

*Teaching Guide*



***ADULT BIBLE STUDY  
IN BASIC ENGLISH***

**PHILIPPIANS,  
COLOSSIANS &  
1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS**

Phyllis Merritt

BAPTISTWAY

Dallas, Texas

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN BASIC ENGLISH  
TEACHING GUIDE  
PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS & 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS**

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## Adult Bible Study in Basic English—Teaching Guide

# PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS & 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS

### Introduction for Teachers

The purpose of this teaching guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The teaching guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Supplemental Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

The Bible text printed in the lesson material is from the NEW LIFE Version of the Bible (NLV), an inexpensive translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary. The NLV is available from Christian Literature International, P. O. Box 777, Canby, Oregon 97013; e-mail [christian@canby.com](mailto:christian@canby.com); telephone (orders only) 1-800-324-9734.

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious law-keeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students, or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, however, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

Prayer is sometimes specifically suggested in the teaching procedures. It should be an integral part of your lesson plan. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into the teaching session.

The writers and editors wish you success and give you prayerful support in your teaching of this Adult Bible Study in Basic English.

**Bible Study in Basic English is published by the Baptist General Convention of Texas and follows the same curriculum plan as the Bible Study for Texas materials, but has no Texas emphasis. Teachers may wish to purchase Bible Study for Texas lesson comments and teaching guides (\$1.95 each per quarter) as additional resources. These may be ordered through your church or directly from the Sunday School/Discipleship Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798, e-mail [baptistway@bgct.org](mailto:baptistway@bgct.org); FAX 214-828-5187; or toll-free telephone 1-800-355-5285.**

#### About the writer

*Phyllis Merritt has been teaching English as a Second Language and Bible studies for Internationals for thirty-two years while she and her husband, Jack, have served as missionaries in New York, New Mexico, Georgia, and Texas. They are now serving Baylor University as Missionaries in Residence working with International Students, Missionary Kids and Campus Women on Mission. They have two sons, Greg and Travis.*

# Suggestions for Teaching Basic English Bible Study Lessons

## General Suggestions

- Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
- Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
- Review the Word Study before beginning the study. Provide page (see resources) for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
- Prepare 9-12 core sentences which tell the most important part of the Bible focal text. Illustrate each sentence with stick figures and symbols in *picture sequence* form (see details below).
- Prepare lesson outlines or written materials before class—make your own cling sheets by cutting apart white plastic garbage bags and writing on them with markers. The plastic bags will cling to the wall.

## Bible Comments/Focal Text

- Help students hear English and practice their pronunciation by modeling phrases and sentence. Allow the entire class to repeat. Be consistent with stress and intonation. Speak naturally.
- Allow individual students to read a sentence or paragraph at a time. For further practice, ask students to tell sections from Bible comments in their own words.
- When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
- Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
- Discuss lesson using “Things to Think About.”

## Memory Verse

- Challenge class members to say the Memory Verse several times each day.
- Provide Study Sheets for students to write Memory Verses.
- Write phrases or individual words on separate pieces of paper. Give to students to place in order.
- Write entire verse on board. Read in unison. Erase key words a few at a time. Recite the verse until the entire verse is erased and class can repeat by memory.
- Make a symbol for each word or phrase of the verse. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

## Picture Sequencing (The Lipson Method)

This method is especially suited for teaching beginners. It consists of a series of pictures with accompanying sentences that tell a story. It may be used solely for oral production (using pictures alone) or for integrated skills (engaging students in reading and writing the story).

You may use real pictures, videotape, pictures that are professionally drawn, or stick figures

Other benefits include the following:

1. Relaxed, low-anxiety atmosphere as students focus on the pictures and create their own sentences to tell the story
  - Focus on fluency, not just accuracy
  - Focus on a message or task rather than form or grammar
  - Minimal error-correction as students tell the story
2. Pictures (even stick figures) convey meaning in every language.
3. The same set of pictures can be used with more than one level of students by making the sentences easier or more difficult.
4. The use of pictures helps students learn the language in “chunks” rather than words in isolation.
5. The only item needed is a piece of chalk—or a marker, if using a cling sheet or overhead cell.

## Preparation

1. Put a story into sentences that are suitable for the level of your students. Try to tell the story with a maximum of ten sentences. For low beginners, choose the simplest and fewest words possible. Keep sentences in their most basic form, so students can combine sentences later.
2. Draw simple pictures or stick figures to illustrate key points in the story. These serve as prompts for the telling of the story. Other drawing tips:
  - An “x” in a small square beside a picture enables you to cue for a negative as you tell the story.
  - Direct quotations may be indicated with a cartoon-type bubble.

## Picture Sequencing (continued)

### **Procedure**

1. Introduce the story by following your prepared script of sentences (for consistency) and pointing to the pictures as you speak. This will give students the main idea and help them think in chunks of language (as in real-life language use).
2. Introduce the new words as you again reference the pictures. Use props and/or dramatization as needed to establish understanding. Work on individual sounds and word stress as students repeat new words.
3. Lead students in repetition of the story, one sentence at a time, working on sentence stress and intonation.
4. Lead the class in one more repetition of the story (going straight through and continuing to refer to the pictures throughout the story).
5. Ask the class to tell you the story as you cue the story sequence by pointing to the pictures. (You become “stage prompter” at this point.)
6. Then ask for a single volunteer to tell the story. (This may open the door for several of the more proficient students to use what they know.)
7. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students to give each person practice in telling the story. (Inevitably, the most eager student will go first, followed by another “semi”-eager student. By the time it is the turn of the least proficient student, he/she will have learned a lot by listening, will have observed a good model at least a couple of times, and will have bolstered courage for risk-taking.)
8. Follow with questions in review of the story (begin by naming the setting, the characters, etc.—easy questions).
9. Conclude with life application questions that require some thought and give students opportunity to express opinion, emotion, and their own ideas.

