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“THE TEENAGE YEARS OF CHRIST!”

- The Ultimate Pattern For Teenagers Today!
- A Thorough study of the teenage years of Jesus!
- The Bible IS NOT “silent” on the teenage years of Christ as you will soon see!

The author invites you to a serious study of the “teenage life” of Christ as viewed from the eyes of the Bible. This study will revolutionize your Youth Pastor and your Youth Group!

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BILL DUVALL
Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the KING JAMES VERSION of the Bible.

“THE TEENAGE YEARS OF CHRIST!”

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Bill Duvall Ministries, INC.
Cabot, AR 72023

Published by Self Image Publications,
AKA Bill Duvall Ministries, INC.
Cabot, AR 72023

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INTRODUCTION

Make no doubt about it, this book was written for the teenager and the day to day struggles life presents them.

Too well do I remember the struggles I had as a teen. All of a sudden, I had the body of an adult with all its needs and wants and yet, just a few days before it seems, I was playing "cowboys and Indians" with the other kids!

The little girls I played with on the school yard had grown into something very different and as I was looking at them in a completely different way, they were also looking back at me because they were experiencing the same transformation in their bodies.

This book is about those struggles and how Christ dealt with them. Get a copy for your teen or church group and let God fill you in on how to cope with the teenage life!

In His Name,

Bill Duvall

Bill Duvall,
Teacher (Ephesians 4:11-12)
DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the teens of the world and the struggles each have in finding your place in this crazy world! May the “fire in your bones” lead you to the life God has planned for you!

Jeremiah 20:9 “But if I say I’ll never mention the LORD or speak in his name, His word burns in my heart like a fire. It’s like a fire in my bones! I am worn out trying to hold it in! I have to speak His word!”
CHAPTER ONE:

“The Teenage Years Of Christ!”

Luke 2:51-52 (NIV) “Then He (Jesus) went down to Nazareth with them (Mary and Joseph) and was obedient to them. But His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

(52) And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

Throughout this book, we will be involved in the most dramatic study of the teenage years of Christ that you have ever experienced. You will not want to miss a single word as each chapter will allow you to see Christ as never before.

For the first time you will understand Him, not as the Savior of the world, but as a teenager, facing the same struggles of life that you and every teen experiences.

Believe it or not, He was tempted in the exact same way you are tempted and by seeing how He handled each situation, you will know how to deal with every issue you face in life.

1st Corinthians 10:13 (NIV) “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”

(NLT) “But remember that the temptations that comes into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful: He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can’t stand up against it. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.”

How did the young Jesus deal with His peers, His parents, other adults,
authority and just “growing up” in general?

How did Jesus deal with the “lust of the flesh,” the “lust of the eyes” and the “pride of life” that we all face?
All these questions that you face daily, Jesus will face them with you!

Why? Because He has been there!

1st John 2:16 (ICB) “These are the evil things in the world: wanting things to please our sinful selves, wanting the sinful things we see, being too proud of the things we have. But none of those things comes from the Father. All of them come from the world.”

(KJV) “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

Have you ever wondered about the teenage years of Christ? I mean, what was He like?

Did His mother ever scream at Him to “clean you’re room” and did she ever say to Him, “Close the door! What’s the matter with you? Were you born in a barn?”

Or if you have siblings, did His mother ever say to His brothers and sisters, “Why can’t you be like your brother Jesus?”

OUR STUDIES OF JESUS IN THE PAST

We are all familiar with His birth and we read of His life as an adult but, like you, He was also a teenager, with teenage problems.

One thing is certain: He DID NOT go from being a baby in a manger to adulthood! No one does. We all go through the same stages of life!

Believe it or not, your parents were once your age. They DID NOT just suddenly appear “full grown” and “all knowing” as they are now!

Listen to what King David said as he reflected back on his life:

Psalm 37:25 (NIV) “I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children
begging bread.”

(NLT) “Once I was young and now I am old. Yet I have never seen the Godly forsaken, nor their children begging for bread.”

I remember a story of a teenager who brought home a report card that he was not exactly proud of. As a matter of fact, it was quite bad.

As he handed his report card to his dad he said, “Dad, here is my report card --- and one of yours I found up in the attic!”

Just as your parents were not always adults, neither were you’re teachers, you’re pastor---or anyone else. We all were once where you are now and this IS the real reason for this study.

We simply DO NOT want you to make the same mistakes we made. If we seem to be coming down hard on you at times, it’s because we DO REMEMBER that once we were teenagers also!

Ecclesiastes 1:9 (NIV) “What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.”

Also remember that every President and world leader were once teenagers. You can be what you choose to be. Believe me when I tell you that there are “NO LIMITS” as to what you can become!

I would also ask you to remember that every person in prison today once sat on his or her mother’s lap and was the “pride and joy” of the entire family.

Why the vast difference in the person who becomes President and the person who winds up behind bars?

Society will tell you that it was the environment they were raised in or a thousand other different excuses, but the whole truth of the matter is “personal choice,” the decisions we make in life.

Too many have been raised in poverty, abuse and what the world would classify as handicaps --- AND HAVE SORED ABOVE THEM TO GREAT HEIGHTS --- so don’t let problems stop your God given dreams!

2nd Chronicles 25:4 (NIV) “Yet he did not put their sons
to death, but acted in accordance with what is written in the Law, in the Book of Moses, where the LORD commanded: Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sins."

Deuteronomy 24:16 (NIV) “Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin.”

Right or wrong, there are laws that we all have to obey. I pray you will spend the rest of your life trying to change the things that are wrong and defend the things that are right!

Jesus gave His life doing just this.

Oh, the times were different as were the customs, but things then were just like they are now, either right or wrong.

People were the same then as they are now. Good people make very bad mistakes sometimes and bad people often do things that are good, but it still boils down to the choices we make.

**THIS IS WHAT THIS STUDY IS ABOUT, THE CHOICES JESUS MADE AS A TEENAGER**

The Bible says that, “Jesus came that we might have the abundant life, or the very best life.”

John 10:10 (NIV) “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full (Overflowing).”

Some of you may become famous; having all the world’s goods and that’s O.K., providing you follow the leadership of Christ in getting there.

Others may never make the national scene but live quiet and peaceable lives in the area of your birthplace, and that’s O.K., providing you follow the leadership of Christ in staying here.

It’s O. K. to be you. It IS NOT O. K. to try and be someone else!

Now, they may influence you as they set an example before you that you
admire, but you can never be anyone but yourself!

This is why we want you to carefully study the life of Christ. After all, He is the ROLE MODEL for us all in every stage of our lives.

**Philippians 3:14 (KJV)** “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Now, let’s scroll down to the question sheets and ready ourselves for the next chapter!
PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER!

1. Study Chapter and be ready to discuss the material covered in the chapter when we meet again next week.

2. Remember, asking questions IS cool!

3. Write down what you know about Christ at this moment. Use extra sheets if you need to.

4. What do you expect to receive from Sunday School and our Worship Services? (Being honest IS cool!)

5. In your own words, what do our churches need to do in order to reach more teenagers with the message of Christ? (You CANNOT hurt the Pastor or your Leaders by telling us how you really feel. Remember, we are trying to help and now is your chance to help us do just that!)

Let’s talk about your questions!
CHAPTER TWO:

THE TEENAGE CHRIST

Matthew 7:20 (KJV) “Wherefore by their fruits (manner of life) ye shall know them.”

In this chapter, we will look at five very different teenagers.

You can identify what kind of a person someone is by the things he or she likes and does. This is simply re-stating Matthew 7:20 above.

Let’s identify each of these teens from the descriptions given:

Teen Number One

Teen One: Heavily involved in all sports: Football, baseball, basketball, weight lifting, cross-country track, etc.

Do you know this person from your own school by the description given?

Name them: (It could describe more than one person)

This person is driven by sports! He/she lives and breathes sports! This tells us a lot about the person and what motivates them, doesn’t it?

What people DO tells us more about them than what they SAY!

Teen Two

Teen Two: This girl likes: Boys, hairstyles, boys, shopping, boys and boys.

Do you know this person from your own school by the description given?

Name them: (It could describe more than one person but, please, do not share their name (s) with the others)
This person lives for one purpose: **BOYS!** Her hair is styled for boys. She purchases clothing for one purpose: **TO ATTRACT BOYS!**

Now, she may or may not know that she is doing this. She **COULD** be a member of one of our churches but her motivation is strait from Hollywood and not from the Holy Word!

Also remember that girls **ARE** attracted to boys and boys **ARE** attracted to girls. These are **GOD GIVEN FEELINGS** but they must not possess us as there is a time for everything.

**Teen Three**

**Teen Three:** Mathematics, chess, science club, computers, astronomy, model planes.

Before you lump this person in with the "**brains,**” the "**bookworms**” or label them as "**nerds,**” isn’t **STUDYING AND LEARNING** the real **reason** for school?

This teen is probably thinking about a future in aviation, or without even realizing it, honing his or her spiritual gift from God (Wisdom)!

Astronomy is the science of studying the universe and the so-called "**hobby**” of model planes **COULD BE** the give-way of things to come!

We **KNOW** the person is "**studious.**"

Do you know this person **from your own school** by the description given?

Name them: (It could describe more than one person)

**Teen Four**

**Teen Four:** Soul winning, school, church, church bus route, piano, after-school job, sewing.

This teen is definitely sold out to God. He is **FIRST PLACE** in her life. She has no "**idle time**” to get into sin, even though she **COULD** sin doing any of the above, but it certainly would not be her intent!
Do you know this person from your own school by the description given?

Name them: (It could describe more than one person)

______________________________

Teen Five

**Teen Five:** Sports, fast food, car, girlfriend, money, TV.

While we had much to say about teenager number two and her fascination with the boys, at least hers was just that: **fascination.** Teen Five more likely represents the vast majority of teens today.

They have a boyfriend or a girlfriend and they date steadily, meaning they are by themselves and are fascinated by the things of this life. They are **OPEN GAME** for trouble of the worst kind.

*2\textsuperscript{nd} Timothy 2:22* (KJV) “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

Just as we have gotten a “**mental image**” of these five teenagers and what they were like **WITHOUT** actually knowing any of them or have anything written about them, we can do **THE SAME** with the teenage years of Christ!

Watch this closely and get the same “**mental image**” of Jesus:

*Luke 2:51-52* (KJV) “And He went down with them (Mary and Joseph), and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. 
(52) And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

These two Scriptures tell us so much about the teenage years of Jesus **WITHOUT** giving us a day by day description. They immediately follow His encounter in the Temple at age twelve (verse 42), thus referring to His teenage years.

Note again what they tell us about the teenage Jesus:
JESUS FROM AGE 12 TO ADULTHOOD!

1. He increased in wisdom. (Verse 52)
2. He increased in stature (Maturity). (Verse 52)
3. He increased in favor with God. (Verse 52)
4. He increased in favor with man. (Verse 52)
5. He was subject to Joseph and His mother (Verse 51)
6. He learned a wage-earning skill. (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3)

We challenge you to follow the teenage Jesus and pattern your teenage years after Him.

Now, let’s look at the questions and ready ourselves for chapter three!
CHAPTER TWO QUESTIONS

1. Which of the five teens listed has the best chance of falling into a serious sin?
   ___ Teen 1
   ___ Teen 2
   ___ Teen 3
   ___ Teen 4
   ___ Teen 5

2. Write out why you feel as you do and share it with the group.
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

3. Which teen more closely reminds you of the teenage Jesus?
   ___ Teen 1
   ___ Teen 2
   ___ Teen 3
   ___ Teen 4
   ___ Teen 5

4. Write out why you feel as you do and share it with the group.
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

5. Food for thought: Which teen more closely reminds you of your own life? This is personal and does not need to be shared with anyone but God, other than your Pastor and Leaders—That is, if you need to talk to one of us at all.

6. What is your understanding of verse 51 and the word, "subject?" This is covered in depth in chapter 6 and will be the main topic in chapter 7 of our
studies.

However, before you look at chapter 6, think about the meaning of the word and your understanding now.

7. Do you feel God has a special calling on every life other than to save us and take us to Heaven? Give your answer AFTER reading Psalm 139:13-16:

(ICC) "You made my whole being. You formed me in my mother's body. (14) I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way. What you have done is wonderful. I know this very well. (15) You saw my bones being formed as I took shape in my mother's body. When I was put together there, (16) you saw my body as it was formed. All the days planned for me were written in your book before I was one day old."

God has a special ministry and a plan for every life BEFORE conception:

___ True
___ False

8. What part of the study so far has helped you the most? Share your thinking with the group.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Do not miss the next session --- AND BRING ANOTHER FRIEND!
CHAPTER THREE

THE TEENAGE CHRIST INCREASED IN WISDOM

Proverbs 4:5-7 (KJV) “Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. 6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. 7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.”

While God is saying many things to us from these verses, the principal thing to strive for in our youth is to get Wisdom.

Dads are always giving their sons and daughters advice; at least this is our primary responsibility, and you know what? We are commanded by God to listen to them, to obey them!

Ephesians 6:1-3 (KJV) “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honor thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”

The word translated “obey” in verse one is the kissing cousin to the word translated “honor” in verse two.

When put together, they mean that we are to willingly submit to our parents out of reverence for God.

One of the benefits of wisdom is that we understand that our parents were given to us by God.

Most teens DO NOT understand this and when we rebel against the authority of our parents we are actually rebelling against God!

Solomon was no different than the dads of today! He wanted the very best for his son. Why? Because Solomon HAD wisdom and knew its importance!
1st Kings 4:29-30 (KJV) “And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. 30 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.”

So, Solomon, under the inspiration of God, said to his son, “Seek after wisdom and the understanding to use the wisdom God gives you.”

Before we leave this thought, notice the title of this chapter: The teenaged Christ INCREASED in wisdom.

That Jesus was God, there is no doubt, and yet, Jesus had to grow just like each of you have to grow.

Do you think He knew as much when He was in diapers as He did when He started His schooling? No!

Do you think He knew as much when He started His schooling as He did in His teenage years? No!

Do you think He knew as much in His teenage years as He did as an Adult? No!

It was THE SAME with each of us adults! It is the same with each of you.

WHAT IS WISDOM, ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE?

Just as Jesus increased in wisdom in each stage of His life, God wants the same for each of us.

Proverbs 7:1-4 (GW) “My son, pay attention to my words. Treasure my commands that are within you. 2 Obey my commands so that you may live. Follow my teachings just as you protect the pupil of your eye. 3 Tie them on your fingers. Write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 Say to wisdom, “You are my sister.” Give the name “my relative” to understanding.”

Wisdom is calling out to humanity!
Luke 2:40 (NIV) “And the child grew and became strong; He was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him.”

Isn’t this exactly what happened to Solomon? Sure it is and God wants the same for each of us as He is no respecter of persons!

I have four (4) earned degrees from college and seminary. According to man, I have the worlds wisdom and the degrees to prove it, and yet, in almost every message that God gives me, I warn those present; “You CANNOT rely on education, human knowledge and reason!”

I tell people plainly that true wisdom come from God and God only!

So let’s look at the wisdom that comes from God.

Corinthians 1:20-21 (NIV) “Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know Him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.”

Today, the wisdom of the world DOES NOT include God. He is no longer welcome in our public schools of learning and has been kicked out of the work place. After all, why pay homage to a God that doesn’t exist?

This is the wisdom of the world.

Listen and listen carefully, “Anything that labels itself as wisdom and ignores the clear teachings of the Word of God is not wisdom. It is a counterfeit.”

1st Corinthians 2:12-13 (NIV) “We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.”

True wisdom comes as the Holy Spirit guides us as we compare spiritual things with spiritual words.
The Bible cannot be understood by our human intellect. God must be our instructor if we are to understand the Word of God. To the world, this is foolishness.

Before leaving this chapter, let me point out the Biblical way to understand the wisdom of God. To do this, we will use the three (3) types of men found in the book of Proverbs.

They are:

1. The simple man.

Proverbs 7:6-7 (NIV) “At the window of my house I looked out through the lattice.
7 I saw among the simple, I noticed among the young men, a youth who lacked judgment.”

A simple person, according to God, is someone who does not know His Word.

2. The foolish man.

Proverbs 1:7 (NIV) “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”

Proverbs 18:2 (NIV) “A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions.”

The foolish person has heard the Word but refuses it, wanting to do as they please. The New Testament states their condition:

Romans 1:21-23 (KJV) “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
23 And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.”

Unlike the simple man, they have been exposed to the Word but because of their natural wisdom, consider it foolishness.
3. The wise man.

**Proverbs 21:11 (KJV)** “When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.”

**Proverbs 8:33 (KJV)** “Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.”

A wise person hears the Word of God, clings to it and adjusts his or her lifestyle to conform to its teachings.

On any given Sunday, all three groups of people may be sitting “side by side” in Sunday School and Church!

For the simple person, there is hope that after instruction in the Word, they may respond.

For the foolish, they will be thinking, “*What am I doing here? How stupid can I be to have let them talk me into coming!*”

For the wise, there is “*food on the table*” that will INCREASE their wisdom and make them more like Jesus!

How did Jesus INCREASE in wisdom?

**Luke 4:16** (NIV) “He went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day He went into the synagogue, as was *His custom*. And He stood up to read.”

Jesus made Himself available for the teaching of the Word of God! His “*custom*” was to be at the Temple every Sabbath!

He increased in wisdom by hearing the Word of God and applying what He heard!

**Luke 2:46-47** (NIV) “After three days they found Him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 Everyone who heard Him was amazed at *His understanding and His answers.*”

**Romans 10:17** (KJV) “So then faith comes by hearing,
and hearing by the word of God.”

We **INCREASE** in wisdom the exact **SAME WAY** Jesus increased in wisdom, by hearing the Word of God over and over and over and over!

Faith comes **NO OTHER WAY!**

Most churches offer 4 services **each week** for its members and the public at large to **INCREASE** in wisdom:

1. Sunday morning Bible Study
2. Sunday Morning Worship
3. Sunday Evening Worship
4. Wednesday Evening Worship

Less than 1/3 of most church members take advantage of the first two opportunities and attendance at the last two are almost non-existent!

May God have mercy on our stupidity as we “sin away” opportunity after opportunity to **INCREASE IN WISDOM.**

Now, let’s look at and discuss your questions!
CHAPTER THREE QUESTIONS

1. What is the title of this chapter?

Answer: ___________________________________________________

2. According to the author, what should be the principle priority of your teenage years?

Answer: ___________________________________________________

3. Is wisdom the result of age alone?

Answer: ___________________________________________________

4. In your church, who would you choose as the person (or persons) with wisdom as describe in the Bible? (This is for your benefit only and IS NOT to be shared with the group)

5. To whom is the book of Proverbs written?

Answer: ___________________________________________________

6. If it is written to Solomon's son, can anyone else benefit from applying its instructions?

Answer: ___________________________________________________

7. How old was Jesus when He was said to be "filled with wisdom?"

Answer: ___________________________________________________

8. At what age was Jesus when He started INCREASING in wisdom?

Answer: ___________________________________________________

9. Do we just "show up" wise or does wisdom come from hearing the Word of God and applying its great content?
10. Where does all true wisdom come from?

Answer: ___________________________________________ ________

11. Who are the 3 types of people in the book of Proverbs?

Answer:

1. _______________________________________

2. _______________________________________

3. _______________________________________

12. What was the custom of Jesus every Sabbath day?

Answer: ___________________________________________ ________

13. How did Jesus become an authority of the Scriptures?

Answer: ___________________________________________ ________

See, you are learning so much about our Savior that most people do not know! With this study, you should be ready now to tackle The Bible Formula laid out in the next chapter!
CHAPTER FOUR

THE BIBLE FORMULA
FOR INCREASING IN WISDOM

**Proverbs 4:7** (KJV) “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.”

The wisdom of God is available but it is not automatic. We have to pursue wisdom even more diligently than the mate we will someday marry.

Jesus pursued wisdom. From His 12\textsuperscript{th} birthday on, He **INCREASED** in wisdom.

**Proverbs 3:13-15** (KJV) “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that gets understanding. 14 For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. 15 She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.”

This is why Jesus sought after and pursued wisdom! He knew the value, literally, the wealth obtained in getting wisdom!

What is the first requirement in getting wisdom?

1. **We Must Fear The Lord**

The word “fear” means “to reverence.” We must have a right relationship with God or wisdom will never be ours.

The word “fear” also means just that; We must all stand before a Holy God one day in judgment and “give account.”

God is a “just God” but He is no fool.

He **NEVER** accepts excuses.
Proverbs 1:7 (KJV) “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Proverbs 9:10 (KJV) “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding.”

Proverbs 15:33 (KJV) “The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honor is humility.”

2. We Must Be Teachable

Pride is a very deadly sin. It causes us to rely on our "wisdom” instead of the wisdom of our parents, our teachers (both in school and church), our government and the wisdom of God.

In order to receive God’s wisdom we must trade in our wisdom. We cannot walk with God unless we agree with God!

Amos 3:3 (KJV) “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”

Proverbs 3:7 (KJV) “Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.”

Proverbs 23:4 (KJV) “Labor not (just) to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.”

Proverbs 16:18 (KJV) “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty (prideful) spirit before a fall.”

Pride causes destruction and failure in our lives as it relies solely in its own wisdom and shuns the wisdom of God.

3. We Must Pray For Wisdom

James 1:5-8 (KJV) “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.
7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.
8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

To be “double minded” is to think one way with our intellect and another way in our spirit. To receive from God, both our “spirit mind” and our “flesh mind” MUST be in agreement!

How do we do this?

Romans 12:1-2 (KJV) “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.”

We bring our body and our mind under the subjection of the Word of God. We train our flesh mind and our body to operate as God has commanded.

