



Calvary
Community
Church

Introduction to Bible Doctrine

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Lesson 1: Understanding the Bible

There are more than 200,000,000 copies of the Bible in the world, not counting Testaments and Scripture portions. It is the most quoted, cited, loved, hated, read, and studied book of all times. It has inspired millions of works of art. It has been the basis of the highest ethical and legal systems the world has ever known. It has prompted the establishment of great centers of learning and entire educational systems. But more important than all that, the Lord Jesus Christ put His stamp of approval on the Bible as “the truth” (John 17:17). Jesus asked the Father to use the Bible to sanctify you. You cannot grow in your relationship with your Heavenly Father if you neglect this book. Our objective in this study is to find out what makes this book so special?

WHAT IS THE BIBLE? II Timothy 3:14-17

As the Apostle Paul faced death he wrote this letter to the young man he had selected to carry on his ministry. He was especially concerned about Timothy’s attitude about the Bible and its importance in the lives of Christians. Because the Bible is so vital to Christian growth Paul knew that Satan would exert a great deal of effort in keeping Christians out of the Bible. In order to remain true during the persecution which is certain to follow (verse 12), Timothy is reminded of the true nature of the message he has been called upon to preach. It is important to take note of two specific facts about the Bible in this passage:

I. The Bible is GOD-BREATHED II Timothy 3:16

Paul describes the Bible as being “God-breathed.” Although most of the English translations of this verse used words like “inspired of God” the most clear and accurate translation is found in the New International Version: “All Scripture is God-breathed.” This verse very clearly describes the character of the Bible. It does not describe the process by which the Bible came into existence but rather the quality of the finished product. To

say the Bible is God-breathed is to say that it is uniquely a product of God's creative activity. It is therefore authoritative and without error.

But how was this God-breathed book given? In John 3:8 Jesus told Nicodemus that although we cannot see how the Holy Spirit does His work we are able to see the results of His work. We do not fully understand how the Holy Spirit used man to create an inspired Bible but He has let us in on a few things...

FIRST: According to II Peter 1:20-21 no prophesy of Scripture originated from an act of man's will. Rather men, set apart for this task, were "borne along" by the Holy Spirit, who enabled them to accurately record God's message. It is important to notice that the men themselves were not inspired or God-breathed, but it was that which they wrote through the work of the Holy Spirit that was called God-breathed or inspired of God. So the Bible is not just the product of human genius.

SECOND: According to I Corinthians 2:11-13 this process involved both the Holy Spirit and especially chosen men. Paul describes the following steps:

(1) Revelation: God unveiled specific truths that He wanted His people to know (verse 12).

(2) Inscripturation: The Holy Spirit guided the apostle in communicating God's revelation in words from the Apostle's own vocabulary that perfectly represented God's thoughts (v. 13).

(3) Inspiration: Because of the Holy Spirit's involvement in this process the finished product is "God-breathed"; a product of God's creative activity (II Timothy 3:16).

* Note: These verses make it clear that God did not **dictate** the Bible to human authors. They often used their own understanding and vocabulary to communicate truth and yet the Holy Spirit enabled them in such a way that the finished product was “God-breathed”.

Summary: Only the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments are inspired or “God-breathed.” No other writing has been produced by this enabling ministry of the Holy Spirit; therefore the Bible stands in a category all by itself. Every word of Scripture as well as every section of Scripture is a product of God’s creative activity. All the Bible is therefore inerrant and the only authoritative word from God to His people.

II. The Bible is PROFITABLE 2 Timothy 3:16-17

According to 2 Timothy 3:17 the Bible outfits the believer for every good work. The Bible is indispensable in living as a disciple. One of the characteristics of a disciple of Christ is that He abides in the word (John 8:31). How does the Word profit you as a disciple? It is profitable in four ways:

A. It is profitable for Teaching

Since the Bible is our only authoritative word from God it is our only source of absolute truth. Man has used two main methods of searching for truth. One method called empiricism, seeking knowledge through sensory experience, stresses personal experience. The other, rationalism, seeks to gain knowledge through human reasoning. The Bible teaches that these methods are not adequate to discover truths about God. “Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard (which rules out empiricism), and which have not entered the heart of man (which eliminates human reason), all that God has prepared for those who love Him.” (I Cor. 2:9). Thus the Bible declares that God’s truths cannot be learned through either of these methods alone. The Bible goes on to say in the next verse, “For to us God revealed them through the Spirit” (I Cor. 2:10). Without revelation from God we cannot know the truth of God!

B. It is profitable for Reproof

Not only does the Bible tell the believer the truth it also tells him when He is wrong. Reproof is a rebuke which brings about a conviction of wrong doing. The word of God is a mirror that will give you a true reflection of yourself (James 1:23-24).

“A rich man from China visited England and took great delight in a beautiful microscope which was shown him. Later, he purchased one for himself and took it back to China. But one day he happened to examine a tiny piece of rice he was eating. To his horror he discovered that many microscopic creatures were crawling on it. According to his religion, he was not to eat any animal life, but he was very fond of this food, and it was the staple item in his diet. There was only one solution to the problem. He would destroy the instrument which pointed out the distasteful fact, and so he dashed the microscope in pieces. Many attempt to do the same thing with God’s Word when it reveals sin in the life but one must be prepared to receive this ministry of the Bible.”

(William Bellshaw, On These We Stand –Great Doctrines).

C. It is profitable for Correction

The Bible not only shows you when you are wrong, it also corrects you or sets you straight. It is not enough to tell you that you are wrong you must be instructed on how to get right. Every disciple of Jesus Christ needs this ministry of God’s Word in his life.

D. It is profitable for Training in righteousness

This word was used of rearing children. The Bible is the instruction book for the child of God. The Bible will train you to live right before God.

So far as human knowledge goes, the Bible deals as freely with things unknown as it does with the known. It speaks with utmost freedom and assurance of things altogether outside the range of human life and experience. . . of things eternal as well as of time. There is a border beyond which the human mind, basing its conclusions on experience, cannot go; yet the human authors of the Bible do not hesitate when they reach that boundary, but move majestically on into the unknown realms with intrepidity. By what other means than through the Bible may one gaze into eternity either backward or forward?

Lewis Sperry Chafer (Systematic Theology, Vol. 1, Page 27)

Personal Investigation:

1. According to II Tim 3:14-17 what will keep Timothy from being deceived by the evil men and imposters mentioned in verse 13?

2. What would you say is the difference between learning and becoming convinced?

3. What part did the Scriptures have in Timothy's Salvation (3:15)?

What should this teach me regarding my own children's salvation?

11. What did Jesus believe about the Old Testament Scriptures (Matt. 5:17, 18)?

12. What did Jesus believe the Law of Moses and the Ten Commandments were (Mark 7:10, 13)?

13. What was Jesus' opinion about the reality of Noah and the Flood (Matt. 24:37, 38)?

14. In your own words explain how the Bible could be God's Word and yet written by men.

Memorize: I Corinthians 2:9-12

9 but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And which have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him."

10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God

Lesson 2: Understanding Bible Study

The Bible is one of the most important tools that God uses to produce spiritual health and growth in the Christian's life. Jesus specifically asked the Father to use the Word to sanctify us (John 17:17). The Bible is designed to teach us the truth, to confront us when we are wrong, to show us how to get right and to train us in living the Christian life (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is absolutely vital that the Bible become a part of the disciple's everyday life. In this session you will learn some guidelines for effectively learning and applying the Bible to your life.

There are five activities you should be continually using in order to be growing in the Word.

I. Hear The Word

"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ" (Romans 10:17)

- A. According to Luke 8:15, what kind of heart must you have in order to hear the Word of God?

- B. What is the teacher's responsibility when he proclaims the Word? (Nehemiah 8:8)

- C. What is your responsibility when you hear the Word preached and taught? (Acts 17:11)

- D. Whom did Jesus say would be blessed in Luke 11:28?

- E. Why do we sometimes fail to hear the Word?

II. Read The Word

"Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy and heed the things which are written in it." (Revelations 1:3)

What are the benefits of reading the Bible daily? (Deuteronomy 17:19)

A SIMPLE READING PLAN. If you are not following a reading plan start with this simple approach: Start with the Gospel of Mark and read two chapters a day. In 19 weeks you will complete the New Testament.

III. Memorize The Word

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy Word. Thy Word have I treasured in my heart that I might not sin against Thee." (Psalm 119:9,11)

A. What does God want us to do about His word? (Deuteronomy 11:18; Proverbs 7:3)

B. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How did Jesus overcome Satan's temptations?

C. What do you think Paul means in Colossians 3:16 when he says, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly"?