### **Lesson Expansion**

If the setting and circumstances permit,

- Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- Matching pictures and sentences
- Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)
- Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the portion on their paper strip)
- Cloze (supplying a written copy with every n<sup>th</sup> word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)
- Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)
- Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner. Ask students to write the story in their own words.

## Bible passage as content for reading lesson

Procedure:

Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.

Ask questions about the main idea of the story.

Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.

(Intermediate or advanced students) Have students read silently a second time to look for answers to two or three questions about details that you have written on the board. Ask students to discuss their answers with a partner. Then go over answers with the whole class.

(Beginning or low-intermediate students) Read the story again and ask the students to repeat it with you line by line.

Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.

Ask pairs to read the story to each other.

Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.

Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.

3. Select a list of new words in the story—unfamiliar words that the students would not likely be able to figure out from context (generally 8-10 new words per lesson).

4. List the new words in categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs. When listing verbs, you may write both simple present and past tense forms (e.g., eat / ate, walk / walked). Basic beginners would do well to tell the story in present tense, but high beginners could work in present tense, then retell the story in past tense.

## **Checklist for Successful Classrooms**

### **◇ *Right Kind of Input***

- New language in every lesson
- Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
- Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
- Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation
- Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
  - (1) Realia or authentic materials
  - (2) Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
  - (3) Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
  - (4) Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

### **◇ *Low Anxiety Environment***

The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community that is a safe place for risk-taking: (Students are unafraid to make mistakes or feel foolish.)

- Personally greeting and bidding farewell to students
- Sincere and frequent affirmation
- Minimal error correction from the teacher
- Frequent reference to the culture(s) of the students
- Smiles and laughter that are commonplace
- Connecting with the students as often as possible through eye contact and/or positioning yourself on the eye level of students

Calling students by name as often as possible

### **◇ *Real-Life Interaction***

Checklist for interaction:

- Pacing of activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
- Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
- Variety in grouping (predominately pairs and small groups of three or five; using whole class in initial presentation and again for feedback and wrap-up at the end)
- A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
- Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
- Avoidance of questions for which answers are already known
- Use of information gap activity in which partners have different pieces of information and must ask each other questions in order to fill in their gaps of understanding
- Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, role-play, problem-solving, and interactive games
- Review previous material.

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(Some suggestions based on material developed for the EFL Training Manual — Beyond our Borders.

For more information or for training contact the Literacy Missions Center:

Email: [Literacy\\_Missions@baylor.edu](mailto:Literacy_Missions@baylor.edu))

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 1 PHILIPPIANS: REJOICING IN CHRIST

### Lesson 1 LOOK AT LIFE WITH HOPE

#### Lesson Focus

Although we may have bad things happen in our lives, faith in Christ helps us learn to look at life with hope.

#### Focal Text

Philippians 1:1-26

#### Memory Verse

“I am sure that God Who began the good work in you will keep on working in you until the day Jesus Christ comes again.”

—Philippians 1:6

#### Connect with Life

1. Ask a class member who wears glasses or contacts to tell about first getting them. Say: *Many people only realize how little they can see after they start to wear glasses or contacts.*
2. Draw a large pair of glasses on the board. Label one lens: *Positive*. Label the other: *Realistic*. Say: *Listen as we read the Bible lesson today for ways a person can look at life both in a positive way and a realistic way.*

#### Guide the Study

3. Write the following verses on strips of paper and give them to students to read. Then place them on a poster.
  - Acts 16:28-34 — Paul founded the church at Philippi
  - Philippians 1:13-14—Paul was in prison
  - Philippians 2:25-29—Epaphroditus returns to Philippi
  - Philippians 1:29 —Christians at Philippi will suffer
  - Philippians 4:2-3—Disagreements
  - Philippians 1:17—Paul had more difficulty because of those who brought him troubleRead Philippians 1:4, 18. Write under the picture

of the glasses: *Paul’s positive outlook.*

4. Read Philippians 1:1-8. (If your class needs to hear you model these verses, read aloud and let the class repeat. Then ask a different person to read each verse).

Ask the class to listen for how Paul felt about the Philippians. Say: *These verses tell of Paul’s good feelings for the Philippians during his time of trouble. These verses remind us that others can help us when we have bad times.* Invite the class the name difficulties that people might face. Talk about ways the class could help such people (take food, clean house, mow the lawn). Talk about other ways to help (listen as they talk, share God’s promises, pray with and for them).

5. Role-play good and bad ways of listening to people. Ask someone to pretend to tell about a problem. Ask the person who is listening to lean forward, look at them in the eye, perhaps patting them on the arm. Do it again and this time the listener will look at other people in the room, wave at someone, chew gum, or look at their watch.

6. Read Philippians 1:9-11. Ask the class to listen for what Paul wanted for the Philippians. Say: *Paul prayed for two things for his friends —love and knowledge. Ask: What did Paul say about finding happiness in the middle of difficulties? (The happiest people in the world are those who help others and look for the best for others even while they are having many problems of their own.)*

7. Read Philippians 1:12-19. Ask the class to listen for ways that things which looked bad turned out to be good things. **Before class**, ask a couple of members to be ready to tell about a time in their lives when something that seemed to be bad turned out to be a good thing. Ask others to share if they wish.