4. We Must Study The Scriptures.

2nd Timothy 2:15 (KJV) “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

While we are to love, honor and respect our parents, our teachers and our pastor, if all we have is what they have “spoon fed” us, we will NEVER have the wisdom of God!

We MUST diligently study the Scriptures for ourselves!

If your parents or teachers or pastor can talk you into something, someone else can talk you out of it.

However, truths that you dig out of the Word of God and store in your heart by putting them in practice in your life, Satan himself CAN NOT talk you out of this “revelation knowledge!”

Why? It is no longer “head knowledge” but rather “heart knowledge.” It is as much you as breathing. It is something you do
without even thinking about it!

Do you have to ask yourself, "Do I need to breathe?" NO! You just automatically do it!

This is what a systematic study of the Word of God will do for you. It causes you to "think like God" and "act like God" when temptation comes calling!

Wisdom is God’s reward for your willingness to "search and study" the Scriptures on a daily basis.

**Proverbs 2:4-6** (BDT) "If you will seek wisdom as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures;
5 Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.
6 For the LORD gives wisdom: out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding."

This is why we **MUST** study the Scriptures and rely on them instead of our own understanding.

**5. We Must Receive Instruction**

If you are to increase in wisdom, you must have the correct attitude towards instruction.

There are many that God has placed in your life to give you instruction. They have been sent by God to teach.

However, learning is the process by which **YOU** take the instructions and apply them to your life. Instruction **IS NOT** learning.

**Proverbs 9:9** (KJV) “Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.”

**Proverbs 21:11** (KJV) “When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.”

The question before us then is; "Many are teaching but are you learning?“
Wise are the teens who will learn from their teachers and not make the same foolish mistakes past generations have made.

It is foolish to say, "I don’t want people telling me what to do!"

6. We Must Seek Council

Proverbs 19:20-21 (KJV) “Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.
21 There are many devices in a man’s heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.”

Proverbs 24:6 (KJV) “For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counselors there is safety.”

There will be many in your church and community who seem to have great Bible knowledge but do not live Godly lives. Flee from them as if they have the plague! While they are “learned,” they do not possess wisdom. King Solomon is a great example here as he knew what to do but did not do it.

Seek council from people who not only have Bible knowledge but who live Godly lives. They possess wisdom that cannot be purchased with money.

7. We Must Accept Rebuke

The teen who learns to accept rebuke (correction) is well on the way to INCREASING in wisdom.

Proverbs 9:8 (KJV) “Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.”

A fool will reject correction but a wise person will profit from it! This is a good way for us to inspect our own lives and "pinpoint" where we are in gaining wisdom!

Proverbs 25:12 (KJV) “As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.”

Proverbs 15:31-32 (KJV) “The ear that hears the reproof of life abides among the wise.”
32 He that refuses instruction despises his own soul: but he that hears reproof gets understanding."

Again, the teen that learns to accept correction in his or her life is on the fast track to obtaining wisdom.

8. We Must Be Soul Winners

Nothing is as close to the heart of God as winning souls!

Proverbs 11:30 (KJV) “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.”

It is my personal belief that God will especially "open the Word of God" and give "much wisdom" to the person who actively seeks out friends and acquaintances with whom the Gospel message can be shared.

Believe it or not, no one can reach teens like teens can! Visit people for your Sunday School class and if you drive, go by and pick them up and bring them to church!

Each of you should make a list of friends and acquaintances and bring or invite them to every service your particular church has!

Practice giving your personal testimony as to how your life was before you received Christ and how it is now that you have received Christ and then share your testimony with your peers.

9. We Must Choose Wise Companions

A famous preacher once said, "Show me the crowd you run with and I will tell you the kind of person you are!"

He also said, "If you run around with pigs ... YOU ARE GOING TO STINK!"

Proverbs 13:20 (KJV) “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”

Proverbs 14:7-8 (KJV) “Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.
8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but
the folly of fools is deceit.”

Think seriously about the people you associate with. Love them but let them go if there is the smallest possibility they could lead you astray by their lifestyle.

Move on the questions and get ready for the next chapter!
CHAPTER FOUR QUESTIONS

Proverbs 4:7 (KJV) “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.”

1. If we are told to “get” wisdom, doesn’t this mean that it is not automatic, but that it is something each of us CAN obtain?
   ____ True
   ____ False

2. At what age did Jesus start His pursuit of wisdom?
   ____ From His 12th birthday on.
   ____ He did not have to pursue wisdom as He was God.

3. Jesus pursued wisdom. From His 12th birthday on, He INCREASED in wisdom.
   ____ True
   ____ False

Proverbs 3:13-15 (KJV) “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that gets understanding.
14 For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.
15 She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.”

4. The author lists 9 requirements in obtaining wisdom. What are they?
   1. We Must __________ The Lord
   2. We Must Be ____________________________
3. We Must ____________ For Wisdom

4. We Must _____________ The Scriptures

5. We Must ________________ Instruction

6. We Must _____________ Council

7. We Must ______________ Rebuke

8. We Must ________ Soul Winners

9. We Must ____________ Wise Companions

5. A famous preacher once said, "Show me the crowd you run with and I will tell you the kind of person you are!" He also said, "If you run around with pigs...YOU ARE GOING TO STINK!"

From your own experience, are these statements:

_____ True

_____ False

Before you answer, study the following Scriptures very closely.

Proverbs 13:20 (KJV) "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

Proverbs 14:7-8 (KJV) "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge. 8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit."
CHAPTER FIVE

IDENTIFYING THE FOOLISH
BY WHAT THEY SAY

Discuss the student questions and their answers from session four as session four and five are so critical to their obtaining and walking in God’s wisdom.

**Proverbs 19:3** (KJV) “The foolishness of man perverts his way: and his heart frets against the LORD.”

(BDT) “A person’s own foolishness ruins his life. But in his mind he blames the Lord for it.”

In the flesh there is no way we can please God. We live as we please and then we blame God for the outcome!

"If God really cared for me He would not let this be happening to me!"

This is the mindset of man when all the time God’s Word is crying out, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things SHALL BE added unto thee.” (Matthew 6:33)

God also warns us in Galatians 6:7, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Our reaping depends entirely upon what we have sown!

While we are warned in Matthew 7:1, “Judge not, that ye be not judged,” we CAN be "fruit inspectors!

Matthew 7:20 (KJV) “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

In other words, God is saying we can know what someone is like by the way they lives their lives; by the “fruit” they produce. They do not have to say a word --- just watch how they live!
A Foolish Person Will Ignore Reproof

Do you remember the Bible formula for INCREASING in wisdom from our last session?

Well, they’re the nine (9) things you WILL NOT see a foolish person doing! As a matter of fact, the foolish person will be headed in the exact opposite direction.

**Proverbs 17:10** (KJV) “A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.”

**Proverbs 19:25** (KJV) “Smite a scorners, and the simple will beware: and reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge.”

Not only will the foolish refuse to be corrected, he or she will hate the person who is delivering the message to them from God.

A foolish person will not accept help. Why? They ALREADY know more than anyone else --- or so they think!

A Foolish Person Will Despise Instruction

One of the saddest things you will ever see is a person who does not realize they need instruction.

They will stumble through life, filled with pride, thinking they know it all when in reality, they do not know anything about the things of God --- nor do they care!

Their NATIONAL ANTHEM is the song that Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley made famous a few years back. That song is, "I Did It MY Way."

**Proverbs 1:7** (KJV) “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

**Proverbs 15:5** (KJV) “A fool despiseth his father’s instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.”

To God, a person is foolish if they choose to ignore or take Him and His Word lightly.
They may possess degree after degree and as far as the world is concerned, be very successful.

However, it’s God’s BALL GAME. He makes the rules and He is the Attorney, Jury and Judge all rolled into one!

On Judgment Day, God will look at one thing and one thing only --- WHAT WE HAVE DONE WITH CHRIST!

The question before us then is:

1. Have you received Christ as your personal Savior, and
2. Have you followed Him faithfully after your salvation?

Nothing else matters.

**A Foolish Person Sees Themselves As Always Right**

A foolish person is one that thinks he or she knows MORE than their parents, their teachers, their pastor --- EVEN GOD!

You will hear them state proudly, “No one is going to tell ME how I can live MY life!”

They will reason, “I didn’t ask to be brought into this world. It’s MY life and I will live it as I please."

They “scoff” at authority in any form and yet, “they” ARE the authority --- or so they think.

**Proverbs 12:15** (KJV) “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.”

**Proverbs 14:16** (KJV) “A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.”

A fool has confidence in his or her own self. They actually believe they can “play with the fires of sin” and not get burned!

**Numbers 32:23** (KJV) “But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.”
A Foolish Person Sees Mischief As Sport

A foolish person thinks it’s funny to cause trouble.

We all remember someone like this when we were in grade school. I remember a guy that was the school “bully.”

He thought he could get away with anything. One day he stopped me and wanted my bicycle! I was much smaller than the bully but I decided I had had enough.

Just about the time I "tore into him,” dad drove up! (Thank God for Dads as the bully would have killed me!)

When the bully saw my Dad, he started making light of what he was doing. He said, "I was just joking William, can’t you take a joke?”

A few weeks later the bully was taken from school by the authorities because he had broken into the "coke machine“ at school. It seems the authorities COULD NOT take a joke either!

Causing trouble and being a bully is no joke.

Proverbs 10:23 (KJV) “It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.”

A Foolish Person Will Make A Mockery Of Sin

A foolish person thinks it is amusing when someone says or does something that is unholy or perverse.

The fool delights in sin and those who dabble in it.

Proverbs 14:9 (KJV) “Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favor.”

Romans 1:32 (KJV) “Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”
A Foolish Person Is Usually A “Hothead”

You must either control your temper or your temper will control you. If you cannot control your temper, you will always be in trouble and be seen for what you really are.

Our prisons are filled with people who would not control their temper!

Proverbs 12:16 (KJV) “A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.”

Proverbs 14:17 (KJV) “He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.”

Proverbs 27:3 (KJV) “A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.”

Anyone with a temper is truly a foolish person and is set on the course of sure destruction.

A Foolish Person Meddles In The Affairs Of Others

To gossip, to be a busybody, is to be foolish, so says the Word --- and common sense!

Just think of the lives that have been ruined because someone did not mind their own business.

Perhaps we are even more foolish as church people because we “excuse ourselves” by saying, “Now this is not gossip, but I am telling you this so you can make it a matter of prayer” and THEN we unload our tales of half-truths and innuendoes!

Proverbs 20:3 (KJV) “It is an honor for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.”

2nd Timothy 2:16 (KJV) “But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.”

Nothing good has ever come out of sitting around and talking about something you really know nothing about.

Sometimes, the greatest proof that we have wisdom is to simply keep
our mouths shut!

A Foolish Person IGNORES Their Parents

Our parents ARE NOT perfect but they have been given to us by God. In His wisdom, God has ordained that children obey their parents out of reverence for God.

Oftentimes it is easy to compare what we have with what we imagine. “Oh, if my parents could be like Johnnie’s parents!”

Little do we know that all the while Johnnie is thinking THE SAME about our parents!

Later in life when you are married, you will be tempted to compare what you have in a mate with what is imagined about someone else.

Don’t play the fool concerning your parents. If they ARE NOT saved, pray for their salvation and live your life before them in a way they can see Jesus in you.

A foolish person will not do this.

Proverbs 15:20 (KJV) “A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.”

Proverbs 19:13 (KJV) “A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.”

Some teens, determined to give their children more than their parents gave them, often fail to give their children what their parents did give to them!
CHAPTER FIVE QUESTIONS

1. What are the eight (8) points the author makes in identifying a foolish person?

   1. A Foolish Person ________________ Reproof

   2. A Foolish Person ________________ Instruction

   3. A Foolish Person Perceives Himself As Always ______________

   4. A Foolish Person Sees ______________________ As Sport

   5. A Foolish Person Makes A ______________________ Of Sin

   6. A Foolish Person Is __________________________

   7. A Foolish Person ______________________ In The Affairs Of Others

   8. A Foolish Person ________________________ His Parents

2. How can we truly know another person?

   _____ By how handsome or beautiful they are

   _____ By their fruits, or how they live their lives

3. What is the NATIONAL ANTHEM of a foolish person?


4. On Judgment Day, what one thing will God be looking for in our lives?


5. Will a foolish person accept or scoff at authority?
6. How does a foolish person view sin?

________________________________________________________________________________

7. Does a foolish person meddle in the affairs of others?

1. True

2. False

8. What does the statement below mean to you?

"It is easy for us to want to compare what we have with what we imagine."

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

9. Why is it foolish for a teen to despise their parents?

_____ Parents are ordained of God

_____ We are to obey our parents

_____ Despite what we think, they have more wisdom

_____ All the above

10. Do you now know the people to be with and the people to avoid? Share your thoughts with the other participants.
CHAPTER SIX

THE TEENAGED CHRIST
INCREASED IN MATURITY

In the first five chapters we looked at how Jesus increased in wisdom. Why did we spend so much of our time with wisdom?

Because this is where Jesus started! It is a DIRECT COMMAND of God that we get wisdom --- not the wisdom the world gives, but the wisdom we obtain through following the clear directives of God.

In this chapter we move on to maturity. The Bible puts it like this:

_Luke 2:52_ (KJV) “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

The “second” characteristic of the teenage years of Christ was an INCREASE in “stature.”

The word translated “stature,” according to Strong’s Concordance, actually means “maturity.”

In other words, Jesus not only increased in size as He matured physically, mentally and socially, He “grew up.” He matured.

Paul stated it this way:

_1st Corinthians 13:11_ (KJV) “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

Unless one is under control of the Holy Spirit, our “growing up,” or “maturing,” is greatly stunted. You see adults today who have never matured. They are still in diapers, spiritually speaking.

As you can see, instead of obtaining wisdom and maturity during their teenage years, it was “party time!”
THE TEEN YEARS ARE FOR GROWING UP, NOT GOOFING UP!

This is why the world’s way is so dangerous! During our most informative years, the world say "You can grow up in your twenties."

Note what happens to us during our teenage years:

1. Our CHARACTER is developed

By the time we reach our 20\textsuperscript{th} birthday, we have the weight of the world on our shoulders!

How we respond to these challenges will be determined by what we did while in our teenage years!

There is no switch to flip that will automatically make us "wise" at this point in life.

Habits have developed that now determine how we think and how we act and react to every situation that adults are faced with, and unless we developed a "Christ like character" during our teens, the decisions we are suddenly forced to make become total chaos!

This is why so many adults make the dumb mistakes that we make. We ARE NOT ready for adulthood --- BUT HERE WE ARE!

This is why our divorce and bankruptcy courts are filled to the overflowing today!

This is why teenage pregnancies swell and the abortion mills thrive! Instead of "growing up" in our teenage years, we "flittered away" our day of grace and played the fool!

2. Christ’s example teaches us that the teenage years are for preparation

Beginning at the age of twelve, maturity SHOULD BECOME the primary goal in life.

Why? The teenage years ARE the informative years of our life and will determine our degree of success in life.
Let me give you two examples. I will use myself and my grandson Blake.

I played the fool during my teens. I played every sport in high school, not so much that I was obsessed with sports --- BUT SPORTS ATTRACTED THE GIRLS --- and girls were my goal!

Marilyn and I graduated high school in 1955 and immediately married, moved to California to make our fortune --- completely skipping college.

Our young adult years and median adult years were spent in trying to correct the mistakes I had made because I WAS NOT PREPARED for adulthood.

Yes, we turned out alright but we are the exceptions and not the rule. Most who did it “my way” wound up divorced, bankrupt or even worse, in jail or in the grave. Instead of getting my degree in 1959 (four years out of High School), I got my Bachelors in 1975 and finally my Doctorate in 1995! That, my young friend, IS NOT the way to do it!

Blake, however, spent his teens in preparation for adulthood. At this writing, he is very active in his church serving as Youth Pastor. He has his Associates Degree in Business and has FIVE HOMES that he has purchased and rents them out. He has his Real Estate License and is busy purchasing and selling homes.

Blake just had his twenty-third birthday!

He is the perfect example of a “present day” teenage Jesus who spent his youth in preparation for adulthood. This is what Jesus did and Blake IS LIVING PROOF that anyone can follow the example set by Jesus!

**3. Most of life’s major decisions are made from eighteen to twenty-four years of age**

It is during these years that most people enter college, choose their career, develop companions and choose their mate.

To wait until you are in your twenties to begin the process of maturing will mean you will be ill prepared to make these major decisions correctly.

As you have already seen by my example, wrong decisions in these major areas will result in spending much of your life trying to fix these “wrongs” and dealing with the consequences of these poor decisions.
The young person who understands that he or she is to begin to develop into maturity at the age of twelve will be prepared to make wise, Godly decisions as a young adult.

The Bible teaches that God divides our life-span into three basic age groups:

- 1. Children
- 2. Young men or women
- 3. Aged men and women

The Bible leaves **NO PLACE** for the foolishness of the teenage years. This is all man’s way of doing things.

Age twelve was a milestone, a new beginning, the doorway to adulthood. It was at this age the child picked up the mantle of maturity.
CHAPTER SIX QUESTIONS

1. What is the second stage of development according to the author?

Answer:
______________________________________________________________

2. What is a more modern day meaning to the word translated “stature?”

Answer:
______________________________________________________________

3. On page 24 of your textbook, how does the world suggest we spend our teenage years?

Answer:
______________________________________________________________

4. What are the three points the author makes concerning our development in our teen years? (See page 24)

Answer:

1. ____________________________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________________________

3. ____________________________________________________________

5. When we turn 20, is there a switch we can flip that automatically makes us ready for adulthood?

   ____ Yes

   ____ No

6. The Bible divides our lives into three stages. What are they?
1. Stage one: ____________________________

2. Stage two: ____________________________

3. Stage three: ____________________________

7. What is the name of the fourth group, or stage in life, that man has created?

Answer: ____________________________________________

8. At what age did the Jewish boy or girl reach a milestone?

   ____ Age 12
   ____ Age 16
   ____ Age 18

9. Most of life’s decisions are made between what ages?

   ____ 20 to 30
   ____ 21 to 25
   ____ 18 to 24

10. Given your current age, how would you rate your progress towards maturity? (Personal: not to be shared with the group)

11. Is it possible in today’s society to start at an early age and follow the pattern of the teenage Jesus?

   ____ Yes
   ____ No
CHAPTER SEVEN
MATURITY, ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE!

The chapter is devoted to teaching us how to mature THE BIBLE WAY. It can easily be broken down into three parts:

1st Corinthians 13:11 (BDT) “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became an adult, I put away childish things.”

What are “childish things?”

1. To speak as a child would speak.
2. To understand as a child would understand.
3. To think as a child would think.

Paul says there came a time in his life when he “put away” speaking, understanding and thinking as he did when he was a child.

What does it mean, “to put away?”

It means “to cause to cease, put an end to, do away with, to annul, to abolish, to put to death.”

This IS NOT something that just automatically happens when we leave our childhood at age thirteen, as can be attested by the actions of most adults today!

Paul said that this was something that he had to do and he did this during his teenage years!

Maturity is a process in which we take control of our speech, our understanding and our thinking!

Maturity should be THE PRIORITY of teenagers.

Like it or not, if we are to make the correct decisions later in life, the foundation has to be laid during our teenage years.
DEVELOPING EXCELLENT SPEECH

Since Paul starts with speech, let’s also start there as this is the Bible way to maturity.

**Matthew 12:34-36 (KJV)** “O generation of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

36 But I say to you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

What we say lets people look into our hearts and see us for who we really are!

There is a saying that I learned as a child that is strait from Hell as Satan is its author and he is a liar and the father of lies.

Note this saying and flee from it:

“**Sticks and stone may break my bones but WORDS can never harm me.**”

Can you see this statement for the lie that it is? Sure you can!

Our "**words**" will either make us or break us!

**James 3:6; 8; 10 (KJV)** “And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

8 “But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”

10 “Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”

If we will all be truthful, the most hurtful things that happen to us are words that have come from the tongue of someone else!
Words cut to the core and often leave lifetime scars, unless we learn to release the situation to God and let Him handle it.

To mature, we **MUST** guard the things we say and be sure that what we say agrees with the Word of God.

**Proverbs 18:8** (KJV) “The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.”

(BDT) “The words of a gossiper are like wounds that sink deeply, cutting all the way to the center of the heart.”

This is why we must enlist the Lord in taming our tongue. We **CANNOT** tame the tongue other than with His help because we still live in the flesh and Satan has access to our flesh.

Notice the wisdom of the virtuous woman:

**Proverbs 31:26** (KJV) “She opens her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.”

A virtuous woman is guided by the laws of God, having deliberately chosen to let His law rule. This is why she is virtuous in the first place!

God has laws against the tongue and she agreed to abide by those laws concerning her speech.

Just like the laws of our land are designed for our protection, so are the laws of God.

To break either has severe consequences, a corresponding penalty that is applied when a particular law is broken.

If we will force ourselves to live by these laws we can live in peace and harmony. If we choose to break them by ignoring them or just out and out rebel against them, then the opposite will occur.

To be Christ-like, we must learn excellent speech, or Biblical speech.

**Proverbs 8:6** (KJV) “Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.”
Proverbs 17:7 (KJV) "Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince."

All the above Scriptures are laws of God concerning our speech. Study them and place yourself under their authority.

If you break one, immediately seek God’s forgiveness and accept His penalty as you allow Him to cleanse you.

1st John 1:9 (KJV) "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Galatians 6:7 (KJV) "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

While God stands willing and waiting to forgive, the seeds we have sown WILL COME UP, good or bad!
CHAPTER SEVEN QUESTIONS

1. In 1st Corinthians 13:11, the Apostle Paul mentions three things that he had to change when he went from childhood to adulthood. What are those three things?