D. Write Psalm 40:8 in your own words:

Think about this: After 24 hours, you may accurately remember:

-5% of what you hear

- 15% of what you read

- 35% of what you study,

BUT YOU CAN REMEMBER 100% OF WHAT YOU MEMORIZE!

IV. Study The Word

"Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the Word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so." (Acts 17:11)

A. According to Proverbs 2:4 how should we study the Word?

B. According to II Timothy 2:15 what should your goal be in studying the Bible?

C. Basic Tools for Bible Study

1. NASB Exhaustive Concordance
2. The New Bible Commentary - Guthrie, Ed.
3. The New Bible Dictionary - Douglas, Ed.
4. Foundations of the Christian Faith - J.M. Boice
5. A good English dictionary

D. The Three Basic Steps of Bible Study

I. **Observation** - Answers the question: what does it say?

a. Observation is learning to ask the right questions:

Who? Who are the people in this passage?

What? What's happening?

Where? Where is the story taking place?

When? What time is it?

b. Example: Observe I John 5:11,12 and answer the following questions:

Who gives eternal life?

Where is eternal life found?

Who has eternal life?

Who does not have eternal life?

When is this life completed?

2. **Interpretation** - Answers the question: what does it mean?

a. Interpretation is answering the questions that come from observation and discovering the full meaning of the passage.

b. In answering the question that came from observation, three sources are used:

Context - The part just before or after a word or passage that determines its meaning.

Cross Reference - Letting Scripture interpret Scripture.

Culture - The Bible is not a modern book. The Bible must be understood from a cultural context.

c. Looking back at your observation Questions on I John 5:11, 12, what source did you use to answer each question? (Context? Cross Reference? Culture?)

3. **Application** - Answers the question: What am I going to do about it?

a. All Bible study exists for this step.

b. Application is not to do something with the Bible, but to have the Bible do something to you.

c. The reason for all Bible study is to conform us to the image of Jesus Christ.

d. You should ask the following questions of every portion of Scripture you study:

How does this affect my relationship with God?

How does this affect my relationship with others?

How does this affect my relationship with myself?

How does this affect my relationship with Satan?

e. Answer these application questions in relationship to I John 5:11, 12.

How does this affect my relationship with God?

How does this affect my relationship with others?

How does this affect my relationship with myself?

How does this affect my relationship with Satan?

V. Meditate On The Word

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law he doth meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psalm 1:1-3)

A. The Meaning of Meditation: prayerful reflection with a view to understanding and application - giving prayerful thought to God's Word and to your life, with the goal of conforming your life to His will.

B. Two Key Questions That Will Help You Meditate:

1. What is the meaning of this verse based on its context? (Remember, there is only one true interpretation).

2. How should this verse affect my life? (There are many applications).

C. What promises are made to the person who continually meditates on the Word of God?

1. Psalm 1:2, 3

2. Joshua 1:8

D. How will meditation affect your speech and actions? (Luke 6:45)

Personal Application:

You have 168 hours in every week. How are you investing them? Are you being changed by the Word? Use the following chart to analyze where you are now and how you need to change.

My Weekly Practice

	My Present Practice	My Goals and Plans
Hearing the Word		
Reading the Word		
Memorizing the Word		
Studying the Word		
Meditating on the Word		

"The Scriptures were not given to increase our knowledge, but to change our lives."

Dwight L. Moody

Memorize: II Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Lesson 3: Understanding God

"Plunge yourself in the Godhead's deepest sea; be lost in His immensity; and you shall come forth as from a couch of rest, refreshed and invigorated. I know nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief; so speak peace to the winds of trial, as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead."

C.H. Spurgeon

Living life without a knowledge of God is chaotic. The world we live in becomes a totally insane place; life becomes a disappointing and painful pursuit. Living without a knowledge of God leaves us without a reference point... we are adrift on an uncharted sea. There is no meaning in the past, no comfort in the present and no hope in the future. A.W. Tozer said, "Our worship is only as pure or as high as our thoughts of God. Without a doubt, the mightiest thoughts the mind can entertain are the thoughts of God. This makes it immensely important that our ideas concerning God should correspond as nearly as possible to that which is true of God. True worship allows God to manifest His attributes in our lives."

I. How Can I Know God?

I Can know God because He has revealed Himself. The revelation of God is not restricted to the Bible. There are many ways in which God has shown Himself to man; we will consider three.

A. GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF IN CREATION - Romans 1:20

1. According to Romans 1:20, what does creation reveal about God?

2. Why does that leave man without excuse?

3. Is this "natural revelation" enough to bring man into a personal relationship with God? Why?

B. God has revealed Himself in the Bible - Hebrews 1:1

1. What kind of information did the Old Testament prophets give about God that cannot be known through nature?

2. Would you say the Bible is a "complete" revelation of God or a "sufficient" revelation of God?

3. Is the Bible a revelation that can bring you into a personal relationship with God (II Timothy 3:15)?

C. THE COMPLETE REVELATION OF GOD IS FOUND IN JESUS CHRIST - Hebrews 1:2,3; Colossians 2:9

Everything that God is dwelt permanently in His Son. So Christ is the final and perfect unveiling of God to mankind. All other revelations are incomplete except Christ. The way to know God is to know His Son.

II. What Is God Like?

Since God has revealed Himself through nature, the Word and ultimately through Jesus Christ, it is obvious that He wants us to know Him. What exactly has He revealed about Himself? What is He really like?

A. WHAT IS GOD MADE OF?

Although this sounds like a question only a naive child would ask, it really is a good question. We are not suggesting that God was created by asking this question. Has God revealed what His essence is? Yes.

God Is **Spirit** - John 4:24

Our English translation says "God is a Spirit." Since the Greek language lacks an indefinite article, the word "a" should be omitted. A paraphrase of this verse would be: "God is, as to nature or characteristic, spirit." Therefore, God does not have a material body.

√ Our bodies need a combination of things in order to exist. What does God need?
(See John 8:58)

√ Our bodies are limited to one place. Is God's essence limited? (See Eph. 4:6)

√ We are made up of a compound of elements (i.e. body, soul, and spirit). Is God's essence compounded? (See John 10:28-30; The Greek reads "one thing")

B. HOW DOES GOD ACT?

God is personal. He thinks, feels and acts. How does He think, feel and act? In other words, what are God's attributes?

1. God Is Omniscient. God possesses all the knowledge there is to have. Nothing takes Him by surprise (Isaiah 46:10).

- Think of omniscience in relation to the eternal security of the believer. If God knows all, then obviously nothing can come to light after salvation which He did not know when He saved us. Knowing all about us, He still forgave our sins, and accepted us into His family forever.

2. God Is Love. God is perfect infinite love. His love is given freely and without any consideration to the loveliness or merit of the object.

- Godly love is that which seeks good for the object loved. Love expresses itself in action. God is our example. He demonstrates His love for us in sending Jesus to die in our place (Romans 5:8). How can we demonstrate love to someone else today?

3. God Is Holy. Holiness means that God maintains His own moral excellence and because of this attribute He abhors anything unlike Himself and demands of others a purity like His own.

- How important is holiness? (Hebrews 12:14)

- How can I get this holiness? (I Corinthians 1:30)

4. God Is Righteous. God always acts right. It is impossible for Him to do or cause anything that is wrong. Psalm 71:19; 111:3

5. God Is Truth. God is perfectly reliable in His revelation and sees things as they really are. John 14:6

- In John 18:38, Pilate asked, "What is truth?" Man is constantly searching for truth, but in sources other than God. Jesus said, "I am the truth." But man has suppressed the truth in his unrighteousness (Romans 1:18). He has exchanged the truth of God for lies (Romans 1:25). When a person comes to Jesus, his quest for the truth ends and freedom begins. Jesus said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32). Are you experiencing the truth of the Gospel in your life?

6. God Is Good. God desires and maintains His own happiness and the happiness of others. Matthew 19:16ff

7. God Is Omnipotent. God is all powerful, having more than enough strength to do the sum total of all things.

- Because God is all powerful, the believer is kept secure in his salvation. Our salvation comes because the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). Furthermore, God's omnipotence is seen in His power to create (Genesis 1:1); in His preservation of all things (Hebrews 1:3); and in His providential care for us.
- Will God ever lose any of these attributes? (James 1:17; Hebrews 6:17; I Timothy 1:7)

Personal Investigation:

What do the following verses teach about God?

1. Proverbs 15:3; Acts 17:27

How does this apply to me personally?

2. Exodus 3:14; Revelations 22:13

Personal application?

3. Numbers 23:19; Hebrews 6:17, 18

Personal application?

4. Job 34:21; Matthew 12:25

Personal application?

5. Psalm 89:14; Galations 6:7

Personal application?

6. Psalm 11:7; I John 2:1

Personal application?