8. Read Philippians 1:20-26. Ask how Paul looked

at his present life. Say: *We would all be happier if we were in heaven, but there is a reason we are still on this earth.* Allow time for class members to share what this passage means to them.

## Encourage Application

9. Bring a magnifying glass. Ask class members to look through the glass and describe what they see. Show how the glass has a narrow focus. Point to the pair of glasses on the board. Ask the class to list from the day's lesson ways Paul looked at his life with hope and in a positive way. Write those words or phrases under the picture of the lens you labeled "Positive." Repeat for the lens which says "Realistic." Ask: *What do these verses tell us about looking at life in a positive way?* (We can choose whether to have joy in Christ.) Ask if anyone knows a Christian who has had a difficult life and has overcome that.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

1. Remind the class that Paul had many difficulties in his life. This lesson will teach us how Paul used his faith to have a positive outlook.

### Guide the Study

2. Read Philippians 1:1-8. Point out how these verses show the tender feeling Paul had for the Philippians. Paul used words to tell how a group of believers worked together to share the good news of Christ.

3. Say: *Looking at the needs of others and not your own needs is one of the best ways to get through tough times. Paul shows us this in verses 9-11.* Read these verses. Ask the class to listen for what Paul prayed for the Philippians. (love for one another, growth in spiritual knowledge and insight, and to see the difference between right and wrong, to be clean on the inside)

Make three large dots on the board in a triangle design with one dot at the top. Above this top dot write : *GOD*. On the lower left dot write: *ME*. And on the lower right dot write: *OTHERS*. Say: *The best way for each of the lower dots (ME and OTHERS) to be together is to be joined also to the top dot (GOD).* Make a line from both ME and OTHERS to

the top and then join them together at the bottom dots. Say: *When we focus on God, we can get closer to each other.*

4. Read verse 9 again. Then read John 3:16 and 1 Corinthians 13. Ask: *How can others tell that love is the guide for your life?* (By the way we act)

5. Say: *There can be good in the middle of bad times.* Read Acts 16:16-34. Allow time for class members to share if they have ever had a difficult situation turn for the good.

6. Read Philippians 1:20-26. Ask: *How did Paul find reason to be happy in difficult times? What was the focus of Paul's life?* (Christ) Share words that tell about a person whose life is focused on Christ. Write these words on the board.

### Encourage Application

7. Say: *When a person is focused on Christ, they can face anything with confidence, courage, an attitude of hope and a realistic mindset.*

8. Ask the class to look for people next week who might not understand that they can have a hopeful life when they have trials, difficulties and troubles. Ask: *What would you say to this person about your own life and its focus?*

### Review of Lesson

1. Our personal relationship with Christ is the source of Christian joy.

2. God uses other people to encourage us. Christians can minister as they give glory to God.

3. Everything in life, both good and bad, can be useful when we give it to God.

4. Christians do not make joy. We express the joy Christ gives to us because it is a gift.

5. Christian joy increases our love for one another and gives us more knowledge of God. It makes us more useful to God for His purposes on this earth.

6. Life's troubles do not seem as large when our goal is honoring Christ and spreading the Gospel.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 1 PHILIPPIANS: REJOICING IN CHRIST

### Lesson 2 LIVE A LIFE AS THE GOOD NEWS SAYS YOU SHOULD

#### Lesson Focus

Living a life worthy of the gospel calls for following Christ in a life of humility, concern for serving others, and faithfulness-whatever it might cost us.

#### Focal Text

Philippians 1:27-2:15

#### Memory Verse

“You are to shine as lights among the sinful people of this world.”  
—Philippians 2:15b

#### Connect with Life

1. As the class arrives, divide them into two groups. Place a large letter “P” for one side and a large letter “R” for the other.

2. **Before class**, wrap garden gloves, a cooking pan, a belt, a book, etc. in gift wrap. Attach tags with one of these Bible verses under each gift: Philippians 1:27; Philippians 4:3; Philippians 2:15; Philippians 1:15. Place the gifts on a table at the front of the class.

Ask two people from each group (P and R) to come to the table and choose a gift to stand behind. Ask the class: *What must they do to take advantage of each of these gifts.* Instruct those standing beside the gifts: *Pick one up and open the gift.* Then ask the class, *What else must they do to get any good from the gift?* Point out that each gift must be used for the purpose it was given. (Garden gloves are not for washing dishes, a cooking pan is not for growing flowers, etc.)

Say: *The same is true with the gift of the Good News of Christ. The gift of salvation must be taken by each person. It must be used in living each day. It must be shared with others. Today’s*

*lesson tells us to live a life as the Good News of Christ says we should.*

#### Guide the Study

3. Ask the class members who opened the gifts to find and read the verses on the gift tags. After each verse is read, ask: *How does this verse say we should live?*

4. Bring the same two sections of a newspaper and place the pages in the wrong order. Give one to each group and ask each group to try to put their newspaper back in order. After two minutes, ask: *Do you find it easier to work if you do it together?*

5. Read Philippians 1:27. State that the church in Philippi was not working together as one. Read Acts 16:16-24 for information about Paul and Silas who were beaten and in prison. Ask: *How can we live as the Good News says we should?* Write ideas on the board. Use a different color marker and write: *Together as One With No Fear.*

6. Read Philippians 2:1-11. Ask the class to listen for:

- What Paul wanted the Philippians to do
- The example Paul said the Philippians should follow

State that these verses are like a poem which may have been sung during worship time in the early church. Read the verses again, and ask the class to think about them as a song. Write on the board in a different color marker: *Think as Christ Jesus Thought.* Explain these verses.