   A. I __________ as a child.
   
   B. I ______________________ as a child.
   
   C. I _____________ as a child.

2. What does the Apostle mean by the statement "to put away?"

   Answer:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3. What is "maturity" according to the Bible? (Textbook, page 25)

   Answer:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. Do the words we speak allow people to look inside our hearts and determine what kind of a person we are?

   _____ Yes
   _____ No

5. Do the words we speak make us or break us?

   _____ Yes
   _____ No

6. If I make the statement, "We are today what we spoke and thought about
in days gone by,” would this statement be true? (See Galatians 6:7; Mark 11:23)

____ Yes

____ No

7. According to James 3:8, can mankind in the flesh tame the tongue?

____ Yes

____ No

8. In your own words, how are the laws of God and the laws of man alike?

Answer:
___________________________________________________
___________________________________________________

9. According to Proverbs 8:6, there is only one kind of speech that should come out of our mouths. What is this?

____ foolish talking

____ right things

10. If we sin, what are we to immediately do according to 1st John 1:9?

Answer:
___________________________________________________
___________________________________________________

11. God will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness but do the “seeds we have sown” just go away?

____ Yes

____ No
12. According to Matthew 12:34, what comes out of our mouth when we speak?

Answer:

__________________________________________________________

13. Since Jesus did not spend His teenage years being immature and childish and He is our example, can we spend our teenage years like He spent His?

____ Yes, it is possible

____ No, it is impossible
CHAPTER EIGHT

10 LAWS OF EXCELLENT SPEECH

As we take each of these laws and look at them, try and relate them to your life and if there is a problem in this area, determine in your heart to correct your speech in this area.

This is referred to in the Bible as "discipline," as it IS NOT just a teen problem but something that each of us could use a little more of!

The more disciplined we become the more discipled we become and each of us should strive to be more of a disciple, a follower of Christ!

The first law of speech that we want to look at is:

1. Speak Sparingly.

   **Proverbs 17:27** (KJV) “He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

   **Proverbs 10:19-21** (KJV) “In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refrains his lips is wise.
   20 The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is of little worth.
   21 The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.”

In these two passages we have the description of two people;

The first has knowledge and speaks little and is referred to as a person with understanding and has an excellent spirit. His tongue is spoken of as the tongue of the just and when he does speak, his lips produce righteousness.

The other person is one who is always running his mouth which keeps him from learning, thus opening himself to much sin. His heart is described as of little worth.

The words "wanteth not" are not words we use today but the meaning is crystal clear: It means "Lacking not." In other words the person who
is always talking has an abundance of sin!

The New International Version translates the verse this way:

**Proverbs 10:19** “When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.”

If you do not have anything to say that is positive and can edify (build up) the person to whom you are speaking --- **KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT!**

Why? Unplanned conversations **of any length** always turns to foolishness and gossip, so avoid talking **just to be talking!**

Cell phones and telephones are for one purpose: so you can reach your parents and so your parents can reach you! They **ARE NOT** for the purpose of idle chit-chat with boyfriends or girlfriends.

I have an evangelist friend, Dr. Charles Massegee, who simply **WILL NOT** talk to you about anything that does not directly relate to the church, Jesus, revival or business!

If it is not about these subjects, forget it!

Charles ain’t talking! His motto is:

**Philippians 3:13-14** (KJV) “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

What a great way to live --- wanting to be more like Jesus!

The second law of excellent speech is:

2. **Speak only after thinking.**

**Proverbs 29:20** (KJV) “Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.”

**James 1:19** (KJV) “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let
every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:"

If we would only engage our brain before we engage our tongue, most of what we say would never be said!

Take time to think before you speak!

This one thing would stop 99.9 percent of the hurt and misunderstanding in our churches and among our friends and acquaintances!

Let’s think about some things we can do to keep from falling into the "talking trap."

1. Never give a quick, of the top of your head answer. It IS NOT our head that needs to answer anything anyway, but rather our heart. A polite "I don’t know" or "I’ll have to think about that" will do wonders to keep us out of a trap!

2. If the question involves a third person simply say, "You will need to discuss that with them" or "Have you talked to them about this?" This is gossip just waiting to happen if a third person is involved and is not present!

3. It is always good to ask and recommend to the person who asks a question, "Have you sought the Lord concerning this?" Or, "What do you believe the Lord would say?" Or, "The Bible says---!"

4. My wife is extremely good at answering a question with a question! This usually stops any foolish talk or gossip in its track!

Whatever you do, before you engage in idle conversation, ask yourself, "Is this something I need to be talking about?"

Usually it isn’t!

The third law of excellent speech is:

3. **Speak honestly.**

   **Ephesians 4:25** (KJV) “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.”
Proverbs 12:17 (KJV) “He that speaks truth shows forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.”

The “truth” law is so important as there is no such thing as “a little fib!”

Speaking honestly involves both what we say and what we don’t say!

Let me give you an example of lying and see if you agree:

I purchased a new car once from the showroom floor. The salesman let me drive his demo which was identical to the one I purchased.

Little did I know, nor was it disclosed to me, that the car on the showroom floor had been sold on a Friday and wrecked on Saturday! The person’s credit was no good so the dealer was stuck with a wrecked car, which the promptly repaired, placed on the showroom floor and sold to me.

The car was never right and was in the shop more times than I would care to remember. It was at one of these visits that I learned the truth, but the car WAS NEW, having never been registered by the person who bought it and promptly wrecked it.

Now, did the dealership lie to me? Yes they did BY WHAT THEY DID NOT SAY!

When the new models came out, I took the car to the same dealership and traded it in on a new model. By that time, the dealership had new salespeople and new managers, and to be truthful, I was in a "gitcha-back" mood!

The salesman made a point to ask me the condition of the car to which I replied, “Except for the miles, the car is just like it was the day I purchased it!” In my mind I thought, “It was a pile of junk then and it is a pile of junk now!”

Did I lie to the salesman? Yes I did BY WHAT I DID NOT SAY!

A lie IS a lie, under any circumstance and we need to guard our tongue because it is s-o-o-o-o-o easy to lie!

Even if people deserve to be lied too? Yes, a lie IS a lie!
Even if it keeps someone out of trouble? Yes, a lie **IS** a lie!

Excellence **demands** perfect honesty.

Now, by being perfectly honest, I do not mean that if a person is ugly or fat, you are required to tell them! This is when the next law applies:

4. **Speak with grace.**

This law follows law three on purpose. Watch this:

*Colossians 4:6* (KJV) “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

While we are to always speak the truth, not all that is true needs to be spoken.

We are saved by grace, God’s “**unmerited favor.**” Salvation is something that we do not deserve.

When we say that we are to “**speak with grace**” we mean that we should show the same type favor to others that God has shown to us.

We are never to speak an unkind truth. Our speech is to “**be seasoned with salt.**” Salt is a preservative. It **DOES NOT** destroy.

When you speak to others, season your words with grace.

5. **Speak only acceptable words.**

*Psalm 19:14* (KJV) “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.”

Every word we speak should be tested against what God would deem correct.

Invite God to sift through your vocabulary and point out the words that do not become a child of God.

This will eliminate crude, vulgar, perverse and every questionable words that you may have uttered in the past and go a long way towards making your speech excellent.
You should be especially careful of "slang" words as many of these are derived from sexually explicit terms (Body parts, body waste, etc.).

Racial slang should never be used nor should any term that is a derivative of God (Gosh, Golly, OMG, etc.).

Words that have “double references” should also be avoided as they do not become excellent speech.

This brings us to the sixth law of excellent speech and is similar and naturally follows law number five:


**Proverbs 25:11** (KJV) “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”

(NIV) “A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.”

(ICB) “The right word spoken at the right time is as beautiful as gold apples in a silver bowl.”

(BDT) “Timely words are as beautiful as golden apples in a silver display.”

God is simply saying that an appropriate statement is a work of fine art. Often we say the right things at the wrong time.

We must choose our words carefully and paint a beautiful picture. Let me give you an example:

“I look into your face and time stands still.” How beautiful and how appropriate. Some guys would say, “You have a face that would stop a clock.”

Guys, this IS NOT appropriate!

**Ecclesiastes 3:1** (KJV) “To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:”

Choose your words wisely and temper them with grace.

A good question to ask yourself before speaking is "What time is it?"
Since there is a time for everything, is this the time? Humor is wonderful — at the right time. However there are times when humor is out of place.

Rebuke is often needed, but timing is everything.

Just because something is right does not mean it is the right time to say it.

7. **Speak respectfully.**

1\textsuperscript{st} Timothy 5:1-3 (KJV) “Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; 2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. 3 Honor widows that are widows indeed.”

May I ask a silly question? How many youth today stand in honor when their elders walk into a room, especially a woman?

When I was in my teens we did. We knew our place and we honored our elders.

How did we learn this? A few slaps up against the head usually was sufficient enough to get our attention! As a matter of fact, after a few slaps we would just naturally **BE LOOKING** for an adult so we **COULD STAND**!

We simply need to honor those who are our elders, not so much that they are worthy, but simply out of respect.

A good rule of thumb is, “**If you disagree with someone in authority, approach them privately and speak to them with the same respect you would show your father.**”

Consider which of the following is more apt to **“be heard.”**

You do not agree with something and you approach the person in charge with an **“in your face”** attitude in front of others.

The same scenario:

You do not agree with something and you approach the person in charge and in a non-combative way ask for a few moments of their time
privately. In this private meeting, you simply share your views and ask that they re-consider their actions or bring you up-to-date so you can understand and help them.

Who do you think is more likely to be heard?

No answer need be given as the answer is obvious; the person who shows respect for authority will be heard!

This brings us to the number eight law of excellent speech:

8. **Never speak evil of another.**

    **James 4:11** (KJV) **“Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaks evil of his brother, and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law, and judges the law: but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge.”**

    **Titus 3:2** (KJV) **“To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness to all men.”**

The word "evil" in these verses goes beyond speaking negative things against someone else but rather, _describes our motives._

We must NEVER slander someone. We must NEVER retaliate but overcome evil with good.

    **Romans 12:21** (KJV) **“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

Now, let’s look at the ninth law of excellent speech:

9. **Never praise yourself.**

    **Proverbs 27:2** (KJV) **“Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.”**

The person of excellent speech is a person who is humble in spirit, knowing that God will exalt them in due time.

Absolutely nothing turns people off faster than a person who is a "legend in his own mind!“
Every time you are around this type of person, the deer they shot will have a larger rack, the fish they caught will become longer, the girl they dated will be more beautiful, the tackle they made will break more bones, etcetera’s and so forth!

They are interested in only three people, "Me, Myself and I!"

We all know people like this and we sure DO NOT want to be around them, so why would we want to be “like” them?

Remember, if what we do needs talking about, let others and God do it!

This brings us to our final thought for this chapter and the tenth law of excellent speech:

10. **Speak the Gospel boldly.**

   **Romans 1:16** (KJV) “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

   Our prayer each morning when we awake should be "Lord, thank you for this new day and help me use it for you. Bring me to the people you want me to minister to today and give me the words to say that are appropriate. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

   There are only four things we can do anyway.

   1. When we are with God we worship Him.
   2. When we are confronted by Satan we resist him.
   3. When we are with fellow believers we encourage them.
   4. When we are with the lost we witness to them.

   We do the above at school, at work, while we are shopping, while we play, wherever we are!

   Excellent speech is the hallmark of excellent character. As a matter of fact, witnessing with boldness WILL HASTEN the development of the nine other laws!

   **James 3:2** (KJV) “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.”
CHAPTER EIGHT QUESTIONS

1. According to the Bible, should we be "chatter-boxes" and talk everyone else down? (See Proverbs 17:27)
   
   ___ Yes

   ___ No

2. Name some ways and things we can do to avoid the "talking trap."
   
   Answer:
   _____________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________

3. According to James 1:19, we are to "be ____________ to hear, slow to ____________ and _____________ to wrath."

4. Is there really a "little fib" or is it just a plain out lie?
   
   ___ A little fib is completely harmless.

   ___ A little fib is an out and out lie.

5. Did our pastor lie when he traded in his old car for a new one? (Remember the story)
   
   ___ Yes, by not saying so, he lied.

   ___ No, those people had lied to him and deserved what they got.

6. What does it mean "To speak with grace?"

   Answer:
   _____________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________

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7. How can we know what words are acceptable to God?

Answer:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

8. Are “slang” words and “racial” words acceptable to God?

   ___ Yes
   ___ No

9. How is the best way to approach someone in authority with whom you do not agree?

Answer:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

10. The author give the definition of the word that is translated “evil” in James 4:11 and Titus 3:2. What does “evil” in these verses mean?

Answer:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

11. Should we “pat our backs” and “toot our own horn?”

Answer:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
CHAPTER NINE

HOW TO DEEPEN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORD

In this session we want to let God show us how to DEEPEN OUR BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING!

Look around you at church. How many adults who attend on a regular basis actually know what the Bible is all about?

They will tell you they believe it and that God is its author, but for most, that is the extent of their Bible knowledge.

Our church will be ABOVE AVERAGE because they have been under solid Biblical preaching for the last fifteen (15) or so years. We have had two (2) pastors during this period.

However, the problem with our church and all churches in general IS THE LACK OF TRAINING during the informative years.

It has taken me this long in my ministry here (4 years) to get the children and youth ministries going --- AND THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TEACHING AGE of our lives!

So, pray for your pastor and be patient with your elders as they ARE coming around!

Note the emphasis Jesus placed on children:

Matthew 19:13-15 “Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put His hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.
14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.
15 And he laid His hands on them, and departed thence.”

Luke 17:1-2 “Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!”
2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”

It should be obvious to even a novice (new or unlearned) that Jesus was serious about little children and our ministry to them!

God wants us mature and the time to start maturing is during our childhood years!

Paul also made it plain that there is a difference between childish and mature understanding.

1st Corinthians 13:11 “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, thought like a child, and reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I no longer used childish ways.”

An important priority of the teen years is to perfect your understanding; to take it from speaking, reasoning and thinking like a child to maturity.

Understanding involves thinking things through to its conclusion. In other words, what will my actions bring forth? This is reason --- or reasoning things out.

For the child of God, it is the ability to base our reaction to life’s circumstances and situations on intellect rather than emotion.

Understanding is when Scriptural thoughts replace emotional reaction. Now, please understand, this DOES NOT eliminate emotion, but rather channels our emotions into compliance with God’s emotions.

Understanding is the maturity to see a situation as God sees it, and to feel about it as He feels.

In the book of Proverbs, Solomon again and again, encourages his son to increase in three areas; knowledge, understanding and wisdom.

Knowledge is learning what God wants us to do with our lives.

Understanding is learning why God wants us to do what He wants.

Wisdom is learning how to do what God wants.
In your childhood years, most of your Biblical instruction was focused toward seeing that you received knowledge and wisdom. These two attributes are strongly related.

Let’s look at the definitions of each word again:

- Knowledge is learning **WHAT** to do.
- Wisdom is learning **HOW** to do what God wants you to do.

In Sunday school and Preaching services, you have been taught what is right and that you have an obligation to do what is right.

Your parents also have been commanded by God to both teach you verbally and by their actions to do what is right.

You have been taught **WHAT** God expects of you and instructed on **HOW** to do what God expects of you.

Through your childhood years, you probably have not been taught a great deal about **WHY** you were to do these things.

Do you remember every time you asked **WHY?**, you were basically told, “**Because I said so!**”

Children **DO NOT** know what is best for them, even though they think they do!

A child who has not learned that wisdom is **INSTANTLY** obeying Bible knowledge will never be mature enough to attain understanding.

God will **NEVER** explain **why** to a person who **won’t**!

At age twelve, Jesus was already filled with knowledge and wisdom:

**Luke 2:40** “And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him.”

In the verses following the above, Jesus is in the Temple talking to the “**Doctors,**” the Biblical scholars of His day, “**both hearing them and asking them questions.**”

Why? Jesus **HAD** both knowledge and wisdom. Now He seeks understanding!
Get this: No one can know **HOW** to do **WHAT** he does not know to do!

You **CANNOT** walk in a truth that you don’t know! Oh, maybe by accident but it will not be your nature.

Jesus could naturally now ask why —— and expect the proper answer!

It was time to attain to Biblical understanding or mature understanding.

It was time to acquire Biblical reasons for doing what He had been taught to do.

Biblical understanding can better be called **BIBLE CONVICTIONS**.

2nd Timothy 3:14-15 “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;
15 And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

The Scriptures are able to make us wise. They are able to deliver us from any problem that might come along.

However, just having the Scriptures **IN OUR HEAD** will not deliver us unless we know how to apply them through maturity, or conviction.

1st Timothy 4:12-16 “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.
13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.
14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.
15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.
16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”

God is saying to the youth of our day what Paul said to Timothy. **“You have learned; now become convinced of my truths. You have**
read; now give yourself wholly to these truths. Make them heart knowledge instead of head knowledge.”

We Baptist have a “Church Covenant” that we proudly hang somewhere in our buildings. Ours is up front for every member to see, and yet, I would venture to say that the vast majority of our membership has never read it, EVEN THOUGH IT STATES WHAT WE BELIEVE!

To most, it is no more than a decoration; a picture hanging on the wall!

It is like the Bible. We say we believe it and yet, we DO NOT know what it says, or if a verse does come to mind, we do not have a clue as to where to find it in the Bible!

God is saying to us all, “Don’t be like this! Know my Word and put it to work in your life on a daily basis. Let everything you say and do be tempered with the truths of my Word!”

The time to start IS NOW!

1st Corinthians 14:20 “Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.”

(NLT) “Dear brothers and sisters, don’t be childish in your understanding of these things. Be innocent as babies when it comes to evil, but be mature and wise in understanding matters of this kind.”
1. Paul makes it plain that there is a difference between childish and mature understanding. In your own words, make the distinction.

Answer:


2. Knowledge is learning ___________ God wants me to do.

3. Understanding is learning ___________ God wants me to do it.

4. Wisdom is learning ___________ to do what God wants.

5. What three areas did Solomon constantly tell his son to develop in his life?
   
   A. _________________________________
   
   B. _________________________________
   
   C. _________________________________

6. Do you know understand the importance in obtaining knowledge and wisdom before getting understanding?

   Answer: ___ Yes

   ___ No (Remember the admonition “Just do as I say!”)

7. At the age of twelve Jesus was already filled with knowledge and wisdom. What did He seek next?

   Answer: ________________________________
8. In Luke chapter 2, we have the story of Jesus in the Temple with the "Teachers" of His day. What do verses 46 and 49 say to you?

Answer:
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

9. What is another word for Biblical understanding?

   A. Bible ______________________________________

10. Where are most adult church members in their understanding of the Bible?

    ___ All knowing

    ___ Don't have a clue

11. According to the Bible, are they mature or childish in their understanding?

    ___ Childish

    ___ Mature
CHAPTER TEN

A GUIDE TO STUDYING THE BIBLE!

2nd Timothy 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

We are clearly and plainly commanded as believers to study the Bible. It IS NOT a piece of literature that we read like a magazine or novel.

As Jesus was the Word of God walking around in the flesh, the Bible IS the Word of God written down on paper!

If God appeared to us in person, He would say the same thing that we read in the Bible.

Watch this:

John 5:39 “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”

Jesus says to us and all who will listen, “Search the Scriptures for they testify of me.”

Or literally, “The Scriptures are MY testimony.”

One cannot separate the Scriptures from Jesus or Jesus from the Scriptures for they are one and the same!

John 1:1-5 (NLT) “In the beginning the Word already existed. He was with God, and He was God.
2 He was in the beginning with God.
3 He created everything there is. Nothing exists that He didn’t bring into being.
4 Life itself was in Him, and this life gives light to everyone.
5 The light shines through the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.”

When everything that is created --- (IN THE BEGINNING) --- Jesus already existed. (Verse 1)
Jesus was called **THE WORD**! So, when we study the Bible, Jesus is actually speaking words to us — *AS IF HE WERE HERE!*

With this background, let’s now look at some simple steps to help you as you begin to **REALLY** study the Bible:

**STEP ONE: ENLIST THE HELP OF A TUTOR --- THE HOLY SPIRIT!**

In every denomination known to man, there are *“learned scholars”* that will tell you what the Bible says — *ACCORDING TO THEIR ON PARTICULAR WAY OF THINKING;* according to the teachings of their denomination!

Baptists are no different.

An example of what I am saying can be found on every doctrine (teaching) in the Bible! Just think of the different teachings in our churches concerning:

- **Baptism and the Lord’s Supper**
- **The role of women**
- **The role of Pastor and Deacons**

The list is endless and yet, the Bible only teaches only one thing about each of these subjects! Now, who is wrong? It’s certainly **NOT** the Bible! So, to properly understand the Word of God, we must go to the source — **THE HOLY SPIRIT!**

The Holy Spirit dwells within the believer and wants to help us understand God’s Word.

Talk to Him as you would any person, and He is that — **A PERSON!**

He is not an **“IT!”**

As Father God was to the Old Testament saints, the Holy Spirit is to the New Testament saints! And it is Jesus that ties both testaments together, making it possible for both Jew and Gentile to be one in the church!

The Holy Spirit has been given to the church to teach us in all truths, but this **CANNOT** happen until we seriously study the Word.
This is what this particular study is about --- **TEACHING YOU THE WORD!**

**STEP TWO: SPEND TIME IN GATHERING KNOWLEDGE**

In my early years as a young pastor, someone would ask me a question about the Bible and I would do research. Once I had gleaned all the knowledge I could on the subject --- **I WOULD TELL THEM!**

In other words, I **WAS NOT** helping them even though I did give them correct answers. But what I told them went in one ear and out the other!