7. Numbers 23:19; John 14:6

Personal application?

8. John 3:16; Romans 5:8

Personal application?

Food for thought. . .

The way we handle any situation corresponds to our view of God.

After having completed this lesson on the attributes of God, how would you respond to the following situations:

1. The death of a close relative, i.e. wife, husband, child.
2. An accident that leaves you physically disabled for life?

Memorize: John 4:24

God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

Lesson 4: Understanding Jesus Christ

Read Colossians 1:15-19. The Apostle Paul was combating a false teaching which had gained entrance into the church in the city of Colossae. This teaching depreciated the person of Jesus Christ. It was an attempt to make something other than Christ the center of the believer's life (Col. 2:18-19). Paul responded by writing this great message contained in Colossians 1:15-19. Some of the most profound doctrine in all the Bible is found in these verses, yet it was written to meet a practical problem in a local church. Church members need to know the great doctrines of the Bible in order to guard against wrong belief and wrong behavior. In these verses Paul answers the question:

"Why must Christ be Lord of All?"

I. Because He Is The Only True Revelation Of God (15a)

These words declare that Jesus Christ is an exact representation of God. Since no one has seen the Father (John 1:18), He must be revealed by one who is capable of accurately conveying to mankind the true nature of God. Only God Himself could reveal His own being to men.

According to John 1:18 what is the one way God has been truly made plain to man?

"Image" here means that Jesus is "that which can be observed of the reality" of God. Jesus Christ is not a copy of God. He is the reality in manifestation. Because Jesus Christ is God.

II. Because He Is Sovereign Over Every Creature (15b-17)

"Firstborn" is a title of dignity and precedence. Does this title in any way imply that Jesus Christ was a part of creation? NO. The witness of Scripture as a whole and especially of verses 16 and 17 make that meaning impossible. Reading these verses carefully makes the meaning quite clear:

He is not the first to be created.

He is not a part of creation.

He is the One responsible for all creation.

The "firstborn" was the one who exercised the privileges of "Primogeniture". As Lord of Creation, Jesus is sovereign in relation to every creature.

Why should Jesus be sovereign over every creature?

Verses 16 and 17 give 5 reasons why He is Sovereign over you and every other creature:

A. All things were created "IN" Him.

Paul pictures Him as the sphere in which the work of creation took place.

B. All things "stand" created "Through" Him.

Paul uses a different tense of the verb to emphasize the ongoing existence of creation. And he adds the concept of Christ being the personal agent as well as the sphere of creation.

C. All things "stand" created "For" Him.

Not only is Christ the "sphere" and "personal agent" of creation, but He is the GOAL of creation.

D. Christ "Precedes" all creation (17).

E. Christ "Holds together" all creation (17).

Christ maintains what He brought into being.

III. Because He Is Head Of The Church (18)

Paul's description of Christ terminates with a reference to His relationship to the church. The church is composed of all who have trusted in Christ as their Saviour. It began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and will be completed when the Rapture takes place (I Thess. 4:13-18). The church is described under the figure of a body. Christ is the Head of that body. By this illustration the truth is taught that direction is given to the body by the Head. When the body does not move according to the directions of the Head, only chaos can result. Every Christian must recognize that each step taken in life must be taken with both eyes on Christ.

IV. Because The Fulness Of God Dwells In Him (19)

The Lord we serve is the one in whom all the attributes of God ("fulness") dwell permanently. He certainly should have the place of preeminence in our lives.

Personal Investigation:

I. Jesus Christ Is a man... 100% man.

1. Where was Jesus born? (Luke 2:4-7)

2. Describe His human growth and development as a youth.
(Luke 2:40, 52)

3. What was Jesus' human response to lack of food? (Luke 4:2)

4. What was Jesus' human response after a journey? (John 4:6)

5. What was Jesus' human response when tired? (Mark 4:38)

6. What was Jesus' human response when grieved? (John 11:35)

7. What was Jesus' human response to the torture of the crucifixion? (John 19:33a)

II. Jesus Christ is God... 100% God.

In John 1:1 Jesus Christ is referred to as "the Word". We know that the term "Word" refers to Jesus because in verse 14 it says, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

A. According to John 1:1:

1. How long has Jesus Christ existed?
2. Where was Jesus Christ in the beginning?
3. Who is Jesus Christ?

B. How did God choose to reveal Himself to man? (John 1:14)

C. How did Jesus demonstrate that He was God?

1. Matt. 8:23-27 - Power over
2. Luke 4:40 - Power over
3. Luke 4:33-36 - Power over
4. John 11:43-44 - Power over

D. What additional authority did Jesus claim in Mark 2:3-12?

E. Who can forgive sin? (Mark 2:7)

F. If Jesus had authority to forgive sins, and only God can forgive sins, who is Jesus Christ?

G. What new things have you learned about Jesus Christ, the man?

H. What new things have you learned about Jesus Christ, God?

I. What was the response of the people to Jesus?

1. The disciples (Matt. 14:33)

2. The blind man (John 9:38)

3. Thomas (John 20:28)

4. Woman at the well (John 4:29)

5. Centurion (Matt. 27:54)

* According to John 5:24, what three things are the result of hearing and believing?

Present

Future

Past

* What does Jesus promise His followers? (John 10:28)

1.

2.

3.

Memorize John 1:1 & 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Lesson 5: Understanding Salvation

One of the great themes of the Bible is the salvation of man through the crosswork of Jesus Christ. The Bible very clearly teaches that every man has sinned (Romans 3:23) and is spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1). We are all under the condemnation of death, and the penalty must be paid.

The Gospel ("good news") is that God paid the price for man. He did this in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. In dying, Christ took the penalty upon Himself so that those who receive Him could be freed from the penalty and have eternal life.

I. Why Did Christ Become A Man?

A. Christ Came To Save Sinners (I Timothy 1:15)

1. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).
2. God is spirit and cannot die (I Timothy 1:17).
3. Christ, being God had to first become a man so that He could die in our place (Philippians 2:8).
4. Christ had to die in order to give life to men who were spiritually dead and under the condemnation of eternal death (John 10:11-21).

5. His death could only pay for our sins if He were sinless; otherwise He would have to die for His own sin (II Corinthians 5:21).

OUR SAVIOR HAD TO BE A MAN IN ORDER TO DIE.

OUR SAVIOR HAD TO BE GOD IN ORDER TO BE SINLESS.

B. Christ Came To Give His Life A Ransom (Mark 10:45)

* How did Christ ransom us?

I. Christ's death made right what Adam's sin made wrong (Romans 5:12-19).

2. Christ's death was accepted by God as payment in full for our sins (I Peter 2:21-24; 3:18). This is called "Substitutionary Atonement"; Christ was our substitute. He died in our place.

3. Christ's death on the cross was payment enough to redeem all men. But all men are not redeemed and back in a right relationship with God; why not?

II. How Can A Man Receive Christ's Salvation?

A. Christ's Salvation must be personally appropriated to our lives through faith (Ephesians 2:8).

* Look up the following verses and indicate what they say about how Christ's salvation can be personally appropriated:

1. John 3:16

2. John 3:36

3. John 5:24

4. Acts 16:25-31

* The word "believe" in these verses denotes more than just believing certain things are true. Intellectual assent alone will not appropriate salvation (James 2:19).

B. WHAT KIND OF FAITH WILL APPROPRIATE SALVATION?

Faith itself does not save. Faith in Christ does not strictly save, but Christ saves through faith. Faith is the instrument through which salvation is given as a free gift from Jesus Christ. Saving faith includes three things:

1. A knowledge of the facts - Romans 10:17

What are the facts you must know? I Corinthians 15:3-4

2. Assent to these facts - Hebrews 11:6

3. Trust or personal commitment - I Thessalonians 2:4; John 1:12

* Note: In John 3:16 the word translated "in" is a Greek preposition that indicates an absolute transference of trust from ourselves to another.

Saving faith includes:

A renunciation of our own efforts (i. e. acknowledging we are helpless sinners)

AND

Relying totally on the work of Jesus Christ to make us acceptable to God.

Personal Investigation:

I. Why did Christ come into the world?

1. I Timothy 1:15

2. Luke 19:10

3. I Corinthians 15:3b

II. Describe man's spiritual condition before God without Christ:

1. Romans 3:10-12, 19

2. Ephesians 2:1-3

III. Why can Christ alone save?

1. II Corinthians 5:21

2. Hebrews 1:3; 4:15

3. I Peter 2:22

4. I John 3:5

IV. Why did Christ die?

1. What process did Jesus use to illustrate death producing life? John 12:24-25

2. What did His death accomplish?

I Peter 3:18

II Corinthians 5:21

Ephesians 1:7

(1)

(2)

3. What 3 things did Paul consider as of first importance in I Cor. 15:3-4?

(1)

(2)

(3)

IV. What is the correct response to these truths? Romans 10:9

(1)

(2)

What is the promise? Romans 10:9b

Memorize: I Corinthians 15:3-5

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Lesson 6: Understanding The Holy Spirit

Who is the Holy Spirit? "The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity." This statement implies that the Holy Spirit is a person (possessing all the characteristics of a person) and He is fully God (possessing all the essence and attributes of God). The role He plays in the life of the believer could only be accomplished by such a divine person.