7. Read Philippians 2:12. Say: *These verses are sometimes called a puzzle (Pauline paradox).* Explain that these verses do not say we work for our salvation but that we work to show we are saved. Read Philippians 2:13. Remind the class that it is God who works in us. Allow time for the class to comment on what they think these verses mean to

them.

8. Read Philippians 2:14. Ask: *What is the difference between talking about (discussion) and arguing about what the Bible says?* Write on the board in a third color marker: *Making Our Discipleship Complete.*

### Encourage Application

9. Explain that Paul was a Roman citizen who had privileges (rights) and responsibilities. Write on the board some of the rights and responsibilities which US citizens have.

10. Ask the P group to list privileges which Christians have (being forgiven, having a faith, a family, a future). Ask the R group to list some responsibilities Christians have (live a life worthy of God).

11. Restate the “Lesson Focus.” Ask someone from the P group to lead in prayer thanking God for our privileges as Christians. Close with a prayer by someone from the R group asking God to help us lead our lives with responsibility

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas

#### Connect with Life

1. State that this lesson will help us discover how to live as the Good News says we should.

#### Guide the Study

2. Explain why Paul wrote this letter:

- The church at Philippi was divided (Philippians 1:27)
- Two women, Euodia and Syntache were having a serious disagreement (Philippians 4:2)
- Paul was concerned about Christians who talked about all the things they wished they did not have to do (Philippians 2:14)
- People were jealous and wanted to make trouble (Philippians 1:15)

3. Discuss how jealousy can and almost did destroy missions in the New Testament. State that jealousy is not what Christ wants. Ask: *What does Christ want?* (serving with humility)

4. Refer to the study guide and write the outline on the board. Use for class discussion:

The Gift of Suffering  
(Philippians 1:27-30)  
Reasons for Faithful Obedience  
(Philippians 2: 1-4)  
Faithful Obedience of Jesus  
(Philippians 2: 5-11)  
Following God’s Plan for Our Lives  
(Philippians 2:12-15)

### Encourage Application

5. Point out that Paul asked the church at Philippi to live as the Good News says we should. List privileges and responsibilities we have as American citizens.

6. Ask: *What rights and privileges do we have as Christians?*

7. Refer to “Things to Think About” in the study guide for discussion topics.

### Review of Lesson

1. Ask: *Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

- Salvation is not the end but the beginning of the Christian life. Living for Christ every day is a great example for the world today.
- Part of being a Christian is to live as part of the body of Christ in a local church.
- When a church does not agree together it hurts the witness of the church.
- The cause of division in the church is pride, which can blind us to God’s truth.
- Being without pride comes when members of a church are in right relationship with God and follow the example of Jesus.
- Churches should seek the best for each member and discover special gifts of each member.
- Christ has always been with God. He alone could die for us on the cross and make us right with God.
- Christians are supposed to be a source of strength and healing. We are to let our lights shine.
- When God calls His church to do something, He will give the strength to do it.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 1 PHILIPPIANS: REJOICING IN CHRIST Lesson 3 MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH YOUR LIFE

### Lesson Focus

People who make a difference for Christ give of themselves in serving others for Christ's sake.

### Focal Text

Philippians 2:19-30

### Memory Verse

“We have worked together like brothers. He was like a soldier fighting beside me.”  
—Philippians 2:25b

### Connect with Life

1. Bring a photo album of your family and friends. Open the album and tell about some of the pictures. Tell the class how these books help us remember and keep connected with family and friends.

### Guide the Study

2. Prepare the following teaching drama of Paul and his friends, Timothy and Epaphroditus. Introduce yourself as Paul and ask two students or others in your church to help you.

Paul (speaking to class): *I am in the middle of writing a letter to the church at Philippi. The people there are very human. (Write Philippians 2:19-20 on the board as you speak). I hope by the help of the Lord Jesus that I can send Timothy to you soon. It will comfort me when he brings news about you. I have no one else who is as interested in you as Timothy.*

Timothy: *Brother Paul is too kind. He treats me like a father does a son. Do you remember that my mother is a Jewish woman named Eunice?*

(Acts 16:1-2). *Paul chose me to go with him and Silas on the second missionary journey (Acts 16:3). For this mission to the city of Philippi, Paul chose me out of a group of others he could have sent. I am embarrassed for Paul to give me so much praise. In this letter, Paul gives the reasons he chose me.*

Paul: *Why am I sending Timothy to Philippi? “You know how Timothy proved to be such a true friend to me when we preached the Good News. He was like a son helping his father. I hope to send Timothy as soon as I know what they are going to do to me” (Philippians 2:23-24)..*

Epaphroditus: *Before Timothy could go, Paul also sent me back to Philippi. Paul told them I worked with him like we were brothers and like a soldier fighting beside him (Philippians 2:25). Paul said that the church at Philippi had helped him by sending me to Paul.*

Paul: *Epaphroditus became quite ill and almost died, but God showed loving-kindness to him and me (Philippians 2:26,27).*

Epaphroditus: *Paul told the church to take me in with joy. He knew the church would be glad to see me again and Paul would have less sorrow (Philippians 2:28-29).*

Paul: *Epaphroditus came close to death while working for Christ. Show respect for men like him.*

3. Invite the class to compare how Paul described Timothy (a true friend, a son, proven, interested in persons) and how Paul described Epaphroditus (a brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, minister, messenger).