Why? I had done the work for them instead of showing them how to dig the answers out for themselves!

While I personally love the King James Version of the Bible, it is filled with archaic words that do not have the same meaning today as they did when written. The people that lived in the times of King James understood those words. To us, they mean something entirely different.

We see the usage of words change meaning even today. When I was a young person like most of you, I was most happy to be referred to as a "**gay**" person! Then it meant that I was happy and a delight to be around because I made people laugh.

Today I would be called a humorist! A "**gay**" person today is one who engages in the sin of homosexually, as sin so vile that it will be **THE** sin that will trigger the Second Coming of Christ!

The meaning of words change from one generation to the next. Now, how many generations have passed since the completion of our Bible? Let’s just say **MANY** have passed!

I must confess that I believe the King James Version to be the most accurate translation of the current list. However, I use the New International Version, the New Living Translation and God’s Word Translation, plus the scores of exhaustive concordances and Bible dictionaries that are available to help me in the translations of difficult King James words. I also study the original Greek and Hebrew texts.

I suggest you do the same.

I will spend in the average week some 50 to 60 hours of Bible study; more hours than most spend on their work-a-day jobs!
I simply want to know that when I preach, I AM NOT preaching what Bill Duvall thinks, but rather what the Bible says.

But then, every source I have for my studies ARE AVAILABLE TO EACH OF YOU!

If there has ever been a generation that is WITHOUT EXCUSE concerning Bible knowledge --- IT IS OUR GENERATION!

**STEP THREE: RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE INFORMATION**

Once you have gathered from both the Old and New Testaments all the Bible has to say about a word or subject, then you can make your conclusions about the teaching or the meaning of that word or subject.

As you pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you, He can take the knowledge you have gathered and teach you what the Bible has to say about any subject!

After all --- HE IS GOD and knows FIRST HAND what His Word says!

A careful study of His Word IS NOT an exercise of our human intellect but rather a TEACHING EXERCISE between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man.

Allow Him to interpret Scripture for you.

**STEP FOUR: DEFINING BIBLE WORDS THAT ARE UNFAMILIAR**

While we have already touched on this, the new translations help but oftentimes lack a true translation of the intent of the passage. Just translating one word correctly will not help if the entire passage is interpreted incorrectly!

As a matter of fact, GREAT HARM has been done at the expense of translating one word correctly!

Let me give you an example:

3rd John 2 (KJV) “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”
In this verse we find the **WILL OF GOD** for every child of His. More than anything else, God wants us to prosper financially and be in health --- **JUST AS OUR SAVED SOUL PROSPERS!**

You simply **CANNOT** get any better than a soul that is saved! Do you "see" the intent of this verse? Good! Now, let’s read it from some of the very best **"modern"** translations:

*3rd John 2* (NIV) “Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.”

Do you see the intent of God in this verse? Not really --- **BUT IT IS EASY TO READ!**

*3rd John 2* (NLT) “Dear friend, I am praying that all is well with you and that your body is as healthy as I know your soul is.”

God’s intent is clearly lost here but again --- **IT IS EASY TO READ!**

*3rd John 2* (GWT) “Dear friend, I know that you are spiritually well. I pray that you're doing well in every other way and that you're healthy.”

All three translations **MISS THE ACTUAL MEANING.** It goes from God’s intent (His will) to a prayer that all is well!

Note the Bill Duvall translation:

*3rd John 2* (BDT) “My Child, My will for you, above all else, is that you prosper and be in good health in the same way your soul prospers.”

Is the intent or will of God still present? Is it readable? Is it understandable?

Someone would have to "pay us" to miss the meaning!

Just making something easy to read **DOES NOT** make it a good translation, **UNLESS THE ORIGINAL INTENT IS KEPT!**
We must define Bible words by seeing how they are used in every verse of the Bible that contains that particular word. This way, the word explains itself!

**STEP FIVE: COMPARISON VERSES.**

Remember, the Bible never contradicts itself. Instead, it completes itself as one verse adds to the other! The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible! It simply explains itself.

I suggest you use these four rules as you study the Word of God:

**RULE NUMBER ONE:** The Bible is the Word of God and therefore true.

**RULE NUMBER TWO:** All 66 books are to be used in establishing what God has to say about any subject.

**RULE NUMBER THREE:** All verses, chapters and books completely agree when properly interpreted.

**RULE NUMBER FOUR:** To get to the truth concerning any matter, we must go by the Word and never by our pre-conceived ideas.

Anyone who will use these rules will get to the truth and the truth, once known and applied, will set us free!

Now, let’s get back to our steps!

**STEP SIX: MEDITATE ON EACH VERSE.**

To whom is the verse written? Is the verse written to the saved or the lost?

**What** am I to meditate about?

**Where** am I to meditate?

**How** will I benefit from my meditation?

This is where the Holy Spirit has the great opportunity to teach us. If there is something that is unclear to you, pray and ask Him to guide you in your understanding.
STEP SEVEN: SEEK WISE COUNCIL.

Note where seeking wise council is located in your search for Biblical understanding.

It comes ONLY after you have exhausted all efforts and ALREADY know the answers!

Most men of God enjoy helping a young person discover the truths of the Scriptures and they can CONFIRM what the Holy Spirit has already shown you. Those who have spent their lives studying the Bible can help you firm up or hone what you have learned.

They will be especially helpful in showing you Scripture that you may have missed. It NEVER hurts to get the advice of your Pastor, Sunday School Teacher or Youth Pastor.

The KEY however, is to ALWAYS go by the Word. Compare what they say with what the Word says!

A word of advice here is to "stay away" from "never before discovered truths."

God’s Word has been completed for some two-thousand years and yet there are those who have to "one-up" everyone else! They are always trying to come up with something "new."

It is usually "another gospel" that Paul warns us about, which IS NOT another gospel at all but rather an out-and-out distortion of the Word of God!

I heard a TV preacher say, “Now you won’t find this in the Bible but ---” so I left that channel immediately! The sad part is most did not! They listened to "another gospel" and this is so sad.

**Galatians 1:6-8** “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:
7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.
8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”
STEP EIGHT: MAKE PERSONAL APPLICATION OF THE TRUTHS YOU HAVE LEARNED.

The Bible is designed to change us. God IS NOT impressed with how much Bible we know but rather by how much Bible we live! God will not waste His time teaching you unless you are willing to apply what He teaches you!

Apply the first truth He teaches you and He will show you the second!

Most people want to “know it all” before they start applying any of His Word to their lives!

TRUTH! It will NEVER happen!

Look around you. There will always be people who are “ever learning” but never coming to the truth!

Why? Because they never applied the first thing God taught them to their lives!

2nd Timothy 3:5-7 “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.
6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers (various) lusts,
7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

STEP NINE: KEEP A NOTEBOOK UP-TO-DATE WITH THE TRUTHS GOD SHOWS YOU.

The object here is to get what is written down in your notebook from your head into your heart!

“Head knowledge” must become “heart knowledge.”

This happens only when you study the material we are providing you over-and-over-and-over-and-over-and-over! So, review your notebook often until you know it by heart.

You WILL know it “by heart” when you just automatically do what the Word says without even thinking about it! It must become something
that you do like breathing! You never stop to ask yourself, "Do I need to breathe or did I just breathe?"

No! Breathing is just something that you automatically do! Heart knowledge of the Word is like this.

**STEP TEN: BE THANKFUL.**

Praise the Lord and thank Him for His Word that the Holy Spirit has taught you and your Pastor has confirmed!

Personal Bible study, combined with the preaching and teaching you receive each week, helps you discover the "whys" of your beliefs and keeps you from being deceived by false doctrine and worldliness.

**Ephesians 4:14-15** “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:”
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER TEN!

1. According to 2\textsuperscript{nd} Timothy 2:15, what are we clearly commanded to do?

Answer: ______________________________________________________________

2. In John 5:39, what is the believer commanded to do?

Answer: ______________________________________________________________

3. The Scriptures are the testimony of ________________.

4. In John 1:1-5, who was in the beginning with God?

   ___ The Holy Spirit
   ___ Jesus
   ___ All the above

5. What are the ten steps to Bible knowledge listed in this chapter?

   Step 1. ______________________________________________________________
   Step 2. ______________________________________________________________
   Step 3. ______________________________________________________________
   Step 4. ______________________________________________________________
   Step 5. ______________________________________________________________
   Step 6. ______________________________________________________________
   Step 7. ______________________________________________________________
   Step 8. ______________________________________________________________
Step 9. ___________________________________________________________

Step 10. __________________________________________________________

6. In step 5 the pastor lists four rules to use to help us understand the teachings of the Bible. What are these four rules?

   Rule 1: The Bible _____ the Word of God and is therefore true.

   Rule 2: All _____ books of the Bible are to be used in establishing what God has to say about any subject.

   Rule 3: All verses, chapters and books of the Bible completely agree when properly ______________________.

   Rule 4: To get to the ___________ concerning any matter, we must go by the Word and never by our pre-conceived ideas.

7. Does the world try and preach “another gospel?”

   ___ Yes

   ___ No

8. What Scripture teaches the above? _________________________________

9. Will God teach you everything about His Word if you are not willing to put the very first thing He shows you in practice in your life?

   ___ Yes

   ___ No

10. Explain “head knowledge” and “heart knowledge” in your own words. (Use the back of this sheet)
The teenager who studies the Bible for themselves develops mental depth and spiritual insight well beyond their years.

In this chapter we want to look at some of the wonderful benefits to developing your understanding during your most informative years.

**Proverbs 17:27** “He that hath knowledge spareth (uses restraint) his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.”

We have already spent time on “idle chatter” but here the Scriptures reminds us again that we should speak sparingly, choose our words carefully and be sure that what comes out of our mouths are from the Holy Spirit. So, let’s deal with the latter part of this verse:

**1. An Excellent Spirit**

A teenager who begins to do right based on an understanding of God’s Word eliminates the cause of rebellion.

Just think of what this one thing will accomplish!

1. **The problems with Mom and Dad are automatically eliminated.** Mom and Dad are no longer “making” you do what is right. Doing what is right and correct just naturally comes when our understanding is developed through serious Bible study.

2. **Your Pastor becomes your friend and closest confidant.** He is no longer just the “preacher” but someone who actually helps you grow in your understanding!

3. **Your desire to mature in your understanding makes you a delight, a blessing, to all those who teach you, both at school and at church.** It will shock you to find out to what lengths a teacher will go to help someone who actually wants to learn!
Proverbs 3:13 “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.”

2. Happiness

Maturity brings happiness. Show me an immature teenager and I will show you a teenager that is miserable --- and makes everyone around miserable also!

Look at the teens in your school. Listen to them complain about everything. To them, nothing is right! They are in rebellion against everything and every person --- and all the while the problem is their own immaturity! The truth of the matter is they are in rebellion against themselves and don’t even know it!

A teenager who refuses to try and understand why right IS right is self-centered and self-serving. These two characteristics always bring personal unhappiness.

Proverbs 6:32 “But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroys his own soul.”

Proverbs 7:4-5 “Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman: 5 That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flatters with her words.”

3. Purity Protection

One of the greatest pit-falls Satan throws at the youth of our day is illicit sex.

Your young body is growing at a rapid rate. On one hand, you are still a teen but your body is that of an adult with adult desires and passions.

Your body is simply wanting to do what it was designed by God to do but sex outside of marriage spoils God’s intent; takes what rightfully belongs to your future mate; taints your soul; robs you of your innocence and leaves scars that can never be mended.

There is a time for sex and it will be beautiful and have God’s full approval but it IS NOT when you are a teen and with whomever is
available, and believe you me, Satan will see that someone is always available!

A teenager who begins to study the "whys" of the Bible will take to heart the Biblical warnings and instruction concerning relationships with the opposite sex. They ARE NOT there to keep you from having fun but rather to protect you so that you CAN have fun and enjoy life to its fullest.

Wisdom and understanding will cause you to cease fighting against the dating rules and curfews that your parents, IN GODLY WISDOM, have established for your protection.

Why? Because wisdom and understanding will let you know why these rules and curfews are needed. Believe it or not, your parents HAVE BEEN where you are now!

_Proverbs 10:13_ “In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding.”

4. Eliminates The Need For Punishment

When we mention punishment we are not just talking about parental guidance, correction and discipline. We are talking about a growing up in understanding that many Christian adults simply refuse to do.

They want to do their own thing as they did in their teens. They do not want God telling them what to do.

It is this immature attitude that brings God’s chastisement upon His rebellious children --- as any good parent should.

Oh, the unnecessary heartache and trials this brings into our lives because we refuse to develop a Biblical, eternal perspective on life.

Not only does it bring hardship upon the adult who is rebellious but it affects the entire family of that adult. Our sins DO affect others!

Because God loves us, He WILL punish us when we act childish. God knows how to push the right buttons!
Proverbs 16:22 “Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.”

5. A Passion For Life

Understanding brings into our life a passion (a wellspring) for life that we could never know otherwise.

Note the many political figures, movie stars and entertainers, major league sports figures and corporate giants who at face value, seem to have it made.

And yet, their lives are wrecked by divorce, drug abuse, alcoholism and every problem known to man!

They are like the immature teen we talked about earlier. They are self-centered and self-serving. It is because they have no understanding of what life is all about therefore they have no passion for life.

Understanding the “whys” of the Christian life provides the passion for service. It transforms duty into delight! It directs service from the heart instead of just the mind!

The effort to think like Christ is rewarded!

When we share His thoughts, we also experience His passion.

Understanding is the reason some Christians are filled with genuine joy. It is the emotion of service. It is not shallow but heart-felt. It is the icing on the cake of knowledge and understanding.

Know this: Just the opposite occurs with a lack of Biblical understanding.

Mark 12:32-33 “And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but He:

And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love His neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”
6. Deepens Our Ability To Love God

Taking the time to think through the teachings of the Bible will deepen your appreciation and love for all that God has done and is doing. You cannot love the Lord “with all the understanding” if you remain immature in your understanding.

Maturity loves at a higher level than immaturity. Just look around at the people you know. Those who really have understanding love the Lord with all their heart, mind and soul.

On the other hand, hypocrisy can be spotted a mile away!

As you develop your understanding, you will increase in maturity. This will increase your capacity to love the Lord and serving Him will be a delight and not a drudgery!
CHAPTER 11 QUESTIONS

1. Name the six benefits of developing a Biblical (Mature) understanding.

1. _____________________________________________________
2. _____________________________________________________
3. _____________________________________________________
4. _____________________________________________________
5. _____________________________________________________
6. _____________________________________________________

2. In your own words, describe an excellent spirit.

Answer: ___________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________

3. What brings true happiness?

   A. ___ Maturity
   B. ___ Not having nagging parents
   C. ___ When the sermon is over

4. Does the Bible teach that sex is wrong or does it teach that true love waits until God provides us a suitable mate in marriage? (See Hebrews 13:4)

   A. ___ Sex outside marriage is wrong
   B. ___ Sex in marriage is honorable
C. ___ True love waits
D. ___ All the above

5. Are dating rules and curfews set to keep us from having fun or to protect us until we develop understanding?

Answer: __________________________________________________

6. Is punishment bad or is it designed to make us grow?

Answer: __________________________________________________

7. Does God, like a loving parent, correct His children?

Answer: __________________________________________________

8. As you look around at the people you know, is it easy to spot those who have understanding and those who are "playing church?"

Answer: __________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

9. Are hypocrites easy to spot?

Answer: __________________________________________________

10. What truly deepens our love for God?

Answer: __________________________________________________
CHAPTER TWELVE

“Discipline Your Thinking!”

In this chapter we want to think of ways to bring our thinking in line with the Word of God on all matters.

God cares for every aspect of our lives; from what we wear to the profession we allow Him to choose for us.

The third aspect of maturity involves our thinking. The public speaking guru, the late Zig Ziegler said, "Get your stinking thinking fixed and everything else will fall in place."

Mr. Ziegler would laugh as he told how corporate giants would pay him millions each year to come and tell their employees what they could get every Sunday at church FOR FREE! Everything he told them are Biblical principles that he simply broke down into the language of the corporate world.

Paul wrote, "When I was a child --- I thought as a child."

However, when he became a man he "put away" childless, immature thinking.

God IS NOT saying that children should not be children, but rather that adults SHOULD NOT be children!

QUESTION: DOES THE BIBLE GIVE US INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE MATURITY PROCESS OF OUR THINKING?

Titus 2:6 “Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.”

In Paul’s instructions to Titus, he urges him to exhort (encourage) the young men to think properly; to be mature in their thinking.

A mature mind is a sober mind. A sober mind in the Bible means a "disciplined mind."

Paul went from a child whose mind is undisciplined to a man whose mind is disciplined.
2nd Corinthians 10:5 “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;”

God demands that we control our thought life and bring it into subjection to His Word.

A vital part of maturity is correcting and disciplining our thinking by bringing every evil thought to an end and casting it out of our imagination.

We have to make our body and our mind obey. This is where discipline comes into play in our lives.

Our minds and our bodies are of the world and will want to dwell on things of a base nature.

I must admit as a teen this IS NOT an easy thing to do but it CAN be done and MUST be done if we are to be pleasing to God!

It is even harder for an adult who has flittered away his time of maturity. Growing up from adulthood is almost impossible because of the hold the world has over an adult who never grew up.

Think with me for a minute: What kind of thoughts should not be allowed in a mature, disciplined mind?

Psalm 119:113 “I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love.”

What does the word translated "vain" mean?

The word "vain" means desolate or empty. It is unproductive thinking.

King David is an excellent example to explain the outcome of vain thinking! This man after God’s own heart said that he hated empty thoughts.

He became furious at himself if he caught himself "daydreaming," or letting his mind become idle!

David said, "Our minds should be on the laws of God."
Someone has said that an “empty mind is the devil’s playground” and how true this is!

You can be sure that if we do not fill our mind with the word of God, Satan will fill it with something else!

A mark of maturity is the ability to concentrate fully on a project until it is complete.

The ability to stay focused is a valuable commodity in the workplace and is one of the characteristics of a productive employee.

**NOTE:** Never seek employment to have a job but rather to learn the business.

This one thing will put you miles ahead of the competition and insure your success!

While in school it is discipline more than intellect that is the difference in receiving an “A” or getting a “B.”

**Proverbs 21:5** “The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want.”

“Diligent thinking” is opposite to “daydreaming.”

Diligent people use their minds to create and produce; they are always planning, evaluating and meditating.

A “working mind” is not a “wondering mind.”

Each evening we should sit down and think the next day through; what needs my priority first --- and write it down!

Continue writing down each thing that needs to be done and then go back and prioritize them.

This process alone helps the planner to accomplish IN ONE DAY what it will take someone else ALL WEEK to do!

Again, it is a matter of being disciplined verses being undisciplined.
The Humble Mind Verses The Proud Mind

As you study the Bible, you will find that God hates the sin of “pride.”

**Proverbs 6:16-19** (BDT) “There are six things the Lord hates; no, seven things He detests:

1. Arrogant, prideful eyes,
2. A lying tongue,
3. Hands that kill innocent people,
4. A mind devising wicked plans,
5. Feet that are quick to do wrong,
6. A dishonest witness spitting out lies,
7. And a person who spreads conflict among believers.”

Note please, that each of these sins that God hates has PRIDE motivating it!

One of the weaknesses of youth IS PRIDE. Anytime we think of ourselves more highly than we ought, we should immediately confess this sin to God, personally rebuke ourselves, and banish such thinking from our minds.

**Romans 12:3** “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

Sober or disciplined thinking refuses to allow men or women to think more highly of themselves than they ought.

Instead, we ought to always see ourselves as children of God --- **HE IS THE ADULT --- not us!**

We need to see ourselves as God sees us; joint heirs of Christ, overcomers, the beloved of God --- **BECAUSE WE ARE ALL THESE!**

But we must also remember that these things were given us by God. The moment we take credit for what we are or what we have accomplished --- **WE STEP OVER INTO THE SIN OF PRIDE!**

The proud teenager says, “**I can do all things.**” The humble teenager says, I can do all things **THROUGH CHRIST** which strengtheneth me.”
Another weakness of being a teen is living in an adult body, with all its desires and passions --- \textit{WITHOUT THE EXPERIENCE OR KNOWLEDGE} to deal with these feelings.

This is why parents and teachers \textit{"clamp down"} on you! It \textbf{IS NOT} to keep you from \textit{"having fun"} but rather to protect you until your intellect; your better judgment can take over so that you \textbf{CAN} have fun.

The teen years are \textbf{years of preparation, NOT YEARS TO DO YOUR OWN THING!} Believe you me, there will be plenty of time for doing your own thing, and when that time comes, you will be surprised at how knowledgeable your parents and teachers actually were!

I know it is hard to imagine, but each of them once sat where you are sitting. They too were teens in an adult body, and they \textbf{DO} know best!

\textbf{Colossians 3:12} “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;”

\textit{(NLT)} “Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”

\textbf{Philippians 2:3-8} (NLT) “Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself.\footnote{Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing.}
\footnote{Your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had.}
\footnote{Though He was God, He did not demand and cling to His rights as God.}
\footnote{He made Himself nothing; He took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form.}
\footnote{And in human form He obediently humbled Himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross.”}

\textbf{Evil Thinking Verses A Pure Mind}

The devil will try to convince you that it is impossible to have a pure mind in this modern world.

This is a lie! How do I know?
John 8:44 “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

Satan CANNOT tell the truth! If he opens his mouth --- OUT COMES A LIE!

KEY: Remember this; the commands of God are always accompanied by the grace of God!