I. The Holy Spirit Is A Person Of The Godhead

Throughout the history of the church there have been those who claim that the Holy Spirit is simply an influence or one of the manifestations of God the Father. One of the key characteristics of many false cults is their denial of the personality of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit's personality can be seen from His attributes and works.

A. How many times do you find the personal pronoun He, His, Him used of the Holy Spirit in John, chapters 14, 15, 16?

B. According to Psalm 104:30, what work of God did the Spirit have a part?

C. According to Psalm 139:7, what divine characteristic has the Holy Spirit?

D. In I Corinthians 2:11-12 we are told that the Spirit knows the things of God in a way in which man does not and in a way which implies what characteristic of God?

E. The Bible states directly that the Holy Spirit is God. In Acts 5:1-4 an incident is related concerning a husband and wife whose names were Ananias and Sapphira. They owned a certain piece of property, and they decided to sell it and give the proceeds to the church. They were not forced to do this but did it on a purely voluntary basis. When they brought the money to Peter, they claimed that all the money was being given to the Lord. However, they kept back a certain portion of the money. Peter charged that they had lied to the Holy Spirit. Notice verse four. If you lie to the Holy Spirit who are you lying to?

- • It is important that Christ's disciples understand that the Holy Spirit is a divine person who helps us day by day to live the kind of life that is pleasing to God. We must know as much about Him as we can so that our conduct will be consistent with that which God has revealed in His Word.

II. The Holy Spirit Is At Work In The Disciple's Life

Read the following: John 16:7-11; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 5:18; Titus 3:5. **List below all the works which are attributed to the Holy Spirit in these verses.**

It is important to know who the Holy Spirit is, but it is just as important to know how He wants to work in our lives. It is only as the disciple learns to cooperate with the Spirit in his life that he will experience the power that is available to carry out the will of God.

The Holy Spirit's ministry took on new dimensions when the Church of Jesus Christ began. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit did not indwell every person who was rightly related to God. When God had a particular ministry for one of His saints to perform in the Old Testament times, the Spirit came upon that one to enable him to accomplish that particular ministry. Since the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost, every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's ministry today is directed to two groups of people.

A. The Holy Spirit's ministry to the non-Christian.

What is the Holy Spirit's threefold ministry to the world which is described in John 16:7-11?

(1) To convict the world of

(2) To convict the world of

(3) To convict the world of

Look again at verse 9. What particular sin is it that the Holy Spirit convicts of?

It is this sin that will ultimately make permanent a man's separation from God. A Christian should always be thankful for this ministry of the Spirit. Because this ministry was carried on in his life, he became a child of God. It is also a comfort to know that when we speak to others about their relationship to Christ, the Holy Spirit is moving upon their hearts as well as convincing them of their need of salvation.

The Spirit also convicts unsaved people of the righteousness of God. God's righteousness must be satisfied if a person is to stand in God's presence. Christ's death on the cross provided that satisfaction. The Spirit also convicts of judgment. The judgment of sin was taken care of on the cross. Unsaved men need to know this truth. The operation of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of non-Christians is a very significant and far-reaching work.

B. The Holy Spirit's ministry to the Christian.

There are several ways in which the Holy Spirit ministers to the believer. We will consider five of them.

I. **Regeneration** - Titus 3:5; I John 5:11, 12

Regeneration is the Spirit's work of giving the believer eternal life. This life is in Jesus Christ and when the Spirit causes Jesus Christ to come into the life of the believer he also receives His life. As a result of regeneration the believer is a child of God. Regeneration is referred to as being "born again" or "being born of God". **According to I John 5:1-5 how can you tell if someone has been born of God?**

2. **Indwelling** - Romans 8:9

At the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit takes up permanent residence in the believer's life. If the Spirit does not indwell a person, he is not a Christian.

3. **Baptism** - I Corinthians 12:13

This work is greatly misunderstood today. According to the verse above every Christian is baptized or placed into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. It is not something which happens after a person is saved but it takes place at the time of salvation. All of the principal references to the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Epistles point to it as already having taken place in the lives of those Christians being spoken of.

4. **Sealing** - Ephesians 1:13, 14

One of the best illustrations of sealing is a registered letter. When the letter is registered at the Post Office, it is sealed until delivered and only two persons can open it -- the sender or the recipient. God is both the sender and the recipient. He has promised to deliver us safely to heaven.

5. **Filling** - Ephesians 5:18

The four ministries of the Spirit which have just been mentioned are true of every "born again Christian". They all take place at the moment one is saved and are not dependent upon some subsequent experience a few believers may have. This last ministry does not happen automatically upon salvation, but is dependent upon the Christian meeting the conditions set forth in the Bible in order to be the recipient of it. Being "Spirit filled" is living under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Every believer is commanded to be filled with the Spirit even as he is commanded not to be intoxicated with wine. Most believers are very careful about avoiding drunkenness but fail to see the disobedience involved in failing to be “filled with the Spirit”.

The believer who is Spirit filled is. . .

(1) Allowing the Holy Spirit to _____ him. Rom 8:14

(2) Is not _____ the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 4:30

(3) Is not _____ the Holy Spirit. I Thes 5:19

We grieve the Spirit by permitting things in our lives which we know are contrary to God’s will. We quench Him by resisting His energy and work in us and by refusing to do as He prompts us. I Corinthians 12:8-11; Acts 13:2-4; 16:6, 7; 8:29

(4) Is continually _____ in the Spirit. Galatians 5:16

What are the observable evidences that one is walking in the Spirit and thus living under His influence? Galatians 5:16-24

Memorize: I Corinthians 12:13

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Lesson 7: Understanding Prayer

One of the greatest needs we have as children of God is to make contact with heaven. Most of us are not like Abraham who throughout his life was personally contacted by God. But God has instead invited me to have communion with Him through prayer as often as I wish. The dynamic of prayer is not based on my posture in prayer or the number of times I repeat my wants to the Father. We are not to have "a little prayer wheel turning" like the pagans who think repetition will move their god. Prayer is exercising our God-given ability to tune in to God. As John White says, "It is God's communication unit. Unbreakable. Inescapable. Not subject to our whims or moods." Prayer, in a real sense, is God's means of liberating His power on earth.

I. The Basis Of Prayer: Relationship

Through Christ a new intimacy with God was revealed. He taught His disciples to pray on a new basis, that of relationship. Through the new birth we are made children and we can speak to God as our Father. Christ revealed this new relationship in person as He lived life among men. He taught them to lift up their eyes and hearts to God at all hours of the day and night, in any place, in any circumstance as children speak to their father. In this new intimacy there is no place for "vain repetitions" or praying "to be seen of men", for He is the Father who sees in secret and reads the heart.

A. To Whom Should You Pray? John 16:24:

1. Who is speaking? (16:19)

2. In whose name should you pray?

3. What is one result from prayer?

4. To whom should you pray? (16:23)

B. When Should You Pray?

1. Psalm 55:17

2. Ephesians 6:18

3. I Thessalonians 5:17

4. Hebrews 4:16

5. Luke 18:1

II. The Conditions Of Prayer

In order for us to experience answered prayer we must meet certain conditions:

1. Matthew 21:22

2. Mark 11:24

3. John 15:7

(1)

(2)

4. I John 3:22

(1)

(2)

5. Mark 11:25

6. I John 5:14

7. Based on 1 through 6, what is involved in your praying and God's answering?

III. Hindrances To Prayer

A. To Corporate Prayer

The New Testament encourages prayer when the church is gathered all together, in house fellowships, in small groups and even in twos.

1. What are we promised in such prayer fellowships? Matthew 18:20
2. What conditions must be met? Acts 1:14

B. Prayer In General

Certain things in our personal lives will hinder our prayers from being answered. There are believers who have little confidence in prayer because they have so rarely experienced answered prayer. What can hinder our prayers from being answered?

1. Psalm 66:18
2. James 1:6
3. James 4:3
4. Proverbs 21:13
5. I Peter 3:7

IV. Important Areas Of Prayer

A. **ADORATION:** Reflecting on God Himself. Praise Him for His love - His power and majesty - His wonderful gift of Christ. Try following the example of David in the Psalms.