### Encourage Application

4. Conclude the teaching drama with the following:

Paul (speaking again to Timothy and Epaphroditus): *You have your jobs now, go on to work.* (turning to class) *What about you? Why do you serve? Are you faithful to do the things you should? Do not think just of yourselves, but think of serving Christ.*

## **Supplemental Teaching Ideas**

### **Connect with Life**

1. Ask: *What is a letter of reference?* Bring an example to show the class. Ask: *What kinds of things do you write in a letter of reference?* Say: *This lesson is a letter of reference for Timothy and for Epaphroditus.*

### **Guide the Study**

2. Read Philippians 2:19-24. List on the board some of the good things Paul says about Timothy. Ask: *If you had to write a letter of reference for Timothy what others things would you add to this list?*

3. Read Philippians 2:25-30. Repeat the list on the board for Epaphroditus.

4. Read Philippians 2:20 again. Ask: *What do you think Paul meant when he said he had no one else like Timothy?*

5. Point out that Timothy lived like we should today. (To care about and minister to the people in our church, look for ways to share our faith, give of our time, money, and talents, etc).

6. Ask how the way Epaphroditus lived could teach us to live today. (He was a brother and concerned about the things of Christ. He was a fellow worker and interested in missions. He was a fellow soldier. He was willing to face whatever happened for the cause of Christ.)

### **Encourage Application**

7. Ask: *What has God asked you to do for Him? How has God helped you to be ready for this?* Invite people in your church or association who do different ministries and who use volunteers to come and share with the class. Ask these people to tell about what they do and how people from your class can help them. If you cannot get these people to come, find out this information and tell it yourself.

8. Lead the class to talk about what we can learn from Timothy and Epaphroditus. Close with prayer that God will guide us to use our gifts to minister to others which He has blessed us with.

### **Review of Lesson**

1. When we become a Christian we start making a difference with our lives. Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus were leaders who were committed to Christ.

2. We can make a difference when we understand God is at work in our world and that God chooses to use us in that work.

3. To be used in God's work means that we must have a deep trust in the Lord and the Lord's plans for us. We must not worry about what is happening to us.

4. We make a good difference when we believe that the church is more important than our own personal feelings or selfish motives.

5. People who make a difference will go through times of testing. Timothy and Epaphroditus passed the test because they were true followers of Christ.

6. Timothy learned early in life to make a difference. His mother and grandmother helped teach him.

7. We should learn from Paul how to help teach younger Christians how to be good followers of Christ.

8. Young Christians should be given ways to help do God's work.

9. When we serve God with other Christians we become stronger Christians, and we learn to love our fellow Christians better.

10. God can use our work for Christ, even when our plans do not always work like we had hoped.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 1 PHILIPPIANS: REJOICING IN CHRIST

### Lesson 4 KEEP FOCUSED ON KNOWING CHRIST

#### Lesson Focus

Learn to know Christ fully and value who Christ is.

#### Focal Text

Philippians 3:2-14

#### Memory Verse

“My eyes are on the prize. I want to win the race and get the prize of God’s call from heaven through Christ Jesus.”

—Philippians 2:14

#### Connect with Life

1. Say: *Many Christians do not start a new way of living after they become Christians. We all need to know Christ fully. This is the main idea for this lesson.*

#### Guide the Study

2. **Before class**, borrow from a local coach these items used in a track program—finish line tape, starting block for racers and other items such as a hurdle. Display these or pictures of them at the front of the room. Name each item and describe how they are used. Place them in the order they are used in a race. Say: *Today’s lesson helps us know Christ and choose the goal of spending our lives knowing Him even better.*

3. Read Philippians 3:2-3. Say: *There were those during the time of Paul’s writing who taught that the way to worship God demanded keeping certain rules.*

4. Read Philippians 3:4-6 and point out how Paul had lived a life by these rules. Ask the class to look for ways some people put their trust in the wrong things. Ask: *What did Paul say about what was wrong with putting our trust in obeying rules*

*instead of knowing Christ?* State that Paul said that obeying rules was nothing when compared with knowing Christ.

5. Show the piece of finish tape or a picture of someone crossing the finishing line and breaking the tape. Read Philippians 3:7-11. Write the following outline on a poster board, or use a white plastic trash bag cut into a single sheet and write on it with markers. It will stay on the wall with static electricity and a couple of small pieces of tape.

#### *Complete Salvation*

#### *Philippians 3:7-11*

*I. A new sense of what is important*

*II. A new goal for living*

*III. A new understanding of how to be right with God*

*IV. A new hope of being raised again to live a life with no end*

6. Write in large letters on the board: *TO KNOW CHRIST*. Ask: *What does it mean to know Christ?* Bring a Bible dictionary or Bibles in different versions and languages of those present. Look at the words “knowing Christ” to find out what the words mean. Discuss what the class finds.

7. Read Philippians 3:12-14. Point out that knowing Christ does not mean we have to become perfect. Review what these words say about being Christians. Say: *Paul wanted to know Christ more and more. He wanted to continue going forward in his goal of knowing Christ fully.*

#### Encourage Application

8. Ask the questions from “Things to Think About” in the study guide.

9. Close by sharing how important it is to live the Christian life every day. Learning to know Christ fully means we find joy in our Christian life. Close

with prayer that the class will discover the importance of having a goal of knowing Christ fully.