He will never give us a job to do without bestowing upon us the power to perform that job.

Wicked thoughts CAN be brought under control and dismissed from our minds --- ONCE WE DISCIPLINE OUR MINDS TO OPERATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WORD OF GOD!

Consider these Bible principals:

1. God knows our thoughts.

Psalm 139:1-2 “O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. [2] Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.”

2. Wicked thoughts are an abomination unto the Lord.

Proverbs 15:26 “The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.”

(NLT) “The Lord despises the thoughts of the wicked, but he delights in pure words.”

3. Wicked thoughts grieve the heart of the Lord.

Genesis 6:5-6 “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
[6] And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.”

While the above Scriptures are true, that alone will not give you victory over wicked thoughts, but they should give you the desire to have the victory!

While the thought is repulsive, most people DO NOT care what God thinks. You can tell this is so by the way they live their lives! YOU DO NOT EVEN HAVE TO ASK!

Well, we ought to care as one day we will each stand before Him in judgment!

The secret to putting this lesson into practice is to learn the Scriptural practice of meditation.

The Power Of Bible Meditation

We are not to let evil overcome us but rather we are to overcome evil!

Romans 12:21 “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Every teenager (and adult) should have Psalm 1 committed to memory. Note the first three verses:

Psalm 1:1-3 “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. [2] But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. [3] 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.”

Do these verses describe your live or the lives of most of the people you know? For most, the answer is NO!

Most believers are like a tree planted in the desert --- PRODUCING LITTLE OR NO FRUIT --- As a matter of fact, they don’t even make a good shade!
They are spiritually withered --- no spiritual energy, no passion, no victory.

Why is this true? **NO MEDITATION!**

The Bible commands us to meditate upon three subjects:

1. **The Person of God.**

   **Psalm 104:33-34** “I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. [34] My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.”

2. **The Works of God.**

   **Psalm 77:11-12** “I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. [12] I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.”

3. **The Word of God.**

   **Psalm 119:97** “O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.”

We must be disciplined to **think upon these things** when wicked thoughts enter our minds. Good is stronger than evil!

We can overcome evil with good, so when Satan comes calling --- **AND HE WILL COME CALLING** --- bring to your mind the thoughts about the **person** of God, the **works** of God and the **Word** of God. Think on these things!

I would suggest you start your discipline by writing down **all the different titles** God gives Himself. Each title tells us a little more about Him! This **IS** the person of God.

Why is He known by these titles? Think! Meditate!

Write down a list of the **mighty works** of God --- Bible stories that tell of His great miracles:
• the dividing of the Red Sea;
• manna from heaven;
• turning water into wine;
• blind men receiving their sight;
• the lame made to walk;
• the raising of Lazarus and
• the resurrection of Christ are but a few!

These are the works of God! Think about what He has done in your own life!

Think! Meditate!

Finally, we are commanded to meditate on the Word of God.

Start out by writing a verse of Scripture on a 3 by 5 card and carrying it with you. Your goal is to commit that verse to memory that day!

One verse each day would be 365 verses each year! Wow! What power and knowledge IN JUST ONE YEAR!

That one verse each day would protect you from the evil one flooding your mind with the filth of the world!

Any young person who makes the decision to do this CAN expect the battle of his or her life!

Romans 7:21 “I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.”

Your decision to read this book and study each chapter WILL NOT go un-noticed by Satan!

How many sessions has he already caused you to miss? He may have used your parents, your school, your friends, your job --- ANY NUMBER OF THINGS --- but mark my word, IT WAS YOUR ENEMY that caused you to miss!

Just think of all those who should have been here that HAS NOT attended a single session! Wow! Satan HAS BEEN busy, hasn’t he?

I have gone through the same at the hands of Satan as has every person who sets their mind to follow God.
I DID obtain victory and you can also by using the life of Christ as an example.

From an undisciplined teen to a disciplined disciple of the Lord took me five steps, adjustments if you please, to accomplish. Oh, Satan is not through with me yet, but now I am ready for his onslaughts!

Here are those 5 adjustments:

1. I made the decision to make CHRISTLIKENESS the ultimate goal of my life. I simply refuse to accept anything less!

2. I set my alarm clock an hour earlier each morning to study the Bible and pray.

3. I left home each morning with a Scripture and a song. I wrote down the Scripture on a 3 by 5 card and memorized it and meditated upon it during the day. The song came from the hymnbook and I would sing it throughout the day. I used these two things to occupy my mind and do battle with the devil over my thought life.

4. I turned off the radio in my car. This kept me from listening to the wrong kind of music. I made my own music!

5. I had to dissolve several relationships. When I was around certain people, it seemed almost impossible to do what was right. I did not blame them but for me to do right, these relationships had to be dissolved.

Of these five decisions, the single most important was the decision to carry around a portion of God’s Word. This was my defense against the constant attacks of the devil on my mind.

You DO NOT have to live in defeat! Saturate your mind with the Scriptures! Plant your mind by the waters of life. Discipline yourself to meditate on the Word of God.

During His teenage years, Jesus increased in stature. He matured.

In order to become like Jesus, put away childish things. Develop excellent speech. Deepen your Bible understanding. Discipline your thinking.
CHAPTER TWELVE STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are we supposed to do when we leave childhood? (See 1st Corinthians 13:11)

Answer: __________________________________________________________

2. A mature mind is a sober mind.

_____ True

_____ False

3. A sober mind according to the Bible is a “disciplined” mind.

_____ True

_____ False

4. What does the word translated “vain” mean?

A. A blood vessel in your body.

B. Desolate or empty.

C. None of the above.

5. If you do not fill your mind with the things of God, who will fill it with the things of the world?

A. Satan

B. Demons

C. All the above

6. What is the difference in getting an “A” or “B” in school?
7. What one thing will help you accomplish **IN ONE DAY** what it will take someone else a whole week to accomplish?

   A. Being smart enough to get someone else to help you.
   
   B. Discipline.

8. According to Proverbs 6:16-19, what are the seven (7) things God hates?

   1. ________________________________
   2. ________________________________
   3. ________________________________
   4. ________________________________
   5. ________________________________
   6. ________________________________
   7. ________________________________

8. Basically, what is the motivation behind each of the above sins?

   ____ Pride
   ____ Love of money
   ____ Low self-esteem

9. In our relationship with God, who is the Adult and who is the child?

   ____ God is the Adult
10. The teenage years are for preparation and not the time for us to do our own thing.

_____ True

_____ False

11. How can you know that the devil is lying when he whispers in your ear? (See John 8:44)

Answer: __________________________________________________
______________________________

12. On page 108, the author lists three (3) Bible principals to help us discipline our minds. What are they?

Principal number one: __________________________________________________
______________________________

Principal number two: __________________________________________________
______________________________

Principal number three: _________________________________________________
______________________________

13. The Bible commands us to meditate upon three (3) subjects. What are they?

Subject number one: ___________________________________________________

Subject number two: ___________________________________________________

Subject number three: _________________________________________________
14. In your own words, write down the excellent advice the author gives for re-programming your mind with the Word of God.

Answer:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

15. The author made five (5) adjustments that literally changed his life. What are those five adjustments?

1. _______________________________________________________

2. _______________________________________________________

3. _______________________________________________________

4. _______________________________________________________

5. _______________________________________________________

16. In order to be like Jesus, we must put away childish things.

_____ True

_____ False

17. Jesus developed excellent speech, Deepened His Bible understanding and disciplined His thinking. Make these your goals and it will revolutionize your life!
CHAPTER THIRTEEN

“The Teenage Christ Increased
In Favor With God!”

Luke 2:52 “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature,
and in favor with God and man.”

So far, we have seen the teenage Christ develop in wisdom and stature. In this chapter we start looking at the favor He enjoyed with the Father.

Why was it necessary? After all, He WAS God!

He was “preexistent” with the Father and equal with the Father! As a matter of fact, Jesus was the person of the Godhead that created everything!

Everything was created BY Him and FOR Him:

Colossians 1:16-17 “For by Him were all things created,
that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him:
17 And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.”

Not only did He create everything but everything in creation is held in store by Him!

So why would Jesus need to gain favor with God? Was He not already in favor with The Father?

While on this earth, Jesus WAS a man. He came as all infants come, through the natural birth. He was “virgin born,” meaning that He had no earthly father but He was as much flesh as each of us!

He was faced with the trials of childhood, the temptations of teens and the demands of adulthood --- JUST LIKE EVERY OTHER HUMAN BEING!
He had to grow, to learn, to increase --- just as required of us!

He did so without ever sinning. Every temptation we all face, Jesus faced.

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

As we have said many times, all “sin” will fall in one of these three (3) categories:

___ The lust of the flesh
___ The lust of the eye, and
___ The pride of life.

This is all the world has to offer. There is nothing else!

Jesus was tempted “in all points” yet without sin!

Hebrews 4:15 “For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

By the decisions He made throughout life, He increased in favor with God, as we all should.

Jesus was “sinless” not because of who He was but rather by what He did!

Peter, in his sermon to the house of Cornelius, makes this discovery about God:

Acts 10:34-35 “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said,
Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:
35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

God DOES NOT play favorites. He doesn’t decide that He likes some people more than He does others. He wants everyone to be saved.
God **DOES** show favor to some and withholds His favor from others but it **IS NOT** because of *who they are* but rather by *what they do!*

The Bible makes plain the attitudes and actions that causes mankind to gain favor with God!

However, it is all up to each of us as individuals.

**HOW TO GAIN FAVOR WITH GOD**

1. **Righteousness secures the favor of God:**

   **Psalm 5:12** “For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield.”

   **Proverbs 14:9** “Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favor.”

Unlike man’s favor, the favor of God is not based on appearance, education or financial standing.

God is moved by our righteousness!

God is first an inspector of the heart and then our actions:

1st **Samuel 16:7** “But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”

The righteousness that secures God’s favor is twofold: **Positional righteousness** and **practical righteousness.**

Positional righteousness is how each of us stands before God in relation to His Son. **This is salvation.**

As God looks upon your heart, does He see that you have received the gift of eternal life made possible through His Son’s death? Have you, by faith, chosen to believe and accept the fact that Jesus died on the cross for your sins, was buried for you and three days later arose from the dead --- **AGAIN FOR YOU?**
The question is “Are you born again?”

If so, positionally you stand before God made righteous by the blood of Christ.

This is so important that we know that we know we are saved. If you are not saved or have any doubts, then you need to stop what you are doing and settle IMMEDIATELY and forever this issue of being saved.

Pray this prayer with me:

“Dear Lord, I know that I am a sinner and that the punishment for sin is eternal death. Thank you for sending Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. I believe that Jesus is your Son and therefore I confess Him over all my sins and ask that you save me right now. I do this moment choose to trust in Jesus as my personal savior and my only hope for salvation. Thank you for keeping your Word and saving me. Amen.”

Romans 10:9, 13 “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

13 “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

After God looks at our positional righteousness, He then looks at our practical righteousness.

Practical righteousness is our everyday actions and thoughts. This is our works.

God shows favor to those who receive Christ and live for Him on a daily basis.

Remember, “Right” is defined by God’s Word and not our opinions!

Judges 17:6 “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”
Today, we are like Israel of old. We decide for ourselves what is right and what is wrong.

This type of living **DOES NOT** bring God’s favor!

James, the half-brother of Jesus, has much to say about how to live the Christian life! Paul taught about **BECOMING** a Christian and James taught about **BEING** a Christian!

**James 2:14-20** “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,
16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?
17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.
18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.
19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.
20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?”

As I have said many times, "**The word CHRISTIAN is not a label to wear, but rather a life to live.**"

**2. The pursuit of wisdom brings God’s favor.**

Since we have already covered this, we do not want to spend a lot of time here but simply to say that any person who seeks the wisdom of God will secure the favor of God.

This is covered in depth in chapter one and you might want to review our study there to refresh your memory concerning obtaining wisdom.

Wisdom is "**the principle thing**” for a young person to obtain.

Doing things that are right is practical righteousness, thusly, the performing of good works **secures the favor of God.**
3. Finding a Godly mate will secure the favor of God.

The second most important decision you will ever make; just behind getting saved --- IS FINDING A GODLY MATE!

Proverbs 18:22 “Whoso findeth a Godly wife (or husband) findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord.”

The word translated “findeth” means to search diligently. Our goal in life IS NOT to get married but rather to find the correct mate that God intended --- and this might not be the will of God for you.

Obviously, it was not God’s will for Jesus to marry. Securing our redemption was His mission and passion in life. His life was complete --- WITHOUT A MATE, that is, in this life!

Christ WILL have a bride one day soon. His bride is the church of the Living God! His bride will be the bride God has chosen for Him.

Occasionally, like Jesus, a young person will discover --- over a period of time --- that it IS NOT the will of God for them to marry. Should this happen, God will give you the gift of being celibate.

Like Paul, God will give this person a ministry so special, so unique and important that a mate would pull them down and turn them away from the calling of God.

1st Corinthians 7:1-9 (NIV) “Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to marry.
2 But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.
3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.
4 The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.
5 Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
6 I say this as a concession, not as a command.
7 I wish that all men were as I am. (Paul was either a widower or divorced. His past life demanded that he be married. See also
verse 8) But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.
8 Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am.
9 But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.”

Note also verses 33-36:

“But the married man is concerned about earthly things, that is, about how he can please his wife.
34 His attention is divided. An unmarried woman or a virgin is concerned about the Lord's things so that she may be holy in body and in spirit. But the married woman is concerned about earthly things, that is, about how she can please her husband.
35 I'm saying this for your benefit, not to restrict you. I'm showing you how to live a noble life of devotion to the Lord without being distracted by other things.
36 No father would want to do the wrong thing when his virgin daughter is old enough to get married. If she wants to get married, he isn't sinning by letting her get married.”

As you can see from these verses, our goal is to follow Jesus and the wrong mate simply would keep us from being all that we could be.

Again, our goal in life IS NOT to find a mate, but to serve God. If we CAN find a mate that is Godly and will help us, then marriage is certainly the thing to do.

The key, should we decide to marry, is to seek out diligently a Godly mate, thus securing the favor of God.

Anything less will be sure "Hell on earth.”

Should God intend that you marry, He will bring the mate He has for you across your path.

**Genesis 2:22** “And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.”

Note please that God created a mate for Adam and BROUGHT HER TO HIM!
Be patient and wait for God to bring you His perfect mate!

**4. Do a word study on these two words: Blessed and Cursed to find favor with God.**

You will find that being in God’s favor is to be blessed and to be out of God’s favor brings a curse. **POWERFUL STUFF!** Don’t let Satan con you out of this assignment!

**5. Study the lives of Bible heroes who found favor with God.**

The list is almost endless as to the many heroes who found favor with God. I have listed 5 for you but there are many, many more! If you have access to a Bible study program on your computer, type in the word "favor" and you will be blown away by the list!

Also, if you have a Bible Concordance, you can simply look at all the verses containing the word "favor."

Here is my **"startup"** list:

1. Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.
2. David found favor before God.
3. Samuel found favor with God and man.
4. Mary, the mother of Jesus, found favor with God.
5. And of course Jesus found favor with God and man.

As you study, note **HOW** these heroes found favor and put the same things to work in your life!

The main thing to note is that **OTHER HUMAN BEINGS** found favor with God!

The ultimate goal of the Christian life is to be like Jesus. When we mimic Him in attitude and action, we secure the favor of God.
CHAPTER THIRTEEN QUESTIONS

1. Tell in your own words why Jesus, the God man from Glory, would need to increase in favor with God.

Answer:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. What are the three categories of sin (See 1st John 2:16)?

___ The ________ of the flesh
___ The lust of the _______
___ The _________ of life

3. Does God play favorites?

___ Yes
___ No
___ On Christmas

4. God DOES show favor to some and withholds favor from others. Which person below would receive the favor of God?

___ The Southern Baptist
___ The most handsome man
___ The most beautiful girl
___ The person who does God's will

5. According to the author, what is Positional Righteousness?

Answer: ___________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

6. According to the author, what is Practical Righteousness?
7. Have you prayed the prayer to receive Christ as your Savior? If you have not, stop and do it now as personal salvation is your only hope.


9. God shows favor to those who receive Christ as their personal savior and live for Him on a daily basis.

___ True
___ False

10. Does the pursuit of wisdom bring God’s favor?

___ Yes
___ No

11. Does finding a Godly mate bring God’s favor?

___ Yes
___ No

12. Is it God’s will that everyone marry?

___ Yes
___ Only if God provides a Godly mate

13. Where is the best place to find a Godly mate?

___ Football game
___ On the inter-net
___ In Bars and Night Clubs
At Church

14. Do a word study on these two words: Blessed and Cursed to find favor with God.

15. Study the lives of Bible heroes who found favor with God.

The list is almost endless as to heroes who found favor with God. I have listed 5 for you but there are many, many more! If you have access to a Bible study program on your computer, type in the word “favor” and you will be blown away by the list!

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Here is my “startup” list:

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4. Mary, the mother of Jesus, found favor with God.
5. And of course Jesus found favor with God and man.

As you study, note HOW these heroes found favor and put the same things to work in your life!

16. The ultimate goal of the Christian life is to be like Jesus. When we mimic Him in attitude and action, we secure the favor of God.

___ True
___ False
In the last few chapters, we have seen how Jesus increased in favor with God. In this chapter, we will explore what it takes to increase in favor with man.

*Luke 2:52* “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

As a teenager, Jesus grew in favor with man. He was wise enough to gain the respect of the adults of His village.

It is interesting to note that the word “favor” in this verse comes from a Greek word that means “to cheer.”

We think of the word and its usage today meaning that people cheer you on as at a football game, but in reality, it is just the opposite!

Jesus brought “cheer” to those around Him. His attitude and outlook refreshed them. His greetings encouraged them. His character and wisdom challenged them to be the very best.

Somehow, over the years, teens have been given the impression that adults did not understand; that they were against them; that they were trying to keep them from having any fun.

This position ignores the fact that adults were once teens themselves and are charged by Father God with the responsibility of raising teens into proper young men and young women.

We DO remember the temptations we faced as teens!

Today, it seems as if teenagers believe that in order to have favor with God, you have to “fall out” of favor with man!

You have heard us say “Don’t do things the way the world does them” and somehow this has been translated into “Don’t listen to adults!”

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This is easy to see how this has happened by the way most adults live their lives! At times, we are very poor examples!

What we mean to say is “Don’t give up your Spiritual conduct and convictions and do things the way the world does them.”

However, it IS NOT our Spiritual conduct and convictions that cause us to lose favor with man.

More often than not, it is our disposition that turns people off and NOT OUR POSITION.

IMPORTANT: A Christian teenager CAN gain the respect of adults; the admiration of their peers --- AND STILL GROW IN FAVOR WITH GOD!

Forget the past:

I. IT DOES MATTER WHAT ADULTS THINK OF YOU!

A. Let me give you some homework! Observe the way teens act around adults for a few weeks and you will find --- as a whole --- most teens today seem to care little about what adults think of them.

B. Most teens are so caught up in trying to impress their peers, who, by the way, care little about what adults think, that it is no wonder the disdain teens have with adults!

How can you impress someone who has little respect for adults --- IF YOU HAVE RESPECT FOR ADULTS?

Thus the dilemma of teens today!

This IS NOT how Christ lived. Men and women respected Him because He respected them! Adults were impressed by Jesus. He “cheered them up!”

C. Why was this important, that adults respected Jesus? Why is it important today that you live in a way to gain the respect of adults?
1. Your Parents are adults.

There is not one single Scripture in the Bible that instructs you to obey your peers. They are simply teens like you!

So what if they have a larger home, drive a better car, have more money and date the most handsome boy or the most beautiful girl in school?

Look around you! Every adult you see once stood where you stand today! We have not always been fat and bald!

Every adult male and female once had a great physique --- OR WANTED ONE!

I remember an old boy from my high school that was as dumb as dirt --- AND JUST AS UGLY!

His handsome brother could sing, act, play the piano and made straight “A’s.”

Today the “dumb and ugly” brother owns most of the river bottom farmland around Morrilton! He doesn’t know how much money he has, while his brother is a school teacher --- drawing a school teacher’s salary!

Now, please understand that I AM NOT knocking teaching school! I just want you to know that the people you are trying to impress today will one day be like every other adult --- with teens of their own --- JUST LIKE YOUR PARENTS!

So why not cut through all the silliness of youth and honor your parents as the Bible instructs!

Watch this:

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

___ Whom does the Bible say teens are to obey? THEIR PARENTS!
___ Why are we to obey our parents? **IT IS RIGHT!**

___ Whom are we to honor? **OUR PARENTS!**

___ What is the promise God makes to the parent honoring teen? **THAT THEY MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH!**

**KEY POINT:** We can **obey** our parents and still not **honor** them! We are instructed by God to **DO BOTH!**

The Bible **DOES NOT** promise you prosperity, peace and a long life if you please your peers!

The most dangerous time in the life of the teen is when they begin to value the **opinion of their peers** more than the **opinion of their parents!**

**MARK IT DOWN IN BIG LETTERS --- TROUBLE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!**

2. **Your pastor is an adult.**

The local pastor has been “**set in the church**” by God and is to be the watchman on the wall as he has been charged by God to watch for your soul.

As with your parents above, you have been commanded by God to “**remember him**” when trouble comes calling and to “**follow his faith**” when you make decisions in life.

Watch this:

**Hebrews 13: 7,17** “Remember them which have the rule (authority) over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

[17] “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”
You are instructed to obey his biblical instruction, to submit to his leadership as he guides your local church.

Again, the teenager is in grave spiritual danger when they begin to exalt the council of their peers above the council or their pastor.