B. **CONFESSION:** Admitting to God where you have sinned. Be honest and humble. Remember, He knows you and loves you anyway. Confession is the only way you can begin walking in the light again when you sin.

C. **THANKSGIVING:** Telling God how grateful you are for everything He has given - even the unpleasant and painful things. Your thankfulness will help you see His purposes.

D. **SUPPLICATION:** Make specific requests. Pray for others first, then for yourself.

The first letters of these four words form the word "ACTS". Using this as a mental guide for prayer helps you maintain a balanced prayer life.

Memorize: John 16:24

“Until now you have asked for nothing in my name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full.”

List four specific things that you can pray about today. Pause and talk to God about them right now.

ADORATION

CONFESSION

THANKSGIVING

SUPPLICATION

Praying is spiritual work; and human nature does not like taxing, spiritual work. Human nature wants to sail to heaven under a favoring breeze, a full, smooth sea. Prayer is a humbling work. It abases intellect and pride, crucifies vainglory, and signs our spiritual bankruptcy, and all these are hard for flesh and blood to bear. It is easier not to pray than to bear them. So we come to one of the crying evils of these times, maybe of all times - little or no praying. Little praying is a kind of make-believe, a salve for the conscience, a farce and a delusion. The little estimate we put on prayer is evident from the little time we give to it.

E.M. Bounds

Lesson 8: Understanding the Local Church

In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said He was going to build a "church". What did He have in mind? A well-structured, wealthy, highly organized institution? An underground cell group with no money or structure? Based on what Jesus did and on what the rest of the New Testament reveals about this church He had none of these things in mind.

What does Matthew 16:18 tell us about this "church"?

What is its foundation?

Who is its builder?

Who is its owner?

When was it to begin?

What could not overpower it?

I. The Church Defined

A. The Meaning of the Term

The word church is the translation of the Greek word *ekklesia* (*ekklhsia*). This word is composed of two parts. The first part (*ek*) means "out of," and the last part (*klesia*) means "called." A church is a called out group of people; an assembly. The context will indicate the nature, purpose and function of the assembly being referred to.

B. The New Testament Concept

As the New Testament was being completed there was a progression of revelation concerning the church. One Bible scholar claims that at least 80 different images can be found in the New Testament to describe the church. The church is viewed as a family, a bride, a vineyard, a temple, a building, a flock, etc. But the most important designation of the church in the New Testament is "the Body of Christ". This metaphor communicates in a very dynamic way that the on-going activity of the Risen Christ is in and through the church.

1. The beginning of the church

The New Testament church began its existence on the day of Pentecost. The description of the birth of the church is found in Acts 2:1-4. The church, the body of Christ, is entered by means of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Colossians 1:24; I Corinthians 12:13). It is only logical to conclude that the church could not be in existence before the baptizing ministry of the Holy Spirit was available. According to Acts 1:5, the Holy Spirit's baptism was still future after the resurrection of Christ. The only logical place to conclude that the church was formed and the baptism of the Holy Spirit was initiated is Acts

2:1-4. This is the event Peter looked back to as the fulfillment of Christ's promise of Spirit baptism Acts 11:16.

2. The nature of the church

Although the church was a mystery before it was born (Ephesians 3:1-11), its nature is revealed in the New Testament. In I Corinthians 12 the church is described as a body. There are a number of characteristics which are immediately manifest in any well functioning body. The first one emphasized in I Corinthians 12 is that of unity. A human body is a marvelous picture of coordination when it is healthy. Every member in the body has its specific task to do. If a particular member does not do his work, the whole body suffers because of it.

The first eleven verses of this chapter demonstrate that the Holy Spirit has given a spiritual gift to every believer. The latter verses of this chapter emphasize that all these different gifts are to function in their rightful places. In other words, there is diversity in unity (verse 12). If the body is to do its job, all the necessary parts must be present and working.

We may not like the place which has been given us in the body. But we must carefully recognize that God is the One who has given to us our responsibility (verse 18). It also helps to remember that even the most humble member is necessary for the well-being of the others (verse 22).

3. The future of the church

The church will be raptured when it is completed (I Thes. 4:13ff; I Cor. 15:51; I Thes. 1:10). In the future Messianic Kingdom the church will judge (I Cor. 6:2) and reign with Christ (II Tim. 2:12; Rev. 1:6; 5:10).

So the church which is His body is the group of believers baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ, and thus into His body, from the day of Pentecost until the rapture (Rom. 12:5; I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:4-5; Gal. 3:27-28).

* Note: Since the church did not exist until the Day of Pentecost it cannot be found in the Old Testament. The phrase "Old Testament Church" is not a biblical one. The church is entirely separate from the nation of Israel; the two are not to be identified in any way (see I Cor. 10:32; Phil. 3:20; Rom. 11). The church was not in existence during the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord states this when He predicted the formation of the church in Matthew 16:18. The use of the future tense here confirms the truth of this statement.

II. The Priorities Of The Church

In John 15 Jesus instructed His followers to carry out three priorities:

Verses 1-11 > "Abide in Me"

Verses 12-15 > "Love one another"

Verses 16-27 > "Bear witness of Me"

A. Priority One: Upward, The Lordship Of Christ

Scripture screams out the message that Christ is above all: Colossians 1:

*15-17a All creation is His work and exists for Him.

*17b He holds it all together.

*18 He is Head and Source of the church.

But how do we practice the Lordship of Christ?

1. Obedience - follow His instructions (John 14:23; 16:13)

2. Worship

According to I Peter 2:4-9 as members of His church we are priests who are to be offering up spiritual sacrifices to God. What spiritual sacrifices are we to be offering up?

Hebrews 13:15

Hebrews 13:16

Romans 15:16; Phil. 2:17

Romans 12:1-2

B. Priority Two: Inward, Love One Another

This flows out of priority number one (II Cor. 8:5). This is the fulfillment of the New Commandment which Jesus left us (John 13:34).

C. Priority Three: Outward, Bear Witness To The World

This priority flows out of the first two (John 13:34-35).



Personal Investigation . . .

1. In Ephesians 5:23

A. What is Christ's position in the church?

B. How is the church described?

2. How did Christ obtain the church? (Acts 20:28)

3. What has He done for us through His death? (Eph. 1:7)

4. Read I Corinthians 12:7-27

A. Does every believer have some gift (ability) from the Holy Spirit? (verse 7)

B. Who decides which gift is given to a believer? (verses 11, 18)

C. For what purpose are the gifts given? (also see I Peter 4:10)

D. What is His desire? (verse 25)

E. Are there any unnecessary functions (members) in the body? (verses 20-22)

F. If any other Christian is helped or suffers, how does it affect us? (verse 26) (circle the correct answer)

- (1) It has little affect on us unless we know him or know about it.
- (2) It affects us most if he is a member of the same group or organization.
- (3) In some cases it helps or hurts us, and some cases it doesn't.
- (4) It always affects us since we are members of the same spiritual body.

5. List all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the following passages:

I Corinthians 12:8-10, 28

Romans 12:6-8

I Peter 4:10-11

Memorize: Hebrews 10:24-25

“... and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near. “

Lesson 9: Understanding the Local Church

The Body of Christ, which is the church, manifests its presence and exercises its gifts through local churches. These groups of born again believers, gathered together in a particular locality to worship and serve God, are extremely important in God's plan and program. Every Christian ought to be vitally interested in his local church. Because of the importance of this organization, a Christian ought to understand what the Bible says concerning it.

I. What Is The Local Church

The New Testament describes the local church as a group of believers in a certain place, banded together for instruction, fellowship, worship and service.

A. Membership in the Local Church

The simplest picture of membership in a local church is found in Acts 2:41. In this passage the members of the first local church met two requirements. They first received the Word which was preached, and then they were baptized. The only kind of church which is ever described in the New Testament is a local church made up of a regenerated membership. Unsaved people have no place in the local church except to learn how they may receive Christ as their personal Savior. There is absolutely no justification for the position that an unsaved person ought to be given a job in the church to keep him interested in the work.

B. Activity of the Local Church

In Acts 2:42-47 the activity of the first local church is described. According to verse 42 the Word of God was taught and the people practiced what they were taught. There was fellowship, worship and concrete acts of love towards one another. The church also observed the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, referred to as "breaking

bread". This whole passage pictures the local church as a working church. There is no indication that the leaders had to plead and beg the members to get to work.

"Too many Christians today are like the furloughed paratrooper who was asked how many jumps he had made. "None," he replied, "but I've been pushed fifteen times."

William Bellshaw

C. The Leadership of the Local Church

The leadership of the local church has been entrusted to the care of two kinds of leaders (I Tim. 3:1-13).