## **Supplemental Teaching Ideas**

### **Connect with Life**

1. Bring to class several of these items: an unused ticket to an event, an unopened CD, a magazine in a sealed package, a can of soda, etc. Ask: *What is alike about each of these items?* (unopened; not enjoyed; useless, etc.) Point out that unless the items are opened and used, played, enjoyed, etc., they will never do any good. Ask: *What does this say about the Christian life?*

2. Say: *Think of a word that describes your Christian life at this time.* Write the following words on the board to help the class get started: *cold, rusty, warm, empty, the best, roller coaster, mountain top.* Ask: *What is it in your Christian life that brings out these words? What has limited your Christian life so that you are not going further in knowing Christ?*

### **Guide the Study**

3. Read Philippians 3:2-3. Write on the board: *Belief in the Wrong Thing.* Share a short lecture about the group in Philippi who taught that the only way to worship God required the Jewish rite of circumcision. Paul said they depended on the religious act of becoming a Jew to be a Christian.

4. Read Philippians 3:4-6. Ask the class to listen for the things Paul said about himself as a Jew and as a Christian.

5. Read Philippians 3:7-11. Ask: *How did Paul describe salvation?* Review the ways Paul talked about his salvation.

6. Read Philippians 3:12-14. Ask: *Are you more like a pioneer or a settler?* Define the two words. A pioneer is always pushing forward; the settler is looking for a place to settle down. Ask: *What do you think Paul was — a pioneer or a settler? If you think Paul was a pioneer, what made him want to go forward?*

### **Encourage Application**

7. Use the questions from the study guide.

Encourage the class to think about trying to know Christ fully.

8. Lead in prayer. Invite the class to ask God to help them value Christ supremely and know Christ fully.

### **Review of Lesson**

1. Christians should be aware of false teachers and false doctrines. Such people should not be allowed to hurt churches or people in the churches. We should provide warnings to all Christians, especially new Christians.

2. Any teaching is evil that says that Christ is not different from all gods. Any teaching is evil that says salvation can be found apart from Christ.

3. Christians are like all humans and sometimes forget to give glory to God. We take pride in what we can do.

4. When we become a Christian it changes all our values. Paul said that everything in his life was a loss compared to “knowing Christ” (Philippians 3:8).

5. The Christian life is a journey of learning, failure, winning, and change. No one lives the Christian life perfectly, but all Christians should try to reach the goal Christ has set for us. When we live close to Christ, He gives us power to live for Him.

6. When we think too much about the past—whether it was good or bad—it takes our eyes off the goal of living for Jesus each day in the present.

7. The final prize for every believer is an eternal relationship with Christ. Knowing that others have become Christians because of our testimony also is a great reward.

8. Christians are called to heaven because of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross (Philippians 3:14). This gives us life that lasts for ever.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 1 PHILIPPIANS: REJOICING IN CHRIST

### Lesson 5 *LIVE WITH TRUE JOY*

#### **Lesson Focus**

A life of true joy comes from putting into practice our faith in the Lord. This kind of joy does not come from what is going on outside of us.

#### **Focal Text**

Philippians 4:2-19

#### **Memory Verse**

“Be full of joy always because you belong to the Lord. Again I say, be full of joy!”  
—Philippians 4:4

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Bring an old family Bible, a framed wedding picture, a photo album, or something that represents a memory for you. Display these in class.
2. Write the words to this song for the class:  
*I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart.*  
Let the class sing it. Ask if anyone remembers singing this song before.

#### **Guide the Study**

3. Ask: *How do Christians live with true joy? What do you remember from your past that brings joy? Are there any songs you sing that make you happy?* State that two women of Philippi had been causing problems. Read Philippians 4:2-5. Say: *Paul wanted the women to remember times when they all got along. Paul asked them to let people see how gentle they were.*
4. Read Philippians 4:6-7. Invite the class to name things that have worried them this past week. List these on the board. Stop to pray about them. After the prayer time, ask if these verses on joy could

help them.

5. Read the list of joyous things in Philippians 4:8. Say: *Thinking about things of joy helps us to have true joy.* Bring a page from a computer printer with lots of mistakes. Explain this phrase: *Garbage in, garbage out.* Encourage the class to share how they can put in good things and keep garbage out of their thinking.

6. Read Philippians 4:9-19. Say: *Christian examples help us. Paul told the Philippians to do as he did.* (Be content and satisfied in all things, be thankful for the help they had been given, realize that the strength we need comes from God, recognize that God would meet all their needs.)

#### **Encourage Application**

7. Ask: *Why is it so hard to be joyful when we are having hard times?*

8. Give a 3 x 5 card to each class member. Ask the members to write on the card a number from 1 to 10. (Number 1 is the lowest and 10 is highest). Ask them to write a number down which tells how much joy they feel. Close with prayer that each person can learn to have a life full of the kind of joy that Christ gives.

#### **Supplemental Teaching Ideas**

##### **Connect with Life**

1. Write on the board: *Joy in our life: not from what is outside, but from faith in Christ.* Read this to the class. Ask the class to think about these words during the lesson.

##### **Encourage Application**

2. Read Philippians 4:2-5. Ask the class to share ideas about what these verses teach about joy.

3. Read Philippians 4:6-7. Ask these questions and list the answers given on the board.

- *What things do we worry about?*
- *How does worrying help?* (State that worrying does not help. Worrying comes when we are not in control. We do not worry so much about what we can control.)
- *What should we do when we find ourselves worrying?* (We should pray.)
- *What should we include when we pray?* (Tell God what we need and thank Him.)