You are not required to like your pastor, but remember; he IS NOT there to get people to like him, but rather to set the example by preaching the Word and watching for the congregation!

It is THE OFFICE OF PASTOR that you are to respect. Do you remember that I said the pastor is “set” in the church?

1st Corinthians 12:28 “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers (pastors, evangelists), after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.”

A church should never call a pastor unless they have the full assurance that it is God’s will for that person to be the pastor.

Once this is determined, God can then lead the church the way He wants the church to go THROUGH the man He has “set” in that local congregation.

The only criteria for choosing a pastor is, “Is this the person God wants?”

Age, education, experience or popularity should not be a consideration because to do so ties the hands of God and keeps Him from placing in the church the person He wants!

3. Your teachers are adults.

Satan has worked very hard to keep alive the lies of the 60’s: “Never trust anyone over the age of thirty!”

Yet, in the book of Titus, God instructs the younger women to learn from the older women and the young men to learn from the previous generation!

Watch this:
Titus 2:1-8  “But as for you, promote the kind of living that reflects right teaching.
[2] Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have strong faith and be filled with love and patience.
[3] Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that is appropriate for someone serving the Lord. They must not go around speaking evil of others and must not be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good.
[4] These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children,
[5] to live wisely and be pure, to rule their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then they will not bring shame on the word of God.
[6] In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely in all they do.
[7] And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good deeds of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching.
[8] Let your teaching be so correct that it can’t be criticized. Then those who want to argue will be ashamed because they won’t have anything bad to say about us.”

Just as you show respect to your teachers in church, the same respect is due your teachers in school and then later in college.

Your attitude towards adults will determine your attitude towards Godly instruction.

4. Your boss will be an adult.

It will not be your peers that will hire you! An adult’s impression of you will determine whether or not you receive a good job --- and whether you get to keep it!

Those who rebel against authority will be those who cannot find --- and keep a good job.

Adult employers are not impressed by immaturity and irresponsibility, nor will they tolerate it for very long!

To achieve Christ-likeness you will have to gain the respect of adults. This is our ultimate goal --- to be like Christ --- not like our peers.
The teenage Christ lived in such a way that He gained the respect and admiration of those over Him.

He did so without compromising the favor of God. You can too!

But before you can do this, you must discover what attributes gain the respect of adults.

II. CHARACTER TRAITS ADULTS RESPECT IN TEENAGERS

1st Timothy 4:12 “Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you teach, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.”

This verse is not written to correct the attitude of adults towards teenagers but rather to instruct the young on how to live before their fellowman!

Proverbs 20:11 “Even children are known by the way they act, whether their conduct is pure and right.”

Whether we like it or not, people watch us and form their opinions of us by the way we conduct our lives.

Adults base their assessment of you by examining six (6) areas of your life and it is in these areas that God requires that we be an example.

Let’s look at each of them:

1. Adults respect excellent speech. Words are simply a window to our soul. Words shows people our heart and reveal who we really are.

   A. I encourage you to review the “Ten laws of excellent speech.” If you have not already made copies of these laws on 3 X 5 cards, do it now, carry them with you and memorize them. Meditate upon them until they become as much a part of you as breathing.

   B. You do not have to think, “Do I need to breathe?” --- YOU JUST DO IT WITHOUT THINKING!
What you say **DOES** matter!

2. **Adults respect mature behavior.** Basic manners are important and make a big impression. Learn to exercise common courtesy. Greet people warmly and sincerely.

   A. Young men are to be gentlemen. Opening doors for the ladies, standing when older ladies enter the room and helping the elderly may not impress your peers, but it sure will make an impression on adults!

   B. Young ladies are to carry themselves with grace and dignity. Boys may think they want to date girls who are “loose,” but note who they take home to meet mom and dad and who they later marry! Don’t pattern your life after Hollywood but rather pattern your life according to **the Holy Word!** You **WILL BE** the winner in the long run.

3. **Adults respect selfless love.** God says in His Word that in the last day’s mankind will be lovers of themselves more than lovers of God. A selfish, self-centered teenager is contemptible in the eyes of adults and in the eyes of God.

   A. A young person who is openly affectionate towards their parents, grandparents, siblings and others is greatly admired.

   B. Also, your love for God, the things of God and the people of God should be obvious for all to see.

4. **Adults respect a good attitude.** One man said, **“Your attitude, not your aptitude, determines your altitude!”** Another said, **“Your attitude reveals your gratitude!”**

   A. Learn to be enthusiastic! Don’t grumble and complain when everything isn’t going your way. Start counting your blessings instead of pouting. Nothing screams **“immature, immature”** more than a negative attitude!

   B. Problems are just a part of life. They will come and they are not pleasant but by reacting to them in a Christ-like manner **WILL** throw water in Satan’s face and bring honor to God and respect from your elders.
5. Adults respect sincere faith. How refreshing to see young people serve God --- AND HOW SCRIPTURAL!

**Ecclesiastes 11:9-10** “You young people should enjoy yourselves while you're young. You should let your hearts make you happy when you're young. Follow wherever your heart leads you and whatever your eyes see. But realize that God will make you give an account for all these things when he judges everyone. 

[10] **Get rid of what troubles you or wears down your body, because childhood and youth are pointless, unless you use this time in preparation.**”

A. We often hear people say, “*It doesn’t matter.*” But many of your choices will be irreversible --- they will stay with you for a lifetime. What you do when you’re young **does** matter. Enjoy life now, but don’t do anything physically, morally, or spiritually that will prevent you from enjoying life when you are old.

B. What an encouragement to see young people at church on a regular basis, in Sunday School, at Youth Bible Study groups, loosing themselves in the Word of God!

C. When we are young is the time to start singing specials, playing the instruments, leading the choir, praying aloud in prayer meetings, etc. Habits are hard to break, either good or bad! You will gain the respect of your elders when you are willing to display your faith in God.

6. Adults respect wholesome purity.

**2nd Timothy 2:22-26** “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

[23] **But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife’s.**

[24] **And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,**

[25] **In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;**

[26] **And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”**
A. The Bible instructs youth to “Flee youthful lusts.” People watch how you interact with the opposite sex --- AND SO DOES GOD!

B. A young person lives in an adult body that is filled with the desires of the flesh. Even adults have a tremendous problem here and they have had years of experience --- AND STILL GOOF UP!

C. This is why God spends so much time in admonishing youth to start their training early in bringing their bodies and minds under the authority of the Word!

1. Gentlemen, train yourselves to avoid looking at inappropriate things; ads, television, movies, books, magazines, the internet, etc. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life will rear up and bite you unless you guard yourselves here.

2. Gentleman, when you look at a woman, look her in the eye and keep your hands off. Never speak suggestively. Beware of the world’s perverse brand of humor. Be an example of the believer in purity.

3. Young ladies, dress modestly and appropriately. Tight fitting clothes DO NOT make you look “sexy,” they make you look “cheap.” My granddaughter says, “If it’s not for sale, don’t advertise it.”

4. Ladies, do not flirt! Keep hands off. Be especially appropriate around married men. No one respects a girl with loose morals. Wicked men may give you attention, then use you, but they won’t marry you! Be an example of the believer in purity. TRUE LOVE WAITS!

5. The goal of every Christian teen should be to arrive at the marriage altar pure and chaste. If you do not, you lose a degree of credibility that you can never fully regain.

D. As Jesus increased in favor with God, He also increased in favor with man. He gained the respect of every adult in Nazareth by being an example of the believer --- in word, in behavior, in love, in attitude, in faith and in purity.
III. HOW TO RESPOND TO THE REACTION OF YOUR PEERS!

A. Let’s start this section with a prophecy concerning our Lord made many years before He was born:

**Isaiah 53:2-3** “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. [3] 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.”

B. Every young person who has ever decided to make Christ-likeness the goal of his or her life has had to deal with some degree of negative response from their peers. Why?

1. Immaturity has never embraced maturity. **IT’S WORK** and a youth who is immature is not disciplined and to cover up their sin, they may **“make sport”** of those who live for Christ.

2. Carnality has never rejoiced to see someone who is spiritual because it shows them for what they are!

3. Foolishness has always tried to ostracize those who make wisdom and understanding their principal goal. Men in darkness hate light!

I wish I could say that if you decide to put into practice the principles found in this book, you will be popular, but you won’t. Even within a Christian school or a good Bible-believing church, you will often be misunderstood. Congratulations and welcome to the club!

C. Jesus was often misunderstood, even despised. At times, sorrow was His closest friend and grief was a well-known acquaintance. Many in His own age group turned their backs on Him --- **EVEN HIS SIBLINGS!**

D. Once you accept this fact, you are on your way in knowing how to deal with your peers!

1. **You cannot live to please your peers.** Their reaction is an attempt to make you become like them, to control you as they do others. Seldom
will you be able to gain the favor of God and the respect of adults and also gain the favor of your own age group.

a. Just think of how you felt about "miss-goody-two-shoes" before you attended this Bible study!

b. You thought they felt they were better than you when all along they were just trying to please God!

You cannot control how they react to you but you can control your reaction to them.

2. Be friendly to everyone, but choose your friends wisely. Decide that you will walk with only those who are wise. One Godly friend is worth more than the entire carnal crowd put together!

3. Embrace solitude. It is the training ground of greatness!

a. Moses came from the backside of the desert to lead the children of Israel.

b. Gideon was alone threshing wheat when God called him to Judge Israel.

c. David had to be sent for so he could be anointed King of Israel; he was out alone on the hills of Judea tending the sheep!

d. Elijah and Elisha were both loners and oh, how God used them!

e. John the Baptist was raised in the wilderness, an odd-ball and an outcast!

You will never accomplish great things for God if you never have great thoughts --- and great thoughts come only to those who are not afraid to be different! They come to those who distance themselves from the mediocre and seek His guidance!

4. Forget popularity. Too often popularity and principles cannot coexist. Never forsake Bible principles for popularity as popularity soon fades but Bible principles follow you throughout life. Be satisfied with respect as this is what counts.
5. **Never defend yourself.** Defend your family, your friends, the weak, but never defend yourself. Live a pure life as this is the best defense!

6. **Don’t be a Pharisee.** This is reserved for your peers! Pride taints a person’s piety! Never allow yourself the luxury of comparing yourself with others. Only comparing yourself with Christ will keep you humble.

7. **Be yourself.** Most teens try to distance themselves from adults by being “different” in clothing, hair styles and talk. However, if they would just look around, they look like every other teen! Learn from others but be yourself!

8. **Avoid the cliques.** Befriend the friendless. Never count how many people are friends to you. Only be concerned with how many people you can befriend.

9. **Apologize when wrong.** Everyone respects someone who is quick to admit that they were wrong. Someone has said, “Crow is best eaten when fresh!”

10. **Overcome evil with good.** Never allow yourself to respond to evil with evil. Good is stronger! Do something nice for those who despitefully use you and pray for them.

11. **Smile.** It drives them nuts! 😊

Let me close this session with a **TRUE STORY.**

When your pastor was in high school, he and a youth named Bobby committed their lives to Christ.

Since both played football, they were around boys who used vulgarity and lived what they called “fun lives.” To say that our pastor and Bobby got “ribbed” for their dedication is to do an injustice to the word “ribbed.”

“Crucified” would be more like it!

However, later in life, one of the star players on their team developed cancer and died at age 29.

One day before he died, our pastor was visiting him in the hospital and he told our pastor, “**William, if I had my life to live over, I would**
want to be like you and Bobby. Thank you for setting the example!”

Your peers may “carry you high” about your stand for Christ but deep down, they know they are wrong and you are right.

Never let down your guard because, believe it or not, your peers want to be like you!
CHAPTER FOURTEEN QUESTIONS

1. When the Bible says Jesus grew in “FAVOR” what does the word favor mean?

Answer: ___________________________________________ 

2. Often our disposition turns people off, not our position.

___ True
___ False

3. Is it possible for a Christian teen to grow in favor with man and their peers and still grow in favor with God?

___ Yes
___ No

4. According to the author, on page 66, he says that teens today seem to care little about what adults think of them. How would you answer him?

Answer: ___________________________________________ 
___________________________________________________ 
___________________________________________________ 

5. Why is it important that teens gain the respect of adults? The author lists 4 reasons on page 66 and 67. Name them.

1. ________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________
3. ________________________________________________
4. ________________________________________________

6. You will never achieve Christ-likeness until you learn to gain the respect of adults

___ True
___ False
7. What is the true meaning of 1st Timothy 4:12 according to the author?

Answer: ____________________________________________
___________________________________________________
___________________________________________________
___________________________________________________

8. The author lists 6 ways to gain the respect of adults. List them:

   1. ________________________________________________
   2. ________________________________________________
   3. ________________________________________________
   4. ________________________________________________
   5. ________________________________________________
   6. ________________________________________________

9. Is it possible to flee youthful lusts?

   ___ Yes
   ___ No

10. What are some thing young males can do to avoid sexual sins?

    Answer: ____________________________________________
             ______________________________________________
             ______________________________________________
             ______________________________________________
             ______________________________________________
             ______________________________________________

11. What are some things young females can do to avoid sexual sins?

    Answer: ____________________________________________
             ______________________________________________
             ______________________________________________
             ______________________________________________
             ______________________________________________
12. What should be the goal of every young person when they arrive at the marriage altar?

Answer: To be ___________ and ______________

13. The author lists 10 ways to respond to the reaction of your peers. What are they?

1. ________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________
3. ________________________________________________
4. ________________________________________________
5. ________________________________________________
6. ________________________________________________
7. ________________________________________________
8. ________________________________________________
9. ________________________________________________
10. ________________________________________________

14. Can you expect opposition to your stand for Christ as a teenager from your peers?

___ Yes
___ No

15. Since people are watching every move we make, what kind of witness should we leave?

___ We should guard our lifestyle
___ We should witness both verbally and with our actions
___ We should follow Jesus at all costs
___ All The above
Luke 2:51 “And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.”

Believe it or not, except for your relationship with God, the second most important relationship you can have as a teenager is with your parents!

Satan has been working feverishly to destroy this relationship to the point that most teens shun the advice of their parents.

While adults assimilate facts with their faith, teens do not. They see truth as action, and to be honest, oftentimes what you see in us points you away from Christ rather than to Christ!

One day you will understand the difference in the two natures of man (flesh and spirit), but until then, love your parents in spite of their short comings!

Your parents may or may not be lovable. I had the very best in parents and yet, I thought they were “squares” and their sole purpose in life was to keep me from having a “good time!”

Little did I know! They were not trying to see that I did not have a good time but rather that I develop into a God-fearing adult --- SO I COULD HAVE THE VERY BEST OF EVERYTHING!

Matthew 6:33 “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

To not be in subjection to your parents, Godly or un-Godly, is to join Satan in his rebellion because God has designed an order for the home and once this order is broken, total chaos is the result!

That order is:
1. The Husband is to be the head of the home (Spiritual leader and provider). He is to give himself for his family.

2. The wife is to be in subjection to her husband (His helper).

3. Children are to obey their parents (Be obedient).

Any deviation from the above places that home outside the will of God and opens the home to satanic invasion.

Satan was the original rebel. As one of God’s angels, he refused to submit to the authority of God. He thought he knew what was best for him. No one was going to tell HIM what to do with HIS life!

He succumbed to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life --- which are the exact sins he tempts us with!

He tried the same on Jesus!

However, Jesus, who deserves to be exalted, humbled Himself to the will of His heavenly Father and was obedient (subject) to His earthly parents. He placed Himself under their authority because this is God’s design for the home.

If Jesus, who, by the way, IS God, submitted to His parents, what does this say to us? He certainly expects us to do no less!

The difference between Christ and Satan in the area of submission is simple: Completely opposite! Satan concluded that rebellion would lead to superiority. Christ, who is the wisdom of God, understood that superiority is a result of submission.

**THE SUPERIORITY OF SUBMISSION**

Your relationship towards your parents will affect every other relationship of your life. Submissive teenagers make superior adults. Teenagers who refuse to place themselves under the authority of their parents will struggle in every area of life as an adult.

1. They will rebel against authority in school.

2. They will rebel against authority of law enforcement.

3. They will rebel against authority on the job.
4. They will rebel against authority at church.

5. They will rebel against their mates in life.

It is a dangerous chain that cannot be broken because the will becomes "set" against any authority.

Let’s look at what submission will do:

1st Peter 2:13-14 “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;”
[14] Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.”

1. A submissive teenager becomes a superior citizen.

The home is the "training grounds” for society. It is the “boot camp” of life.

Communities all over America are trying to find a solution to the problem of juvenile crime.

Teenagers, trying to be adults, wind up committing suicide or shooting their peers, or both.

These problems are being created at home, by parents and teens who try and by-pass God’s laws.

Our public school systems daily play into the hands of Satan by handing out condoms and teaching there are no absolutes. Heaven help the person who tries to bring God into the picture!

Our prisons are full of men and women, who, when young, would not submit to the rules of their parents, and as a result, refused to submit to the laws of society.

Romans 13:1 “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”

2. A submissive teenager becomes a superior employee.
A great employee is one who cheerfully and completely follows the orders of those to whom they report. They put in an honest days’ work for their pay and finds favor in the eyes of their employer, resulting in promotions and into positions of authority.

A teenager who negates the claims of God on their lives by rebelling against parental authority, usually drift from job to job and cause their parents unnecessary financial struggles --- all because they never learned to obey!

No one wants to pay good money to an arrogant and disobedient employee.

1st Peter 2:18 “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward (Unfair).”

Not all parents and employers are bad nor are all good. However, this is a moot point and DOES NOT relieve the teen and employee from the clear cut command of God! Simply turn them over to the Lord and let Him deal with them! Believe me, He DOES know how!

Hebrews 13: 7 and 17 “Remember them which have the rule (authority) over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation (Examples of life).”

[17] “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”

3. A submissive teenager becomes a superior church member.

The Apostle John was very straightforward when dealing with trouble-makers in the church. In his letter to Gaius (Third John), he openly rebukes a man by the name of Diotrephes (Di-ot‘-re-phes), who loved the pre-eminence in the church and refused to submit to the Apostles leadership.

Diotrephes didn’t start insisting on having everything “his way” only after he became an adult! You can bet it started much earlier in his life!
A teenager who gives their parents grief will someday give their pastor and church the same as there is no such thing as “selective rebellion!”

If you will not submit to your parents, you will grow up to be a selfish, strong-willed church member who will cause problems in the church you attend.

**PASTORS’ NOTE:** I do not have to ask a teenager if they are obedient to their parents nor do they have to tell me. I can tell by the way they act. IT SHOWS!

My granddaughter told members of her Sunday School Class after seeing the provocative way some of the girls were dressing, “**If it’s NOT for sale, don’t advertise it!**”

Our lives are an “open book” to those around us, especially Christians as other people watch us like a hawk.

Our prayer should always be, “**Lord, help me to always be a good witness.**”

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

4. A submissive teenage boy becomes a good leader and a good husband.

Show me a teenage boy who is submissive to his parents, who honors his teachers and respects his elders and I will you a young person who will one day be a good husband and a good father!

It is during our teen years that traits are developed that will last for the rest of our lives.

Young men, one day God will place in your path the mate whom He has chosen for you. One day you will replace the leaders of your church. How you function in each of these areas will **ALREADY BE DETERMINED** by how you have lived your teenage years!

Christ loved the church so much that He gave His life. This is how much you are to love the mate God gives to you. It is what you are to do when you assume leadership of your home and the church you attend.
Great leaders come about because they learned to be great followers! It is only after we have followed that we can lead. We have earned the right and are qualified, according to the Scriptures.

Jesus, at age 33, was still taking care of His mother as He hung on the cross!

**Ephesians 5:22** “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”

5. A submissive teenage girl becomes a superior wife and mother.

I often tell the teenage boys, "*Gentlemen, if you become interested in a young lady, take a close look at her relationship with her parents. How does she treat her mom? Is she close to her father? Does she have a servant’s heart? Stubbornness and rebellion are the traits of a practicing witch, not a potential wife.*" (See 1st Samuel 15:23)

*Occasionally, I will hear about a boy who broke up with a young lady because he felt she wasn’t submissive to him. Well, knucklehead, she isn’t commanded to be submissive to you but to be submissive to her parents! I worry about any young man who tries to steal the position of authority from a young girl’s parents.*

Young ladies, if you are involved with a guy like this, **DROP HIM LIKE A HOT POTATO!** A wise young man will encourage his girlfriend or his fiancée to love, honor and obey her parents. If she is submissive and loving to them, she will one day make a superior wife and mother.

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

6. A submissive teenager becomes a superior Christian.
The believer’s major goal in life is to be like Jesus. This is the ultimate and is to be strived for at all cost.

The teenage boy or girl who is not submissive to their parents is simply a lousy Christian!

There is just no other way to put it.

It matters not how many other spiritual accomplishments they can claim, if they fail in submission, they have failed the ultimate goal.

Christ was God, and yet, He submitted Himself to the earthly authority of His parents. He expects no less from us.

Jesus was subject to BOTH authority figures in the home, to His natural mother and Joseph. It is worth pointing out that Joseph WAS NOT the biological father of Jesus.

Christ WAS the virgin-born Son of God. Yet Jesus respected Joseph’s position and submitted to his authority as head of the home.

Many young people today are being reared in homes where they have a stepfather or stepmother. Many believe they do not have to obey them, because they are not their "real parents."

Christ, by His personal example, has shown us that this is NO EXCUSE for rebellion. Jesus learned everything He could from Joseph, as we will see in the next chapter.