1. The **Elders** (also referred to as Bishops) are to act as shepherds of the local church. They are responsible for feeding (Acts 20:28), guiding, directing (Heb. 13:7), caring (I Tim. 3:5), warning (Acts 20:20-38) and being an example to the flock (I Pet. 5:3). They must meet the requirements spelled out in I Tim. 3 and Titus 1.

2. The **Deacons** are official servants of the church. Although no specific responsibilities are spelled out for deacons in the New Testament, based on the new situation described in Acts 6 the deacons are to make sure the needs of the saints are not being overlooked and that the elders are free to spend their time ministering in the word and prayer.

II. Where Do You Fit In The Local Church?

As Jesus works through His Church to carry out His purposes in the world what role does He expect you to play as a member of this church? He fully expects each and every member to play a vital and significant role in the most important work in the world... the Church.

A. Paul's Description of an Active Church Life (Eph. 4:1-16)

1. Make every effort to maintain unity in the Body (4:2-6).

2. Use your unique ability to minister to promote growth in the body (7-16)

a. Because active ministry by each member is Christ's design (7-13).

- Christ has given each member a unique ability to minister (7-10).
- Christ has provided for the equipping of each member to minister (11-12).
- Christ will bring His Church to completeness through this method (13).

b. Because active ministry by each member is of the utmost importance for the growth of the Body (14-16).

- To deliver us from spiritual babyhood (14).
- To produce growth of the Body in love (15-16).

B. Peter's Description of an Active Church Life (I Pet. 4:7-11)

Peter describes active participation in the life of the local church as constantly doing four vital things:

1. Keeping your inner life in order (7).
2. Keeping your love flowing (8).
3. Keeping your resources available (9).
4. Keeping your gift active (10-11).

Personal Investigation . . .

1. Where did believers meet before they had a church building? (Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19)
2. On what day did they meet?

3. From Acts 2:42, list four things that are important to a church:

4. What is God's desire for the local church? (I Cor. 1:10)

5. Read I Cor. 11:23-26. What is this passage referring to?

This ordinance is an act of remembrance concerning:

(1) Christ's death,

(2) Our present fellowship with Christ and others in His Body,

(3) Our spiritual unity with all believers (I Cor. 10:17), and

(4) Christ's return (Mark 14:25).

6. What does Hebrews 10:25 warn us not to neglect?

7. In Eph. 4:2, 3

What is our responsibility? (3)

What will promote unity? (2)

8. How should those who are appointed to preach and teach be supported?

I Cor. 9:14

Gal. 6:6

9. What should our attitude be toward those who teach us God's Word? (Heb. 13:7)

10. In Eph. 4:11-12, God gave gifted men to the church. Who are they?

11. What is their function? (verse 12)

13. What God-given means, do we as members of the body of Christ have to do the "work of service?" (Rom. 12; I Cor. 12; I Pet. 4:10)

Memorize: I Peter 4:7-10

The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaint. As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Lesson 10: Understanding Our Enemies Part One: the Flesh

THE BARRIERS TO SPIRITUAL VICTORY

When Jesus Christ became your Savior, and the Holy Spirit became your Comforter and God became your Heavenly Father their enemies became your enemies. Before you received Christ these forces did not oppose you they controlled you.

Now that you are related to the Triune God His enemies actively oppose you. The Flesh produces “appetites” within that oppose the desires of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:17); the Devil “attacks” you like a roaring lion to keep you from trusting Christ alone (I Pet. 5:8); and the World System continually “appeals” for the affection that should be reserved for you Heavenly Father (I John 2:15, 16).

The Person	The Issue	The Enemy	The Strategy
The Father	Am I loving Him?	The World System	To seduce me into misplacing my affection
The Son	Am I trusting Him?	Satan	To intimidate me into misplacing my trust
The Holy Spirit	Am I being motivated by Him?	Flesh	To overwhelm me with desires that displace the Spirit’s desires

In order to experience spiritual victory the believer must:

- (1) Learn to recognize his enemies and their strategies.
- (2) Learn to tap God's resources for victory over these foes.
- (3) Put these principles into practice in his everyday life.

ENEMY NUMBER ONE - THE FLESH

I. What Is The Flesh?

When used in an ethical sense in Scripture the word "flesh" refers to fallen man living in independence from God and under the control of indwelling sin.

A. The flesh embraces the whole man—spirit, soul, and body—the entire being of unregenerate man. This is why the unregenerate man is said to be "in the flesh" (Rom. 8:8).

B. The unregenerate man "Cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8) because of his relationship to indwelling sin (Rom. 7:14); he is in bondage to it.

C. Sin is lawlessness; violating God's law (i.e. His revealed moral absolutes) (I John 3:4). The sin principle that dwells within man is a principle of lawlessness or rebellion that produces the deep down cravings to be free of the restraints of God's moral absolutes (Rom. 7:8).

D. It is the revelation of God's moral absolutes that bring the sin principle to life (Rom. 7:8; 8:9).

II. How Is The Believer Related To The Flesh?

A. Being “born again” takes place when Jesus Christ comes to live within (I John 5:11, 12; Col. 1:27). This produces a deep radical change of the inner man. A new “law” or “principle” comes to dwell within the believer; a principle of righteousness (Rom. 7:21, 22).

B. But the believer still possesses indwelling sin (I John 1:8); therefore an internal war ensues (Rom. 7:21-24).

C. Although the believer is no longer “in the flesh” (Rom. 8:9) he is still capable of “living after the flesh” (Rom. 8:13). Whenever the believer obeys the cravings of the indwelling sin he is said to be “living after the flesh” or “fleshly”. In this condition he is “walking like mere (unregenerate) men” (I Cor. 3:1-3).

D. Although the presence of Christ in the life produces strong desires to please God, the cravings of the sin principle always drag the believer into captivity apart from the work of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 7:21-25).

III. How Does Indwelling Sin Gain Control Of The Believer?

As long as the believer is “walking in the Spirit” he will experience victory over the flesh (Gal. 5:16). If he ceases to walk in the Spirit he begins to experience a “fleshly” walk.

A. The flesh gains its foothold through SINFUL MOODS (Rom. 7:5 - “sinful passions” could be translated “sinful moods”).

B. Once the believer is moving in the realm of the sinful moods of the flesh he begins to experience specific LUSTS OF THE FLESH (Rom. 7:8-11).

C. When these lusts are “conceived” they “give birth” to sin or specific WORKS OF THE FLESH (James 1:14, 15; Gal. 5:19-21). In this state the believer is experiencing a kind of spiritual death. He begins to walk in darkness and to experience carnal blindness, deafness and insensitivity to the Holy Spirit (I John 2:9-11).

D. A believer who continues to walk after the flesh is enslaved to sin (Rom. 6:16, 20, 21). He begins to develop sinful habit patterns or renew old ones. The ultimate result is that he develops a life dominating sin by which he can be labeled (I Cor. 5:11).

* At this point the cry of the believer is the same as Paul’s in Romans 7:24: “Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?”

IV. How Can The Believer Experience Victory Over The Flesh?

A. Victory over the flesh is a provision for every believer. Why?

1. Because this victory is based on the crosswork of Jesus Christ (Rom. 7:25; 6:1-7). If Christ’s crosswork had not paid for his indwelling sin, the believer would be under constant condemnation because of what he is; a sinner. But because of the crosswork of Christ the believer is not being condemned (Rom. 7:25-8:1).

2. Because this victory comes through the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 7:16-18; Gal. 5:16). Because of the crosswork of Christ the Holy Spirit is free to control the sin principle in the believer instead of condemning the believer for possessing it.

B. Victory over the flesh is a reality in every believer who is continually placing himself at God's disposal (Rom. 6:12-14).

• **THE KEY: PUT YOURSELF AT GOD'S DISPOSAL**

(The meaning of the word "present" in Rom. 6:13-14 is clarified in Matt. 26:53 where the same Greek word is translated "Put at my disposal").

1. *What is presenting yourself to God?*

a. It starts in the thought life. It is maintaining the attitude of a servant (Rom. 6:11)

b. It flows out into every area of life; it is a "walk". Walking as a servant is walking "in the same manner as He walked" (I John 2:6).

2. *Why does presenting yourself to God bring victory over the flesh?*

a. When the believer places himself at God's disposal he is actualizing his position in Christ and activating the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:8-11; 8:2-4).

b. The Holy Spirit has been given to every believer to enable him to fulfill God's purposes in his life (John 14:16ff; 15:26). The Holy Spirit is always actively working to fulfill the Father's will in and through the believer.

Therefore:

√ If the believer is rebelling against the Father and His will, the Holy Spirit will actively work to produce repentance in him (Eph. 4:30; II Cor. 7:10).

