to get into here, but if it's God's will to heal, I want to address part of why people are not healed. One of the reasons is ignorance. You cannot operate in something you don't know or understand, and in my own life that certainly has been true.

I was trained to believe God’s will automatically came to pass, that I had no authority, power, or say-so in it. So, through my ignorance, a number of things happened. My dad died when I was twelve years old and two or three people had died in my presence by the time I was twenty-one. I was praying for all of them to be healed, but I didn't see healing manifest, not because it wasn't God's will, but because of ignorance on my part. Ignorance is a reason why things happen, but it's not an excuse. It's like the law of gravity: a person could say, “Well, I didn't realize that if I walked off a ten-story building it was going to kill me.” You don't have to realize it to have the full impact of that law to work against you. People are ignorant about some of God's laws. They don't know how His healing system works, so ignorance is killing a lot of people.

Another thing that can hinder us from receiving healing is sin. It really upsets people when you say that, because they interpret what you are saying as all sickness is a result of some sin on our part, which is not true. That's not what I’m saying. In John 9, there was an instance where Jesus was coming out of the temple, and His disciples pointed out a man there who was born blind. His disciples said in verse 2, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" In other words, they were trying to relate his sickness directly to sin, asking if it was his sin or his parents' sin that caused this sickness to come on him. Jesus' answer was that neither of them had sinned. That's not saying that the parents or the son had never sinned but that it wasn’t their sin that directly caused his blindness. It's untrue to say that all sickness is related to sin, but it's also untrue to say that sin is not one of the factors.

In John 5 there is an instance when Jesus was at the pool of Bethesda, and He healed a man supernaturally. There were multitudes in that place, and only one person was healed. Later the chapter shows that the man didn't know who healed him when the Jews asked him in verse 12, "What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?" Verses 13-14 continue, “And he that was healed wist [knew] not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being
in that place, Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee” (brackets mine). Jesus said right here that sin would cause something worse than his paralysis to come upon him. He tied the result of sickness to sin. He also said in John 9 that it wasn’t because of anybody’s sin that the man was born blind.

Some things just happen naturally, but there are times when sickness, disease, or problems can be a direct result of sin. Even in such cases, it doesn’t mean God is the one who is doing these things to us. Take, for instance, a person who lives a homosexual lifestyle, which is a perversion of nature. The human body is not made to live that way. Sexually communicated diseases come from that lifestyle. God is not the author of these diseases—it’s just nature rebelling because it’s not set up to live that way. For instance, if you go out and eat the wrong food, your body will respond, and it’s not God doing it to you. There are natural laws, natural factors here. So it is true that sin can be one of the reasons people aren’t healed.

If there’s a known sin in your life and you are believing God for healing, you need to stop the sin, because through it, you are giving Satan a direct access that’s hindering you from receiving what God is doing in your life. Romans 6:16 says, “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servant ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” That’s not saying that Satan becomes master in the sense that you lose your salvation and go to hell, but it means that whether you are a Christian or not—if you’re out living in sin—you’re giving Satan an inroad into your life. John 10:10 says that the thief comes for no other purpose except to steal, to kill, and to destroy. But Jesus came to give you life. So, you’ve got Jesus trying to bring His life and health to you, but you’ve also got Satan trying to make you sick. If through sin you’re yielding yourself to Satan, you are empowering him and giving him an opportunity in your life. You can pray and ask God for healing all you want to, but your actions are allowing the devil to come in and bring sickness. So, if you are living in sin, you need to stop it.

I need to add that you could become so introspective that you would say “Well, I’m always less than what I should be” and get to a place where even though you believe God can heal, you believe He won’t because you don’t deserve it. That certainly is wrong too. None of us are ever going to obtain healing from God because we deserve it. God’s never had anyone qualified working for Him yet, so you don’t need to associate God moving in your life only to your performance, your holiness. It needs to be based on what Jesus has done for you and your faith in Him. At the same time, you can’t ignore your actions and yield yourself to the devil without him hindering you. You’ll see healing work much easier, much better in your life if you repent and quit anything you’re doing that would give Satan an inroad into your life.