Take the test on this chapter and be ready to discuss your answers with the class when you meet again.
CHAPTER FIFTEEN TEST QUESTIONS

1. Except for your relationship with Jesus, the second most important relationship in your life should be with your:

   A. ___ Parents
   
   B. ___ Your Boyfriend / Girlfriend
   
   C. ___ Your Church

2. Adults assimilate facts through their ____________.

3. Teens assimilate truth through the _____________ of people.

4. Since this is true, then is it any wonder that adults and teens see things differently?

   1. ___ No
   
   2. ___ People are people

5. To not be in subjection to your parents is to join Satan in his rebellion.

   1. ___ True
   
   2. ___ False

6. God has designed a certain order for the home. Fill in the blanks from Ephesians, chapters 5 and 6.

   1. The husband is the __________ of the home.
   
   2. The wife is to ____________________ her husband.
   
   3. Children are to __________ their parents.
7. Satan and Jesus are compared in the area of submission. State their differences in your own words.

1. Satan: _____________________________
   _____________________________
   _____________________________

2. Jesus: _____________________________
   _____________________________
   _____________________________

8. List the 6 things the author points out that makes a teenager superior in later life:

1. A submissive teenager becomes a superior _________________.

2. A submissive teenager becomes a superior _________________.

3. A submissive teenager becomes a superior _________________.

4. A submissive teenage girl becomes a superior _________________.

5. A submissive teenage boy becomes a superior _________________.

6. A submissive teenager becomes a superior _________________.

9. The ultimate goal of the Christian is to become like _________________.

10. Does the fact that many teens live in homes with stepparents mean they do not have to submit to parental authority?

   1. ___ Yes, they must submit only to their "real" parent.

   2. ___ No, they must submit to both parents in their home.
CHAPTER SIXTEEN
The Teenage Christ Learned
A Wage-Earning Skill

We are familiar with the announcement of Mary’s virgin-born son, His birth in the stable and His appearance in the Temple at age twelve.

The next time we see Him is at His baptism in the river Jordan by His fore-runner, John the Baptist.

At least, this is the way it was BEFORE we began this study! Now we know so much about His teenage years we are shocked that we missed this part of His life completely --- AND IT HAS BEEN IN THE SCRIPTURES ALL THIS TIME!

What else have we missed about His life? Inquiring minds want to know!

Well, before Jesus was a preacher, He was a carpenter!

Matthew 13:55 “Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?”

Mark 6:3 “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Judas, and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at Him.”

Before He healed the sick or raised the dead, He carefully crafted carts for travel, cabinets to store things and homes in which to live. This is what carpenters do --- AND JESUS WAS NO DIFFERENT!

His biceps were knotted with the strength of hard labor. His body was honed and hard; His hands were calloused.

Instead of the "sissy" image we have been given, Jesus was a “man’s man” as evidenced by His throwing the money changers out of the Temple and the fierce beatings He took prior to the cross!
Most men **DID NOT** survive the scourging Jesus took, but the body of Jesus was so well conditioned, He prevailed to die on the cross for our sins.

How did Jesus develop into such a MAN’S man?

Carpenters in the days of Jesus were no different than the carpenters today, with the exception of modern tools.

He arose early with His father to beat the Middle East heat and worked by his side, learning the skills of a craftsman. These skills were mastered during His teenage years.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING THE WORK ETHIC**

Let me set the tone of this chapter by quoting a Youth Pastor I read about. He said:

“I’m tired of lazy teenagers --- I’ll tell you that from the beginning. I despise being in the presence of a lazy person! It causes me more genuine anger than you can possibly imagine. I think it also angers God.”

He continues:

I hear people say, “Let them have their teenage years. They are going to have to work their whole lives.” I have also seen the result of that thinking.

I have watched “a generation who were allowed to play instead of prepare, watch instead of work, and take instead of give.” The product of this mismanaged and unscriptural social experiment has been a generation of couch potatoes, spoiled brats and thankless vandals. The teenage Christ was none of these.

The Youth Pastor continued: “Before you assume that I am putting every young person in the same boat, please allow me to allow you the opportunity to redeem yourself. Below is a test. There are no trick questions. Each one requires a simple “yes” or “no” answer. The Bible will be used as the basis for determining whether you are diligent or slothful. (Perhaps you should allow your parents to help you answer these questions.”☺ ☺
TEST QUESTIONS

1. Do you often fail to take care of things that have been provided for you? _____

2. Are you constantly asking your parents to buy you things? _____

3. Do you make excuses to get out of doing your work? _____

4. Is your bedroom generally untidy and unorganized? _____

5. Do you sleep more than is absolutely necessary? _____

6. Do you have to be reminded to do your simple chores? _____

7. Do you have a lot of idle time? _____

8. Do you work harder when a teacher is watching you? _____

9. Do you look for reasons to put off doing a job? _____

10. Were you to conceited to be absolutely honest in answering the above questions? _____

Now, let’s take the Bible and see what the Word of God has to say about each of the above questions!

Compare your answers with God’s Holy Word and you will "see" yourself as God and others "see" you!

Remember, the "habits" you develop in your teenage years will determine how you live and think in your adult years!

1. Do you often fail to take care of things that have been provided for you?

   **Proverbs 18:9** “He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.”

Let me give you some examples of a slothful person. Your bike is left out in the rain. Your clothes are crumpled in a ball on the floor. Game pieces are missing because they were not carefully put back after use. School
clothes are ruined because you did not take time to change into proper play clothes after school. You "burn rubber" to show off before your peers wasting the tires on the car or truck your parents are providing.

Every item listed above cost your parents or others their time and their money. To not properly care for them is to be slothful; to be a "sibling" to him that is a great waster.

Diligent teenagers properly care for the things that have been provided for them.

Did you "pass" or did you "fail" concerning what God has to say about being slothful?

2. Are you constantly asking your parents to buy you things?

Proverbs 21:25-26 “The desire of the slothful kills him; for his hands refuse to labor. [26] He covets greedily all the day long: but the righteous gives and spares not.”

I think it is interesting that God considers a slothful person an unrighteous person.

A righteous person gives and a slothful person takes.

Let’s again look at some examples of how we can get what we need without asking our parents for them.

Get a Job. Go to work! Sure, your parents will give to you but you need to start earning your way in your teenage years.

I remember asking my High School coach if he would help me get a job driving one of our school buses. He said, “Duvall, I don’t want you working. I want you free to play football!”

He was not looking out for the interest of my parents or for me. He wanted to win football games more than he wanted to help me without even realizing what he was doing! He was otherwise a good man --- as most are today!

But this is the mindset of most today. Parents want their children to be involved in sports. Teens want to be involved in sports. Most do not have
an inkling that it is Satan behind teenagers “playing” instead of “preparing” for adulthood!

Today, children are bombarded with some type of “sports,” either as a player or cheerleader, almost from birth! One “season” does not end until another starts! Add to this other school activities and study --- WHO HAS TIME TO SERVE GOD?!

However, the wise parent and teenager will realize that preparation FOR ADULTHOOD is the most important thing! Everything else pales in comparison.

Teen, if you want something, get out and get a job, save your money --- AND PURCHASE IT! You will appreciate it that much more and most importantly, start your journey towards responsible adulthood.

**SIMPLE FACTS CONCERNING SPORTS**

- Most teens **DO NOT** play at the college level.
- Most who play at the college level **DO NOT** play professionally.

The wise parent and the wise teen places emphasis where emphasis needs to be placed --- IN PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE!

And then there are the “sports” injuries. Your High School WILL NOT be there in your adult years to pay for all the injuries you received in High School athletics! The broken nose, the knees, the backs, the hips etc., stay with you and manifest themselves in your adult years.

The young man who played football with me in High School and died at 29 from cancer that we talked about earlier, in all probabilities, died from an old football injury. Well do I remember a game that he went up high for a pass and was almost cut in half by a vicious tackle. The cancer started in that area of his body. Coincidence? Perhaps, but not likely.

I **DO** know that I have had four operations on my nose and had my right knee replaced, **ALL BECAUSE I PLAYED SPORTS** in High School!

How stupid. Never again!

**3. Do you make excuses to get out of doing your work?**

*Proverbs 22:13* “The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.”
A lion in the streets? Not if the lion can help it! He wants to get as far away from civilization as he can!

Excuses sound foolish to everyone except the person speaking! Watch how foolish our excuses sound to Jesus:

**Luke 14:18-20** “And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.”

Jesus, in teaching His disciples about the coming Kingdom, used the following excuses to show how foolish we look when we reject His calling.

- Who purchases land **WITHOUT** first looking at it?
- Who purchases stock **WITHOUT** first examining them?
- The only person that had an excuse was the person who had married a wife! (Just kidding!)

We are **WITHOUT EXCUSE** when we refuse to follow Jesus!

You can quote me on this: “**Excuses are like armpits. Everyone has a couple --- AND BOTH STINK!**”

Can you picture the teenage Christ making foolish excuses to His parents? I can’t!

**4. Is your bedroom generally untidy and unorganized?**

**Proverbs 24:30-31** “I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

31 And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.”

While your room belongs to your parents, it **IS** your responsibility to keep it neat and organized. After all, it **IS** your room! It is where you stay and speaks therefore of you **as a person.**
Your mother **IS NOT** your housekeeper, your cook or your maid! By the age of twelve (12), you should not only be responsible enough to keep your own room clean, but you should also be helping your parents with other chores in and around your home.

Don’t wait for them to ask --- **GET UP AND HELP!**

**5. Do you sleep more than is absolutely necessary?**

**Proverbs 6:9-11** “How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?
10 Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:
11 So shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth, and thy want as an armed man.”

Notice that the Bible points out that teens (or anyone else) that sleep all the time are wasting precious time.

While sleeping is certainly required for our bodies to perform and some require more than others, a “**sluggard**” is someone who stays in bed just to keep from being productive! It means simply that they are lazy.

It’s the old adage, **“Let someone else do it!”**

What a terrible habit to develop in your teens! It will “**carry over**” into your adult life causing you to lose job after job because of the “**I don’t care**” attitude that creeps down into your soul.

Do you realize that by staying in bed one hour each day **MORE THAN NECESSARY** ads up to fifteen (15) days **in just one year!**

Over a fifty (50) year period this comes to losing two (2) years of productivity! **Two years!**

This means that a person who earns $50,000 a year just slept away **A NEW HOME!**

Get out of bed and do something with your life!

We need to take a lesson from the ant!

Watch this:
**Proverbs 6:6-8** (NIV) “Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!  
7 It has no commander, no overseer or ruler,  
8 yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.”

Now I ask the question, Do you understand Proverbs 6:9-11 that we just looked at a few minutes ago?!

These last verses **ARE** the verses just prior to them!

I remember a preacher who, as a young boy, was assigned the project of building an ant house. The ant farm was to be for the next school term so he got in no hurry, after all, he had all summer and he could do it later!

Well, soon summer was gone --- **AND SO WERE THE ANTS**! They did their job during the summer months while he was out playing! When he finally got around to his project --- there were no ants to be found! **NEED I SAY MORE?**

This brings us to point number six:

6. **Do you have to be reminded to do your simple daily chores?**

**Proverbs 26:15** “The slothful hides his hand in his bosom; it grieves him to bring it again to his mouth.”

How lazy can someone be? This character is too lazy to even eat!

A lazy teenager resents having to do anything, even the simplest task. Instead of helping gladly, he or she expects to be waited on hand and foot. How sad and what terrible habits are being formed for the move into adulthood!

If we are lazy around the home you can expect this same attitude to carry over into school work and Heaven help the employer who hires such a slothful person! Their outlook in life is **“Let someone else do the work.”** It is as if they feel work is beneath them.

Can you imagine marrying someone who will not work to provide for his family?
Can you see this attitude in any of the Scriptures concerning Jesus? No! Just the opposite is true. Even on the cross Jesus was making preparations for His mother, seeing that she would be taken care of!

I wonder how many times Mary had to remind Jesus to do His chores? If anything, she would have said to His siblings, "Why can’t you be more like your brother Jesus?"

Whatever you do, don’t let slothfulness creep over into your life! Guard this area by jumping up and finding something to do to help your parents out.

**7. Do you have a lot of idle time?**

*Proverbs 19:15* “Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.”

Most of the crime in America is committed by those who have too much idle time. Idle time will get you into more trouble than all the Lawyers put together can get you out of!

Teenagers who are "bored" are open game for Satan and his temptations of life. The answer? **STAY BUSY!**

A spiritual teenager who is in tune with the Holy Spirit will always have something to do. They will be busy with chores, getting homework, working at the church, calling people about church attendance, etc.

If you have too much idle time, call your youth pastor or worker as they will always have tons of good things that can keep you busy and out of mischief!

There is so much good that you can do with your life; so many lives that you can touch simply by making yourself available.

How many senior adults do you have in your church or neighborhood that needs their yard mowed or their leaves raked? **LOOK AROUND!** There is plenty to do.

Be careful here as you just might give someone a heart attack should they see you working!
This in itself would be a good indication of whether or not you are slothful or on fire for God! Would someone be more surprised to see you working or would they be more surprised if you were not?

**WOW!** What a test!

Idle time for teens is the greatest detriment to your spirituality.

8. **Do you work harder when a teacher is watching you?**

   **Proverbs 6:6-8** “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:
   [7] Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,
   [8] Provides her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.”

Mankind is the only creation of God that does not do what God designed them to do!

In our text, the ant works hard without any supervision, doing what God intended they do. An ant. **An ant!**

And yet, we, His highest creation --- **CHARGED WITH SUBDUING THE EARTH** --- goofs off, putting things off until tomorrow --- **WHICH NEVER COMES!**

9. **Do you look for reasons (excuses) to put off doing a job?**

   **Proverbs 20:4** “The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.”

It’s too cold. It’s too hot. I’ll do it tomorrow. I’m too tired. That can wait. It’s not due until next week. I’ll do it later.

10. **Were you too conceited to be absolutely honest in answering the above questions?**

    **Proverbs 26:16** “The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.”

Pride often keeps us from being honest with ourselves. Take the test again that you took before we got into this session. Now that you know
what the Bible says, you can “see” where you are strong and where you need to improve.

Ask the Holy Spirit to convict you and help you overcome the slothfulness that is behind many of your bad habits.

None of us will ever be a success in life until we begin to be brutally honest with ourself --- ABOUT OURSELF!

Now for fun, I’ll let you score your own paper!

**Yes  No  Score**

0-2  8-10  You’ve been well trained. Keep it up!
3-4  6-7   You’re on your way! Seek to improve!
5-6  4-5   You’re probably average, but who wants to be average?
7-8  2-3   Target one or two areas and work on them each week.
9-10 0-1  At least you’re honest! Now get to work! 😊
"Before you assume that I am putting every young person in the same boat. Please allow me to allow you the opportunity to redeem yourself. Below is a test. There are no trick questions. Each one requires a simple “yes” or “no” answer. The Bible will be used as the basis for determining whether you are diligent or slothful. (Perhaps you should allow your parents to help you answer these questions.”☺

1. Do you often fail to take care of things that have been provided for you? ______

2. Are you constantly asking your parents to buy you things? ______

3. Do you make excuses to get out of doing your work? ______

4. Is your bedroom generally untidy and unorganized? ______

5. Do you sleep more than is absolutely necessary? ______

6. Do you have to be reminded to do your simple chores? ______

7. Do you have a lot of idle time? ______

8. Do you work harder when a teacher is watching you? ______

9. Do you look for reasons to put off doing a job? ______

10. Were you to conceited to be absolutely honest in answering the above questions? ______
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Importance Of Mastering A Wage-Earning Skill

Occasionally you will see a plaque that says:

“Give a man a fish and he can eat one meal. Teach him how to fish and it will last a lifetime.”

This is what this chapter is all about; learning a skill that will last you a life-time!

Now, you may want to do something else with your life as an adult but you will always have the skill you learned in your youth to fall back on should you need it.

As a young pastor, I could move to any city God led me and get a job immediately should I be called to a church that could not fully support me. How could I do this? I learned the wage-earning skill of selling. A sells person can always get a job!

The ability to sell enabled me to take churches that I normally could not take because I could always supplement my income with some type of selling job.

My selling ability could be adapted to whatever product I needed to sell in order to make a living for my family. I did not have to rely upon a church for my sole means of support. In other words, I could follow God completely.

The earthly father of Jesus did not just teach Jesus to work. He taught him a trade, a trade that Jesus could use the rest of His life to earn a living.

Most Bible teachers believe that Joseph died long before Jesus turned thirty (30) years of age. In all probability, Jesus was the one who provide for the needs of His mother and His siblings until He started His public ministry.
During His public ministry, Jesus supported His family out of His ministry. He had a large donor base that supported Him financially.

While on the cross, Jesus gave this responsibility to John.

**John 19:25-27** “Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

[26] When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son!

[27] Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.”

His brother, James, was not yet saved and could not be trusted to care for Mary. Jesus knew that He could trust John to provide for His mother’s every need.

Even in death, Jesus provide for His mother and His siblings as He had been doing all along.

Young people, start your preparation early and learn a wage-earning skill that you can continue to use throughout your life. Then you can work your way through college on your own and be debt free when you get your degree!

While you are a teenager, become an apprentice to someone who has a skilled trade.

By the time you graduate from High School, you can be on your way to mastering a marketable skill. You will be leaps and bounds ahead of your peers. To do this, you must set a goal and have a plan.

Consider these suggestions:

**1. Learn the skills that your father uses every day.** A wise son will watch his father carefully as he works on projects around the home. When dad is fixing something, get in there and help! This alone will help you learn the basic home maintenance skills you will one day need when you have your own home.

This will also provide you with common sense that most of your peers will never develop! By the time they realize they need these skills, their dad will be gone --- or too old to teach them.
2. Learn the basics of your father’s trade. You may think, "I’m not going to do what my father does for a living so why learn something that I will never use?"

Let me show you why:

If he possesses a marketable skill, ask him to train you in his area of expertise. This will do at least two things:

A. It will draw you and your father closer together and,

B. It will give you the expertise you just might need later in life even though you may think his job is not for you!

Let me tell you of an incident that happened in church.

A Christian came to our church to tune the piano. He said if I would bring the students of our Christian school up to the auditorium, he would take a few minutes to show them the inside of a piano and explain how it works. Feeling that it would be a great experience for them, we took him up on his offer.

At the end of his presentation, he asked if there were any questions. One of our young ladies asked, "How did you learn to tune a piano?"

His answer was amazing. He said:

My father was a musician and a piano tuner. He was a firm believer that I should be taught a trade before I left home. So, when I was fifteen years old, he went around and bought forty old pianos, all in need of some repair.

Over the next year, under his supervision, he had me take each one completely apart and rebuild it and tune it. He then sold the pianos and with the money sent me to a piano tuning school so I could become even more proficient.

I had other dreams and ambitions, but he said I could pursue them after I learned to tune pianos.

Later in life, I returned to the trade my father had insisted I learn; for the last seventeen years, I have made my living tuning pianos.
He then went on to bless his father for seeing to it that he learned a wage-earning skill while he was still in his teenage years.

Fathers **DO** know best!

This man **DID** pursue other fields but finally returned to what could make he and his family **the best living**. You might be different but then again if your dreams do not pan out, you can still provide for your family ***just like your father provided for his***!

**3. Make a list of the trades represented by the members of the church you attend.**

Get a list of the church membership and find out what these men do for a living.

Here is a partial list that you might find:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpet Cleaning</th>
<th>Printer</th>
<th>Electrician</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roofer</td>
<td>Salesmen</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinist</td>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Welder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairmen</td>
<td>Plumber</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpet Installers</td>
<td>Butcher</td>
<td>Appraisers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see, the list is endless!

If you are between the ages of **twelve and fourteen**, ask these men to allow you to work with them occasionally so you can begin to learn from them. Be sure to get your parents to approve the people you will ask before you ask them. Just because someone goes to your church **DOES NOT** mean they are good Christians. You might not need to be around them.

Also, you must understand that these men are busy making a living for their families. Not all of them will be in a position to accommodate your request, but there will be those who can and will also meet your parents’ approval.

Do not ask them for a job. Do not expect to be paid. At this age, you should be grateful for a chance just to tag along with them and learn from them.
If you are between the ages of **fifteen and eighteen** and have already learned **good work ethics**, ask these men if there is a chance to work with them during the summer. Again, get your parents approval.

Expect to work for a minimum, entry-level wage. You are still learning and are not worth much to them while you are being trained. They will be doing you a favor by giving you on-the-job training.

As much as possible, watch how they do what they do. Ask questions. Listen to what they say. Learn to anticipate their next move. Have the proper tools waiting for them before they have to ask for them. Remember, at this stage, it is **not** important as to how much you **earn** but what is important is what you **learn**.

The money will take care of itself later. What you need now is knowledge.

**IMPORTANT! GET THIS AND IT WILL SET YOU FREE!**

It is very important for Christian young people to work for Christian employers. I cannot stress this enough.

Your character is still being formed during your teenage years. The last thing you need is to work for a heathen employer or a heathen company.

Many young people have been ruined and became backsliders after getting a job and working for a boss who is worldly and working around worldly teenagers.

Never take a job that will require you to miss any of your church services. Make this plain to your employer, even if they claim to be a Christian.

No amount of money you may earn can make up for the cost of serving God to the fullest! No matter how great the temptation, thank them for the offer but pass it up --- **AND TELL THEM WHY!**

4. **Work hard to master at least one wage-earning skill before you graduate from High School.** Even if this is not what you end up doing for the rest of your life, it will always give you something to fall back on. It may be the job you will use to get you through College or later provide you with a second income on the side until your chosen profession earns you the money you need to properly support your family.
Entry-level positions usually **DO NOT** pay you the income you need even with a degree in your chosen field. Later in life it will but not at first. I know many who have college degrees that do not make anywhere near the money someone else makes who has only a wage-earning skill.