√ If the believer is responding to the Father, the Spirit will actively work to enable him to fulfill the Father's will (Rom. 8:11). The power that the Spirit exerts is more than enough to enable the believer to overcome the power of sin and obey the Father (Eph. 1:18-23; Rom. 8:13, 14).

3. How does presenting yourself to God bring victory over the flesh?

A Christian who is putting himself at the disposal of the Father will be rightly adjusted to the Holy Spirit. He is therefore said to be "walking in the Spirit." The believer will experience victory over the flesh while he is "walking in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:4).

"Walking in the Spirit" is orienting your life around the qualities that come from the Holy Spirit. Every step is to be taken in response to the Spirit (Gal. 5:25).

a. The Spirit produces a mind-set like Christ's. He allows the believer to see reality (Rom. 8:5-7; John 5:19-20).

b. The Spirit produces a character like Christ's (Eph. 5:18 cf. Gal 5:22-23).

c. The Spirit produces an obedience like Christ's (Rom. 8:4).

Personal Investigation . . .

Part One

1. What two conflicting principles are found in the person who has been born again (Rom 7:22-23)?
2. Does being born again eliminate the indwelling sin principle from the believer's life (I Jn 1:8)?
3. Does the fact that the believer still has sin dwelling in him mean that he is still in the flesh (Rom 8:9)? Yes No
4. How does Paul describe a believer who is giving in to the strong desires produced by indwelling sin (Rom 8:13 & I Cor 3:1-3)?

5. What evidence will there be in the life of a believer who is walking after the flesh (carnal or fleshly) (Rom 6:20,21; Gal 5:19-21)?

6. What evidence will there be in the life of a believer who is walking in the Spirit (spiritual) (Rom 6:22; Gal 5:22-23)?

7. Read Romans 8:4-8 and contrast the person who is living under the influence of the Spirit and the person who is living under the influence of the flesh.

Flesh	Spirit

Part Two

Carefully read Romans 6:1-10. In this passage Paul explains the believer's new relationship to God and to indwelling sin.

1. In verse 1 Paul is anticipating a question some might ask after hearing his teaching on the grace of God and salvation apart from works (chs. 1-5 note especially 5:20). Why would anyone suggest that Paul's teaching about grace would lead the believer into continuing in a life of sin?

2. According to verse 2 what historical fact about our past makes living "in sin" an impossibility?

3. In verse 3 Paul explains how the believer has died to sin. When did this occur?

4. The word "baptize" means "to immerse or place into" and therefore to become identified with. According to I Corinthians 12:13 how were you "baptized into Christ Jesus" and thus identified with Him?

5. The New Testament mentions many different wonderful things that resulted from your being baptized into Christ. What specific thing does Paul mention in Romans 6:3?

6. Why would God want you to die? (The answer is found in verse 4)

7. What two reasons does Paul give in verse 6 for our “old self” (i.e. who we were before salvation) being crucified with Him?

8. In verse 7 the word “freed” means “justified, declared righteous.” When someone is justified from something in his life it means he is no longer condemned for that thing and is thus free from obligation for it. Paul is referring to indwelling sin in this context. Why is it important for us to know that we are no longer condemned or legally obligated for the sin principle that dwells in us?

9. Since we died with Christ (i.e. because of our identification with Him through the Spirit’s baptism) what will we also experience “with Him” (verse 8)?

10. According to verse 10 to what did Christ die?

11. To what was He made alive?

12. Does Paul give any commands for you to obey in verses 1-10? ✓ Yes ✓ No

13. Based upon this passage could we say that everyone whom the Holy Spirit identifies with Christ has already died to indwelling sin and has already been made alive to God?

14. Does this passage teach that indwelling sin has died? ✓ Yes ✓ No

15. What command is given in verse 11?

16. The word “consider” (verse 11) is an accounting term. It never means to make something true by believing it (although you may keep your checkbook that way good accountants don’t!). When you make a deposit at your bank they “consider” (reckon) it to your account because it really is yours. This word is used in Hebrews 11:19 (“considered”) of Abraham. What did Abraham “consider” to be true and how did it affect his actions?

17. What is the main command given in verses 12 & 13?

18. Since verse 12 begins with “therefore” the commands given in 12 & 13 must be based on the fulfillment of the command given in verse 11. That is: in order to present yourself to God you must first consider yourself (i.e. have as a basic assumption about yourself) to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. But what does it mean to “present” yourself to God? In Matthew 26:53 the same Greek word is used by Jesus and translated by four words:

“put at _____”

19. What does that phrase imply to you?

20. In Romans 6:1-13 Paul is explaining how a believer can be delivered from the power of indwelling sin. In three short sentences summarize the teaching:

(6:1-10) p What must I know?

(6:11) p What must I assume to be true?

(6:12-13) p What must I do?

Memorize Romans 6:12-14

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.

Lesson 11: Understanding Our Enemies Part Two: Satan

According to Ephesians 6:10-20 the Christian is involved in a warfare. This war is not against flesh and blood but against Satan and his underlings. If we are to be effective in our struggle against Satan in our lives we must know what he is up to.

Satan's main objective for your life is to keep you from trusting Jesus Christ. In order to recognize his tactics and be prepared to stand against his attacks the believer must gain an understanding of Satan's motives and methods of warfare.

I. Satan's motive - Isaiah 14:12-14

In this passage Isaiah is prophesying against the king of Babylon (note v. 4). But in doing this Isaiah looks beyond the human king and begins to describe the spirit being who was energizing the man...Satan. Read these verses carefully and state in your own words the motive behind Satan's activity.

II. SATAN'S METHODS

The Apostle Paul uses three different terms to describe the attacks of Satan against the believer. Each one of these terms emphasizes a different aspect of Satan's attacks:

A. "Devices" The **approach** of Satan's temptation—Eph. 6:11

The word translated "schemes" in these verses refers to the way Satan comes against us. It is the Greek word μεθοδεία (methodia) and means "a deceitful or crafty approach, a cunning device." Satanic temptations never appear on the surface as they really are (cf. 2 Cor. 11:14). Satan uses subterfuge and deceptive strategies. Read the following verses and describe the kind of thought-life I must have when Satan comes against me: I Pet. 4:7; 5:8; 2 Tim. 1:7; 2:24-26; Titus 2:4-6

B. "Schemes" The **form** of Satan's temptations—2 Cor. 2:11

Example: Acts 5:3

The word translated "Schemes" in 2 Cor. 2:11 is the Greek word νοήματα (noemata) which means "a concept, thought." In this context Paul is referring to the way Satan was tempting the Corinthians to be unforgiving towards a brother who had sinned but now had repented. But now Satan was planting unforgiving thoughts and attitudes in their minds. Satanic temptations come in the form of mental attitudes or thoughts. Satan apparently has the ability to put his thoughts in the minds of Christians when allowed by God. Read Acts 5:1-4 and describe the thoughts which Satan planted in the mind of Ananias.

C. "Snare" The **result** of Satan's temptations—2 Tim. 2:24-26

Example: I Tim. 3:7

In 2 Tim. 2:24-26 Paul is describing how the servant of the Lord is to treat a believer who is "opposing" (i.e. standing against the truth). This condition is said to be "the snare of the devil." An ensnared believer is one who for some reason, perhaps unknown to himself, opposes some truth of the Word. The reason, ultimately, is that Satan has led them astray. Satanic temptation is designed to result in a believer being so ensnared that he will oppose the Word of God.

- Summary: Satan is after your mind. His distractions are subtle and never appear on the surface as temptations. If successful the believer may end up ensnared.

III. SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS

Satan's goal in all of his temptations:

Ezek. 28:17

Isa. 14:13, 16 → PRIDE AND INDEPENDENCE

I Tim. 3:6

- What is the key to victory in the Christians life?
 - . Placing your attention on the Father.
 - . Putting yourself at His disposal.

- * What is Satan's goal in his attacks?
 - . Get your attention off the Father.
 - . Get you to act independent.

• HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE SPECIFIC TEMPTATIONS OF SATAN MENTIONED IN THE FOLLOWING VERSES:

A. I Timothy 3:6

B. I Peter 5:6-8

C. I Thessalonians 2:17-18 and Job 3:11

D. Note the order of events: John 13:37 > Luke 22:54 > 22:57 Note the explanation:
Luke 22:31, 32

E. Ephesians 4:25-29

F. Genesis 3:4 CF. John 8:44; Revelations 20:8,10; Acts 2:45

G. I Timothy 5:11-15

H. 2 Corinthians 2:10, 11 (CF. Ephesians 4:32)

IV. GOD'S ARMOR - Eph. 6:10-17

A. **ITS PURPOSE** - To enable us to stand. That is to enable us to continue putting our attention on the Father and continue placing ourself at His disposal as servants (report for duty).