Another factor that concerns healing that some people don’t think much about is the negativity and unbelief of other people that can affect you. One of the classic examples of this is in Mark 6 where Jesus was in His hometown, and the people didn’t respect Him because they remembered Him as a little boy. They knew His father and mother, brothers and sisters, and didn’t respect Him the way some people did. They came against him and criticized Him. Mark 6:4-6 says, “A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his
own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief.” This doesn’t say that Jesus wouldn’t do any mighty works, but that He couldn’t. Here is Jesus, the Son of God, who came to earth as a man, who had no lack in His faith. And there certainly wasn’t any inroad of sin in His life. Yet He was limited to what He could do for other people because of their unbelief. Put this together with Matthew 13:58, where it says “And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief,” and we see that Jesus, who had no limitations in Himself and certainly no sin in His life to give Satan an inroad, was limited in what He could do because of the people around Him.

This is really important to understand: It is God’s will to heal everyone all of the time. If you believe that, you might possibly make the mistake of going to a hospital and trying to empty it of every sick person because you believe it’s God’s will for them to be healed. It is God’s will for them to be healed, but He will not move against their own will. God will protect their right to be sick, their right not to be healed. No one can force them to be healed—and they can’t get healed off of someone else’s faith. Someone’s faith can help them if they are struggling, but no one can do it for them. You can push a car when it’s in neutral, but you can’t push a car in park or reverse. If a person is set against healing, you cannot overcome it. Because of this, you can’t empty a hospital or go into a church service and see every person healed without their cooperation. There’s so much more that could be said about this. When Jesus healed people, even raising the dead, He would go up to someone and say, “Weep not.” He would tell a mother not to weep and then raise her son from the dead. Somebody’s faith has to be used somewhere. There needs to be faith on our part, and there are so many, many other things involved in healing. I’ve discussed just a few here, and hopefully they will help you, but one of the main things you need to get out of this is that God is faithful. It is His will for you to be healed, but you have to learn how to cooperate with Him. He can’t do it for you; He has to do it through you. It will come from the inside of you.

I pray that these things will help you to start yielding yourself, to allow the power of God to flow through you, and to walk in His supernatural health.
1. Read Matthew 8:17. What did Jesus do to obtain healing for us?

MATTHEW 8:17 – That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

2. Read Hosea 4:6. Some people are not healed because of:
   A. Ignorance (lack of knowledge)
   B. They don’t go to church
   C. They are not good enough

HOSEA 4:6 – My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

3. Read John 9:1-3. What did the disciples think caused this man’s blindness?

Was their thinking correct?

JOHN 9:1-3 – And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. [2] And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? [3] Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4. Read John 5:14. Sin does open the door for sickness, but not always. Besides sickness, what else could sin produce in an individual?

JOHN 5:14 – Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.
LESSON 8

HINDRANCES TO HEALING

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

5. Read Romans 5:12-14 (in The Living Bible if possible). If sin is not always the cause of sickness, what could be another possible cause?

6. Read Acts 10:38. According to Acts 10:38, sickness can be caused by?

7. Read Matthew 13:58. Healing can be hindered by?

8. Read James 5:15. What will save the sick?

SCRIPTURES TO USE WITH QUESTIONS

ROMANS 5:12-14 (The Living Bible) – When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race. His sin spread death throughout all the world, so everything began to grow old and die, for all sinned. [13] We know that it was Adam's sin that caused this because although, of course, people were sinning from the time of Adam until Moses, God did not in those days judge them guilty of death for breaking his laws—because he had not yet given his laws to them nor told them what he wanted them to do. [14] So when their bodies died it was not for their own sins since they themselves had never disobeyed God's special law against eating the forbidden fruit, as Adam had. What a contrast between Adam and Christ who was yet to come!

ACTS 10:38 – How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

MATTHEW 13:58 – And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

JAMES 5:15 – And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.
ANSWER KEY

1. Read Matthew 8:17. What did Jesus do to obtain healing for us?
   *He took our infirmities and carried away our diseases*

2. Read Hosea 4:6. Some people are not healed because of:
   *A. Ignorance (lack of knowledge)*

3. Read John 9:1-3. What did the disciples think caused this man's blindness?
   *Sin*

   Was their thinking correct?
   *No*

4. Read John 5:14. Sin does open the door for sickness, but not always. Besides sickness, what else could sin produce in an individual?
   *Many things worse than sickness, even death (Rom. 6:23)*

5. Read Romans 5:12-14 (in The Living Bible if possible). If sin is not always the cause of sickness, what could be another possible cause?
   *The fall (Gen. 3). Adam through his transgression introduced sin and sickness into the human race*

6. Read Acts 10:38. According to Acts 10:38, sickness can be caused by?
   *Being oppressed of the devil*

7. Read Matthew 13:58. Healing can be hindered by?
   *Unbelief*

8. Read James 5:15. What will save the sick?
   *The prayer of faith*