Most carpenters make more money than ninety-five percent of bank employees! People who install carpet, wood floors or ceramic tile make more money than most attorneys! A coat and tie **DOES NOT** equate to money!

**NOW, LET’S LOOK AT YOU YOUNG LADIES!**

1. **Prepare now to be a successful homemaker.** Learn the skills that your mother uses every day of her life. The ability to make a house into a home is fast becoming a lost art. Learn from your mother and your grandmothers. Never apologize for spending your teenage years preparing to be a good wife and mother. You will be a teenager for only seven years but you will be a wife and homemaker for the rest of your life! Which is more important? The answer is obvious. It doesn't even have to be answered!

There is no greater calling than to be a good wife and a good mother.

2. **Learn the skills and character traits that will enable you to save your family money in the future.**

A well-trained wife can save the family thousands of dollars by shopping smart, learning to sew, creating meals from scratch, caring for the home, etc.

It **IS NOT** wise to work outside the home for several reasons:

A. You are not "**lost**” when you are doing what God tells you to do. This is first and foremost.

B. You do not need to "**find yourself**” as some would tell you. See "**A**” above!

C. You cannot be an effective wife and mother if your time is spent away from the home and away from your church. Don’t fall into this trap.

D. Your family does not need an extra paycheck. They need a wife and mother at home doing what God has called her to do!
E. The “extra” money you might earn working outside the home will mostly be “swallowed up” by the cost of your working, creating a need for even MORE income. Even if your “net earnings” did manage to bring in extra income, the cost to your family cannot stand the absence of a wife and mother at home. The price is simply too much to pay!

F. You do not need the temptations that are sure to come. It is always easy to consider what one has over what one imagines! More homes have been wrecked over women in the workplace than any other reason. The temptations are simply too great for any man or woman to endure. The answer? Go with God and stay home!

As a teenager, a young lady should be taught by her mother and grandmothers the qualities of thriftiness and contentment. She should learn how to create instead of buy. She should learn how to budget the family money and balance the checkbook.

By doing these things, she can save the family more money than she could ever earn outside the home.

3. Learn a skill that will enable you to become a stay-at-home entrepreneur. The virtuous lady described in Proverbs 31 made her family and home the priority of her life. In addition, she developed skills that enabled her to contribute financially --- WITHOUT LEAVING THE HOME for an extended time!

Proverbs 31:16, 24 “She considered a field, and bought it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard."

24 “She maketh fine linen, and sold it; and delivered girdles unto the merchant.”

A home-based business can be very profitable --- and yet the family IS NOT deprived of the quality that only a wife and mother can provide. The woman in our text did exactly that. She did not abandon the family for a professional life but rather ADDED TO the family income through her skills that had been learned in her teens.

4. Develop skills and abilities that will make you an asset to your local church. Ladies have constituted the great army of volunteers who have helped make churches successful for generations. The desire for
the temporal rewards of a career over the eternal rewards of service to family and God has greatly depleted this great resource.

Our churches suffer just like the family when this great army of women are pulled from the church and placed in the work force.

5. During your teen years, learn to serve in your local church. When ladies develop a servant’s heart, the local church as well as her family is greatly strengthened.

The Apostle Paul mentions several women who gave themselves to ministry.

**Romans 16:1-2** “I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:
[2] That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.”

(NLT) “Our sister Phoebe, a deacon in the church in Cenchrea, will be coming to see you soon.
[2] Receive her in the Lord, as one who is worthy of high honor. Help her in every way you can, for she has helped many in their needs, including me.”

In the King James Version, the Greek word “sunergos” (sooner’-goss) is translated “servant” because it is referring to a woman. When it is used in reference to a man it is always translated “deacon.”

Why? Because the men who translated the Bible from Greek to English were “blinded” to the ministry of women --- just like most are today!

**Romans 16:6, 12** “Greet Mary, who bestowed much “labor” (sunergos) on us.”

[12] Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who “labor” (sunergos) in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which “labored” (sunergos) much in the Lord.”

All these ladies served the Lord! They were “deacons” or servants, who worked alongside Paul as they ministered for the Lord.
Nothing is more exciting than to watch God bring together a young man and a young woman who have spent their teens preparing to be what God has created them to be! *What a dynamic duo!*

This is the couple whose lives will be used greatly for the Lord!
TEST QUESTIONS

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

1. Joseph did not just teach Jesus to work, but rather taught Him a wage-earning skill, a skill that would provide a good living for His mother and His siblings.

   ____ True
   ____ False

2. Most Bible teachers believe Jesus grew into manhood without an earthly father; that Joseph died shortly after Jesus’ twelfth birthday.

   ____ True
   ____ False

3. When is the time to learn a wage-earning skill?

   ____ After the twelfth birthday
   ____ When we graduate High School
   ____ When we graduate College
   ____ Live on welfare and let someone else feed you

4. Name the four (4) suggestions the author gives to a teenage young man?

   1. ____________________________________________________________
   2. ____________________________________________________________
3. ________________________________________________

4. ________________________________________________

5. According to the author, what should a young man do between the ages of twelve and fourteen?

Answer: __________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

6. Between the ages of fifteen and eighteen?

Answer: __________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

7. Why is who we work for so important to a teenager?

Answer: __________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

8. What are the possibilities of a young man who plays sports? Circle the correct answer.

   a. Most will be able to earn a scholarship and play College ball

   b. Most who play College ball will become professional ball players and earn personal fortunes

   c. Most will never even play College ball

9. What role in life has God called a young teenage lady to perform?
a. Be a successful business woman

b. Be a devoted wife, mother and homemaker.

10. What, according to the Bible, does the word "servant" mean?

Answer: ___________________________________________ 
___________________________________________________ 
___________________________________________________
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Conclusion

As you can readily see from our studies, Jesus was a busy teen!

He spent those years preparing for life, and yet, most people will tell you that the Bible is silent on the teenage years of Jesus!

The thinking is, “We see Jesus is in the Temple asking questions of the Elders and it is not until He appears for His baptism by John the Baptist that we see Him again!”

Well, our study has blown that to smithereens!

Why do you think Satan has blinded our eyes to the teenaged Christ? The answers should be obvious:

Satan wants teens to flitter away their informative years and not be prepared for adulthood that awaits them!

But now we know the truth! Here is how the Bible says Jesus spent His teenage years and how every teenager should spend theirs:

• “The Teenaged Christ Increased In Wisdom”
• “The Teenaged Christ Increased In Maturity”
• “The Teenaged Christ Increased In Favor With God!”
• “The Teenaged Christ Increased In Favor With Man”
• “The Teenaged Christ Remained Subject To His Parents”
• “The Teenaged Christ Learned A Wage-Earning Skill”

May God help us to recapture the joys of being a teen as we pattern our lives after the teenaged Christ!
EBOOKS BY BILL DUVALL

All our books are now in eBook format only. To continue self-publishing them for retail purchases we would have to charge astronomical prices. Our desire is to be a blessing to the Body of Christ and depend on Father God to supply our every need.


Our materials are listed below with a brief description of the contents of each eBook.

“The WOK AND WALK WEIGHT CONTROL PLAN”

This manual takes you from WHERE YOU ARE to WHERE YOU WANT TO BE by showing you how to take off all your extra pounds and keep them off forever! MUCH MORE THAN A BOOK, it is a WORKING MANUAL for your health, both physically AND Spiritually!

“GOD, RELIGION AND HIS CHURCH!”

People from all walks of life; the rich, the poor, all races and all denominations, both the saved and the lost, are asking the same questions about life! This volume ANSWERS THOSE QUESTIONS!

“DEALING WITH THE DEVIL!”

In this volume, the author deals with Satan and his hoards in GREAT DETAIL! It covers questions FROM CREATION TO THE END OF THE WORLD—AND BEYOND!

“SATAN, HIS LIES AND THE END OF THE WORLD!”

Satan has so duped the Church of the Living God! If you are interested in things that are going on now and what we can expect in the very near future, then this book is for you!
“FROM POVERTY TO PROSPERITY!”

Almost every teaching of the church today concerning poverty and prosperity is in actuality just the opposite of what the Bible teaches. If you have ever doubted the teachings of man concerning our pleasing God by living in poverty, then you need to get this book! Also available in wire spiral binding for $21.99.

“WHATEVER HAPPENED TO MARRIAGE?!

Is marriage even relevant for today’s society with all its sophistication, or is marriage like the horse and buggy of days gone by? Travel the pages of the Bible as the author shows beyond doubt that not only is marriage FOR TODAY, but in reality, is man’s ONLY HOPE of salvaging a world falling apart! This Study Guide will change your outlook on marriage forever.

“SOUL WINNING MADE EASY!”

This book is designed to equip, train and inspire church members to be personal soul winners in obedience to the Great Commission. Every church in the world is filled with PERSONAL SOUL WINNERS --- just waiting to be trained! No matter how much we want to obey Christ, WE CAN’T, if we don’t know how! This Book will turn the most timid church member into a flaming Evangelist!

“ALL THINGS NEW!”

Travel through the pages of the Bible as the author gives a short but detailed explanation of what happens when we are born again! Subjects discussed are the new birth itself, the new family, our new responsibilities, our new master, our new problems, our new standards and our new future!

“AND THE LORD GOD WINKED!”

If you enjoy a good belly laugh, you will get your money’s worth --- AND MORE --- with these true stories of the funny things that happen at church to church people! Warning! Sit down and put on your depends BEFORE you start reading because you will need them from the front page on!

“PASTORS, DEACONS AND CHURCH DISCIPLINE!”

In your denominational setting, who runs your local church? All questions are answered with Scripture after Scripture and chart after chart, PROVING BEYOND DOUBT, just how Christ intended HIS CHURCH to operate on Planet Earth!
“THE LITERAL REIGN OF CHRIST!”

The Sequel to “The Second Coming,” Starts with Christ’s return and basically deals with the Millennial Reign of Christ from David’s Throne. See for yourself the final destruction of Satan, the future---AND BEYOND!

“DEMONS, THEN AND NOW!”

This Study Guide not only teaches about Demons and their activities today, but NAMES THEM one by one and teaches you how to detect AND defeat demonic activity in your life and the life of fellow believers.

“THE TRUTH ABOUT SATAN!”

Ask the average church member who Satan is and what they believe about him, and wait for their reply! The church is completely ignorant as to who Satan is and know even less about doing battle with him! This Study Guide will change your life!

“RISE AND BE HEALED!”

Only the Father Himself knows the devout sons and daughters of His who are in Heaven, that could still be on Earth today, in perfect health, had they only have known what the Word teaches about healing! Let the Word of God speaks for itself!

“THE TRUTH ABOUT PROSPERITY!”

Satan has so duped the church into believing a lie that it is almost impossible to get Bible Believers to accept the prosperity message, and certainly not the work-a-day-world! Beloved, God wants the very best for you and every believer. A must if you are to achieve what God wants for you!

“THE TRAGEDY OF THE TITHE!”

Have you ever seen a believer get rich from tithing? No?! And you never will, and yet this is what is taught today! God’s will IS for us to prosper and the tithe IS INVOLVED, but it takes more! Find out the truth about the tithe and how God can use this knowledge to not only meet your needs, but make you very successful!

“THE TRUTH ABOUT ABORTION!”

From the opening sentence, this Study Guide tells it like the Bible tells it, with Scripture after Scripture that will assure even the most skeptical that abortion is out and out murder, under any circumstance, and that the guilty not only must pay, but also will pay!
“THE VIRGIN BIRTH!”

Concerning the Virgin Birth, man is one step from stupid or one step from salvation! The chart alone is worth twice the price! This Study Guide shows that man’s ONLY HOPE is in the Virgin Birth!

“DIVORCE, REMARRIAGE AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE!”

Watch the Scriptures COME ALIVE as the author proves once and for all that the only unpardonable sin is the “Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit,” and that, therefore, divorced people CAN be forgiven AND used in any capacity that God calls! Do not live in ignorance concerning this most important subject, especially if you have suffered a divorce, or know someone who has!

“NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD!”

If there has ever been any doubt about the blood of Christ being man’s only hope for salvation, you need this Study Guide! The author takes the Word of God and Medical Science and proves beyond doubt that the life of the flesh is in the blood.

“THE TRUTH ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY!”

The sin that will bring about the return of Christ is making its play for acceptability, and our Government has bought it, hook, line and sinker! If you want the truth from the Scriptures, here it unapologetically is! A must for today’s world, especially the teenager! Warning! Very Plain English with no holds barred!

“THE TRUTH ABOUT DEATH!”

If you have any questions about death and how Christians should die, you need this Study Guide! The chart on Luke, chapter 16, allows the reader to see into the Unseen World!

“THE SECOND COMING!”

If you have questions as to the when, where and how of the “Second Coming,” then don’t hesitate to order this Study Guide! This teaching is crammed full of positive proof concerning the “Second Coming” and the events of that day. Charts included.

“THE CREATION!”

What are you telling your children about Evolution and what the Bible teaches about Creation? Are you sure yourself? No need to worry ever again! It is all laid out so there can be no doubt to the serious student of the Word---or even a novice!
“THE TRUTH ABOUT HEAVEN AND HELL!”

Who is going to be in Hell and who is going to be in Heaven? More importantly, How can we know for certain that we are going to Heaven and not to Hell when we die? Every question you have wanted to ask, but never did, is answered in this Study Guide!

“WHO IS GOD?”

How would you describe God? Most cannot, yet in the Bible, we have everything we would ever need to know this side of heaven about God, including His name! The author takes you through the Bible and when your journey is over, you will have experienced God in a completely new way!

“RELIGION VERSUS CHRISTIANITY!”

God’s way or man’s way, which will it be? That IS Religion versus Christianity! The author graphically points out the truths concerning the fallacy of Religion and that man’s only hope is in the Christ of Christianity!

“THE TRUTH ABOUT SALVATION!”

Taken from the heart of the Scriptures themselves, the author shows beyond any reasonable doubt that Christ is our only hope! If you have ever had “doubts,” this IS what you need.

“REVELATION REVEALED!”

Most publishers entitle the book, “The Revelation of John” while the very first verse says it is the “Revelation of Jesus Christ!” Watch the Book of Revelation COME ALIVE as the past, present and future unfold before your very eyes!

“THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER!”

The Believer IS secure, but can you describe what a Believer is---according to the Bible? Many are trusting in church membership or a past experience (either real or imagined) to get them into Heaven, and it simply will not measure up when looked at through the eyes of the Bible! A Spiritual eye opener!

“THE TRUTH ABOUT BAPTISM!”

With the teachings of today, from baptism is not important, to baptism saves, what is one to believe? Whatever your church affiliation, the Bible teaches only one thing about what Scriptural Baptism is. Charts Included.
“REIGNING AS A KING AND PRIEST!”

The author dispels any doubt about what it takes to be what God wants us to be. He shows beyond doubt why so many believers live beneath their dignity as sons and daughters of God, and lists “9 steps” to get you from where you are to where you want to be in your Christian walk!

“HOW TO HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD!”

This Study Guide will tell and show you how you can hear and have a personal conversation with God on any subject that is important to you! Don’t miss this much-needed revelation!

“THE BRIDE OF CHRIST!”

There are those who teach that “they” are the ONE AND ONLY! All other groups are on their way to Hell, even though they believe, because they are not a part of their group! This Study Guide uses the same Scriptures the above groups use, to disprove their pet theories! Truly an eye opener!

“THE UN-HOLY TRINITY!”

Tribulation IS A WAY OF LIFE in most of the known World, especially in Christian circles, AND IS SOON COMING TO AMERICA! The “Un-holy Trinity,” consisting of Satan (Anti-God), The Beast (Anti-Christ) and the False Prophet (Anti-Holy Spirit), are just as real as the “Holy Trinity.”

“WHAT IS SIN?”

Sin, to most folks, is WHAT SOMEONE ELSE DOES! But sin IS what God says it is! Travel with the author as he explores the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation seeking God’s definition of “Sin!” Truly an eye opener” for today’s society!

“WHY DOESN’T GOD---?”

The author deals AT LENGTH with why unfairness prevails, using Scripture after Scripture to open the eyes of the reader to the mind of Almighty God! You will treasure this and share it’s truths for years to come!

“SEXUAL PURITY!”

What does God have to say about sex and its usage, both in and outside of marriage? WARNING! No holds barred and the subject matter is triple XXX in places, but its truth can set you free and IS SO NEEDED in today’s WANTON WORLD!
“THE GRAVE PERIOD OF CHRIST!”

The author uses the feast days of Israel, along with the Ark and Baptism, to prove beyond doubt that Christ was in the grave a full three days and three nights, or seventy-two (72) hours! A spiritual feast!

“THE HOLY TRINITY!”

There are over five hundred (500) Scriptures that definitely teach a Divine Trinity and the Scriptures also abound concerning the “Gathering of God’s people” to Him when He returns during “The Second Coming.”

“THE ANTICHRIST!”

The author believes the time is now “ripe” for the “Man of Sin” to make his appearance on planet Earth! He is described in the Bible as “The Other that shall come.” A must for the serious student of Scripture as this Study Guide answers your every question concerning end-time events!

“THE SECRET SIN!” (The Devastation Of Pornography)

Pornography has moved from the Back Allies of our Father’s day and is making its play for the hearts and minds of our youth! Pornography takes in more money each year than does Rock And Roll, Country And Western, The Theater, Ballet, and Broadway productions combined!

“SATAN AND HIS FOLLOWERS!”

In this book, the author takes the reader back in the eons of time, before creation, then through history and, finally, you will see Satan cast alive into the “Lake Of Fire” where he will spend Eternity!

“THE RESURRECTION!”

The difference between “Religion” and “Christianity” is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ! The world loves religion but detests Christianity because of the blood! This study is a must for your skeptical friends and non-saved church members.

“666, YOU’RE NUMBER IS UP!”

In this Study Guide, the author proves beyond doubt that the number of the beast actually identifies the Satanic Trinity! If you are concerned about the “end times” and the events of that day, then this study will enlighten you even more. The author even goes so far as to tell us who he believes the Antichrist to be!
“THE TWO NATURES (Of Every Believer)!

If you are experiencing a struggle between your spirit and your flesh, the author says, “Welcome to the human race!” Your new nature is from God but you still live in a “flesh body” that is of this world. Every struggle known to man and HOW TO DEAL WITH IT is dealt with in this Study Guide.

“RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD!”

Are you a “student” of the Word, or are you just “trusting” your denomination, church or clergy to interpret the Word for you? Perhaps you do not believe the Word is relevant for today. Then, by all means, this Study Guide is for you! Travel with the author as he PROVES the Word using SCIENCE AND NATURE, leaving nothing to chance!

“TRIBULATION: THE COMING HOLOCAUST!”

What Hitler did to the Jews during World War II is a preview of what is coming to the entire earth in the very near future. The author says of today’s Prophetic Teachings, “Where are the Scriptures?” He says, “Don’t tell me --- SHOW ME!” Chart Included._

“THE SPIRIT OF TOBIAH!”

This special study from the book of Nehemiah IS A MUST before starting any new work for God! If you have ever had to deal with difficult people, then this book IS just for you.

“NO CROSS --- NO CHRIST!

There are those today who ignore the cross of Christ by teaching that it is past and to preach the cross is to give a “negative” message. Others teach that the preaching of the cross is “foolishness.” This study takes the Scriptures and shows that the cross of Christ and the gospel are one and the same. Truly an “eye opener” to refute today’s modern teachings!

“WHATEVER HAPPENED TO MARRIAGE?! 

Is marriage even relevant for today’s society with all its “sophistication,” or is marriage like the “horse and buggy” of days gone by? Travel the pages of the Bible as the author shows beyond doubt that not only is marriage FOR TODAY, but in reality, is man’s ONLY HOPE of salvaging a world falling apart! This Study Guide will change your outlook on marriage forever!
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ABOUT OUR MINISTRY

It is our intent at Bill Duvall Ministries to be a blessing and supply our readers with top quality books and materials.

We DO NOT expect everyone to agree with everything we say but we DO expect our material to make you SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES, and this IS our intent.

Our books can be downloaded for free at our website at: www.BillDuvallMinistries.org

Pastor, we believe in your ministry of reaching the World with the Word and wish to play a vital role. We want to help you spread the Word around the world by giving a donation to help in publishing and distributing the Word. (All gifts are tax-deductible).

Visit our website at www.billduvallministries.org to make your donation.

Thank you for your faithful prayers and financial support!
William L. Duvall, Th.D

Dr. Duvall is an ordained Southern Baptist minister who has had the honor of pastoring both small and large multi-staffed churches as well as conducted Revivals and Bible Conferences across America.

Some highlights of Dr. Duvall’s ministry includes: Establishing Bill Duvall Ministries, INC., The Christ Is The Answer Radio Broadcast, established two (2) churches, baptized 76 souls in the closing service of a Soul Winning campaign with 596 total additions to the church during the same period, has written and published sixty – five (65) books and Study Guides plus numerous Seminary courses.

Dr. Duvall has had the honor of being called “Pastor” by fourteen (14) different churches and has served his denomination as an Interim Associational Missionary.

In addition to his preaching and writing, Dr. Duvall is a gifted humorist and after dinner speaker.

Dr. Duvall is married to his childhood sweetheart, the former Marilyn Hutson. It was Marilyn who led Dr. Duvall to the Lord as she would not marry a person who was not saved.

The Duvall’s have one son, William Todd and his wife Cherrye, Two grandchildren, Blake and his wife Sarah, and Bridgette and her husband Ryan and their son, Keegan Bear and daughter Keiki Nicole.

In The Heart Of America With America On Our Heart