4. Read Philippians 4:8. Point out that this verse tells us to think on things that lead our hearts and minds to Christ Jesus. Explain each phrase. Give groups one phrase at the top of a piece of paper. Ask them to draw a picture of that phrase. Or, assign different groups to prepare a mini-drama with their phrase. Or, give a word to each group to act out and let the others guess what word they are using.

State that if we are going to become the men and women God wants us to be, we must take care of what we think and make sure we think about these right things.

5. Read Philippians 4:9-19. Say: *Paul tells us to look at what he does and do the same.* Ask: *What are some ways we can do what Paul did?* (Be confident and happy in everything that happens to us, be thankful for the help God gives us, remember that the strength we need comes from God, know that God will give us everything we need)

### **Encourage Application**

6. Share this story: *Two women were in the hospital at the same time. Both were very ill and both lived alone. Each had a son who lived in another state. Woman #1: I am so unhappy. My son is so bad. He only calls me one time a week. He never comes home except at Christmas and during his summer vacation. He is so awful. He ought to give up his job and move back here. Woman #2: My son is so wonderful. I know my son loves me. He never lets a week go by without calling me. He comes home to visit me at least two times every year. I have so many blessings.* Say, *These two women are alike. Why is one sad and the other full of joy?*

7. Ask the class if they know someone who has true

joy in Christ even during hard times in their lives.

8. Suggest that the class keep a list this week of blessings as they think of them. Tell them to write more each day. On Saturday they are to thank God for each of these blessings. Encourage the class to consider ways they can express their joy this week.

### **Review of Lesson**

1. Problems between church members can hurt their witness for Christ. Members should keep their mind on Jesus.

2. Christians should be full of joy. When we worry we do not have the joy Christ wants us to have. We should make our requests known to God in prayer and trust Him with thankful hearts. God's peace is for all Christians. His peace protects the hearts and minds of believers.

3. A believer should live the right kind of life. Jesus shows us how to live. We must be truthful if we are to share the truth of the Good News.

4. Because we have so many things we are told we should buy, it is hard to be happy without wanting everything. The wise Christian learns to be happy with what they have.

5. God's work is blessed when we share what we have with those who are doing God's work. We are part of their ministry, too, when we give.

6. Christian giving is worship. Every gift is a love offering when we are in love with Christ.

7. God always has more blessings for us. We never have a need that God cannot meet. God shows us His love for us through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19). The way our needs are met always bring honor to our Lord.

8. When Christians have a right understanding of God's love and care for us, we will rejoice in the Lord always.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 2 COLOSSIANS: CHRIST ABOVE ALL Lesson 6 CHRIST IS NUMBER ONE

### Lesson Focus

Because of who Christ is, we should put Christ first in our lives.

### Focal Text

Colossians 1:4-18

### Memory Verse

“I pray that God’s great power will make you strong, and that you will have joy as you wait and do not give up.”

—Colossians 1:11

### Connect with Life

1. Give each person in class a 3 x 5 card. Ask members to write their name on the card and write some words that describe who Christ is. Collect the cards to use later.

2. Bring the sports section from your newspaper and show the boxes which show the rankings of different sports teams. Say: *Sports teams are listed by their wins and losses.* Tell the names of teams that are number one in several sports. Read the “Lesson Focus,” and say that we want to learn from this lesson who Christ is and how to put Christ in first place in our lives.

### Guide the Study

3. Ask the class to look at the book of Colossians in their Bible. See who can first find the total number of verses in this book. Help the class to see that there are ninety-five verses. Ask members to consider reading Colossians every day this coming week—in English and their heart language if they speak two languages. Give an introduction to Colossians.

4. Read Colossians 1:1-14. Ask: *Why do you think Paul said that the location of the readers was “in*

*Christ” before it was “in Colosse?* Point out that Paul believed their spiritual life was more important than the place where they lived. Their spiritual address was more important than their home address. Point out the name of this unit: Christ Above All.

5. Read Paul’s prayer again in Colossians 1:9-12. Ask: *How would you feel if you knew someone was praying for you like that?*

6. Read Colossians 1:13-14 and 20-22. Ask the class to look at these verses and find out what God did. (took us out of a life of darkness, put us in His holy nation, bought us by His blood, made us free, gave peace) As class members find the answers, write them on the board. Emphasize how much Christ did.

7. Return the 3 x 5 cards to the class members. Ask each one to silently read what they wrote. Ask them to turn over the card and write more of what they have learned from reading this passage. Ask class members to share what they have learned.

### Encourage Application

8. Read Colossian 1:18. Ask the class to agree or disagree with this statement: *Either Christ is first or we are first.* Ask: *Who should be first?*

9. Ask: *Do we ever act as if some person or group is in charge of the church? What happens then?*

10. Show the sports pages again. Name some teams that are in first place. Ask: *Who is always to be in first place in the lives of believers?* Ask: *In what ways do you show that Christ is number 1 in your life?*

11. Using the 3 x 5 cards again, ask the class to decide on at least one way they will show that Christ is first in their lives. Suggest that they keep the card in their Bibles as a bookmark all week to be a

reminder of who Christ is and how they show that He is first in their lives.