B. **ITS NATURE** - It is designed to meet the need. Since the temptations are attitudes (i.e. thoughts subtly suggested by Satan so that the believer will act independently of God) the

armor is made up of attitudes that the believer must put on to render these temptations ineffective.

C. ITS APPROPRIATION

1. "Having girded your loins with truth" (14)

Cf. I Pet. 1:13 → John 14:6 → John 17:17 → 2 Tim. 3:16-17

2. "Having put on the breastplate of righteousness" (14)

Get your thinking straight about righteousness! 2 Cor. 5:21 → I John 3:9 → Rom. 8:1

3. "Having shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace" (15) Rom. 5:1

4. "In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one" (16)

I Pet. 5:6-10

5. "And take the Helmet of Salvation" (17)

I Thes. 5:8 cf. 1:3

6. "And the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (17)

"the sayings of God" Matt 4

- IN YOUR OWN WORDS DESCRIBE HOW TO "PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD":

Personal Investigation. . .

Discover the 9 specific Satanic temptations mentioned in the following verses:

1. I Tim 3:6

2. I Pet 5:6-8

3. I Thes 2:17-18 (cf Job 3:11)

4. Luke 22:31,32 (note order of events: John 13:37 ⇒ Luke 22:54 ⇒ 22:57)

5. Eph 4:25-29

6. Eph 4:25-29

7. Gen 3:4 (cf John 8:44; Rev 20:8,10; Acts 2:45)

8. I Tim 5:11-15

9. 2 Cor 2:10, 11 (cf Eph 4:32)

Carefully read Ephesians 6:10-17 and write at least 25 observations about the armor of God as it is described in this passage. Examples:

1. "The believer is commanded to put on the full armor of God not just a part of it."
2. "The armor is designed to enable the believer to stand against Satan's schemes."
3. "The armor must be put on before the believer can stand firm against Satan."

Memorize I Peter 5:8-9

8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

9 But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

Lesson 12: Understanding Our Enemies Part Three: The World

The third barrier to spiritual victory is the World System. The Father wants us to set our affection upon Him. According to I John 2:15-17 a believer cannot love the Father while he is loving the world. Why can't he?

I. THE MEANING OF THE "WORLD"

A. The word: The Greek word translated world in I John 2:15 is κόσμος" (kosmos). This word means "an orderly system." The English word "cosmetics" is based on this Greek word.

B. The use of the word in the Bible: The word always means "an ordered system but the context in which it is used determines which system is being referred to . For example:

1. God's Created Universe—Eph. 1:4

2. Satan's World System

- This organization is ruled by Satan.

John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11

- Satan has been organizing angels and men to carry out his purpose ever since the fall. Ezek. 28:11-19; Isa. 14:12-15
- Satan's purpose: "I will make myself like the Most High." Isa. 14:14
- Definition: The ordered system of which Satan is originator, organizer and head. His fallen angels are his emissaries and the unsaved of the human race are his subjects. The goal of the organization is to lead creation in a life of total independence from God.

II. WHY DOES THE WORLD SYSTEM EXIST?

A. The World System exists to accomplish Satan's purposes. To lead fallen mankind into total independence from God. (Romans 1:25; 2 Thes. 2:1-12).

B. The World System has been designed to control man in his fallen state. Satan had to design a system that could control a race that has a deep set resistance to any outside control. His problem was to appeal to the felt needs of man in his fallen state. He had to take several things into consideration:

1. Man was created in the image of God; he thus needs meaning, significance and security (Ecc. 3:11).
2. Man is now a fallen sensory being (Gal. 5:19-21).
3. Man by nature seeks to be free of any restraints from God (Rom. 1:18-32).

III. HOW DOES THE WORLD SYSTEM WORK?

How does this world system control fallen man so that he carries out the purposes of Satan?

A. I John 5:19 - Satan has the whole world under his influence.

B. I Cor. 1:21 - The World System has a wisdom that explains reality with God.

C. Matt. 4:8 cf. Rev. 11:15 - The World System has its own kingdoms to keep men under control without God.

D. Col. 2:8, 20, 21 - The World System has its own form of religious teachings that make men feel holy without God.

E. John 15:19 - The World System has its own form of "good works" without God.

- The world system thus has its own education, government, religion and good works without God.
- The world system is organized by Satan to meet every need of man without God!

IV. WHY IS IT SO DANGEROUS FOR THE BELIEVER TO LOVE THE WORLD SYSTEM? (1 JOHN 2:15-17)

A. Because the world is not of the Father (16)

- John reveals the true character of the World System: It did not originate with the Father! Proof? It uses three life motivations to control men.
- Man was created with a tremendous life motivation: To relate to God his creator - to trust Him, to love Him, to obey Him, and to enjoy Him forever.
- Fallen man experiences a tremendous void in his life because he is cut off from the only one who can give him real meaning.
- The World System offers three ways this void can be filled:

1. The Lust of the Flesh

“Lust” A strong desire, craving. That which moves a man to action.

“Flesh” Man in his fallen state separated from God and controlled by sin.

So the “lusts of the flesh” are the cravings felt by the flesh. Satan has developed a system to control man by appealing to his fleshly desires. The system says: “You can find fulfillment in life by getting all gusto (lusts) you can.”

Gal. 5:16-21 describes these lusts as they are manifested in man’s activity.

2. The Lust of the Eyes

- The tendency to be captivated by outward show of things without inquiring into their real value.
- Includes: Love of beauty divorced from the love of goodness.
- Satan has designed things to appeal to that part of man's nature that receives pleasure from what it perceives.

Example: Sports, recreation, art - things which give pleasure to the human nature but are not themselves works of the flesh. The World System presents them as worthy life motivations.

3. The Pride of Life

“life” The Greek word βίος (bios) means life in its present concrete manifestation. Physical life on this planet.

“pride” From the Greek word for “braggart”. A conceited pretentious person who seeks to impress everyone he meets with his own non-existent importance.

So “pride of life” is an arrogance relating to ones external circumstances (i.e. wealth, rank, dress). The desire to outshine everyone else.

B. Because the world is passing away (17)

- I Cor. 7:31 - Paul says that the outward appearance of this world system is continually passing away.
- 2 Cor. 4:18 - Everything you can see is temporal!

V. WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF LOVING THE WORLD?

A. It will cause you to lose your intimate fellowship with the Father. The word "unstained" means to keep without a moral blot. James 1:27

B. It will contaminate you and lead you into further sin. 2 Peter 1:4; 2:20

C. It will lead you into spiritual adultery. James 4; Eze. 16

VI. HOW SHOULD THE BELIEVER RELATE TO THE WORLD SYSTEM?

A. Be discerning in your love—Phil. 1:9

- Recognize what the world is.
- Recognize your responsibility for directing your love.

B. Use the world but don't abuse it—I Cor. 7:31

- "use" To make use of, employ, to avail yourself of.
- "abuse" To use up, consume; to make unrestrained use of, use eagerly, to use to the full, stretch to the uttermost.
- Note the context of this statement in I Cor. 7 - cf. vv. 23, 32, 35.
- Communists say: "Matter is all that exists."
- Capitalists say: "Matter is all that matters."

C. Set your affection on God

- Matt. 6:19-24

"Mammon refers to money or to material things. Jesus is talking here as though money were a person, a master controlling the lives of his servants. In the ancient world it was inconceivable that a slave, or for that matter a free servant, should serve two masters. Again, the statement is true psychologically as well. In practice I will find it impossible to be equally devoted to two major goals. One or the other will become nominal and cease to capture my imagination and my fiercest efforts. We cannot devote our hearts and allegiance equally to God and to mammon.

"This terrible principle means that so long as mammon fascinates us God does not number us among those who serve Him however much 'Christian work' we do. We were created to have one center. To try to have two is to be miserable and to enjoy neither spiritual things nor material. It would have been far more pleasant had our conscience never been awakened so as to leave us free to love mammon and mammon alone. As it is we are doomed to dissatisfaction until and unless we slash ourselves free from cords that tie us to mammon or those that bind us to Christ.

"This choice for a truly regenerate Christian is a simple one. It lies between the misery of ambivalence and the freedom of valuing Christ, between double darkness and light for what is of no value."

(John White, The Golden Cow. pp. 48, 49)

Personal Investigation. . .

1. What part of this world system is under control of Satan? (I John 5:19)

2. What is the difference between the wisdom of this world system and the wisdom of God?
(James 3:14-18)

Worldly Wisdom	Heavenly Wisdom

3. How would you explain the meaning of "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life" (I John 2:16) to a young believer?

4. What effects will loving the world have on a believer?

James 1:27

2 Peter 1:4; 2:20

James 4:1-6

5. What would you tell a young believer to do in order to overcome the appeal of the world?

Memorize 1 John 2:15-17

Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