## **Supplemental Teaching Ideas**

### **Connect with Life**

1. Review the background of Colossians.
2. Lead members to locate the city of Colosse, using a Bible map. Point out that the city was located in what is now modern Turkey.
3. Explain that there was a problem with wrong belief. Explain about the teachings of Gnosticism. (God did not create all of the world, as the world is evil, and Christ did not have all the power the New Testament says He does). Ask: *What are some wrong ideas about Christ that are in the world today?*

### **Guide the Study**

4. Read Colossians 1:1-14. Hand out a pencil and piece of paper for class members to write down what they learn from these verses about Christ.
5. Say: *Three words that Paul used often together are in verses 4-5. What are they?* (faith, hope, and love) Say: *These three words tell about the Christian life. Faith is our relationship to God; hope tells about our promise of the future, and love shows how to treat others.*
6. Read Colossians 1:6. Point out that this is a missionary message. Ask members how your church supports missions in the local area, the state, and around the world.
7. Read Colossians 1:10. Sing the hymn *Living for Jesus*. Or provide copies for class members to read.
8. Read Colossians 1:13-14. Ask the class to make a list of what God has done.
9. Read Colossians 1:19-23. Then write on the board, who Christ is and what Christ did. Say: *All of God is in Christ, and Christ makes us right with God.* Sing *Down at the Cross* and ask the class to see how these verses are like verses 19-20. Point out that verses 22-23 tell how sure we can be that God

will bring us, holy and pure, to Christ.

10. Read Colossians 1:25-17, while the class listens for what these verses teach about Christ. Point out Christ's part in creating the world, and that He is first of all.

11. Read Colossians 1:18. Ask: *What is wrong with thinking of the church as a business company with the pastor as its chief executive officer.* Emphasize that Christ is above all.

12. Read Colossians 1:13-23. Make two lists on the board side by side. On one side write what the verses say about who Christ is. On the other side write what Christ does.

### **Encourage Application**

13. Use questions from the study guide. Encourage members to put Christ first in their lives this week.

14. Read Matthew 6:33 and close with prayer

### **Review of Lesson**

1. Christians should stay faithful to Christ when there are church struggles or they hear of false teachings.
2. Faith grows when we are in Christ.
3. The Good News keeps nothing hidden from those who respond to Christ. The Good News is God's full truth and leads us to full salvation.
4. Christians must look for God's wisdom as we live. God can always change our lives through the power of Christ.
5. Salvation is necessary because we are sinners. This saves us from deep spiritual darkness and brings us to light.
6. Christ is in all ways and at all times superior to all. He alone can bring us salvation. All will bow to Christ.
7. We come to God only through Christ's death on the cross. We can stand firm in Jesus.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 2 COLOSSIANS: CHRIST ABOVE ALL Lesson 7 RELATIONSHIP —NOT RULES

### Lesson Focus

Life in Christ comes from Christ and not from keeping rules.

### Focal Text

Colossians 2:6-23

### Memory Verse

“As you have put your trust in Christ Jesus the Lord to save you from the punishment of sin, now let Him lead you in every step.”

—Colossians 2:6

### Connect with Life

1. Say: *The Colossians had a problem with keeping rules. They added this idea as another way of being saved or being spiritual.*

### Guide the Study

2. Read Colossians 2:6-8. Ask: *What did Paul say the Colossians should do to make sure they continue to live in Christ?* Ask the class to list all the commands while you write them on the board.

3. Point out that in verses 6-7 Paul begins talking about traditions. These are things people did because they had always done them. Say: *Paul told the Colossians that Christ was all they needed. They did not need traditions.*

4. Ask students to share what they think “Jesus Christ the Lord” means. Ask: *In verses 6-7, what words did Paul use to tell how Christians should live?* (Have your roots planted deep in Christ, grow in Him, let Him make you strong, be full of thanks to Him)

5. Read Colossians 2:6 and Matthew 13:5-7. State

that these verses remind us that we should plant our lives deep in the Christian soil to make sure we do not get caught in false teachings. In the time of Paul there were those who tried to make Christ a lesser god. Say: *The false teachers tried to make Jesus less than He was. The false teachers said Christ was one of many gods between earth and heaven.* Ask: *Are there false teachers today also?*

6. Read Colossians 2:9-15. Say: *Paul taught about who Christ is and what He has done for each of us.* Make two columns on the board. Above one, write: *Who is Christ?* Above the other, write: *What has Christ done?* Say: *Paul has written several things about Christ.* List what he said on the board.

7. Read Colossians 2:16-23. Say: *Because of who Christ is and what He has done, we do not have to do anything to earn or keep our salvation.*

### Encourage Application

8. Discuss “Things to Think About.”

9. Ask: *In what ways do Christians sometimes give more attention to rules than to Christ?*

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas

#### Connect with Life

1. Write the “Lesson Focus” on the board. Read it together.

#### Guide the Study

2. Read Colossians 2:6-8. Write these phrases on the chalkboard: *Roots planted in Christ, Grow in Him, Get your strength from Him, Be full of thanks.* Ask *How do these words describe the Christian life?*

Then ask:

- *What kind of life is suggested by the word “roots?”* (farming)
- *What is suggested by the phrase “grow in Him?”* (knowledge)
- *What was Paul warning the Christians against*

*in verse 8? (false teaching)*

- *Do you know of anything like this today?*

3. Read Colossians 2:9-15. Ask the class to listen for what Christ did.

4. Point out that baptism is mentioned in verse 12. Say: *Baptism is a picture of what has happened to the believer. They have died to their old sinful life and been born again to the Christian life. It is also a picture of how Jesus died and was raised again.*

Explain that the false teachers at Colosse wanted the Christians to go through circumcision, the physical act of becoming a Jew. Paul said that belief in Christ was all that was needed. Baptism is a symbol of that belief.

5. Emphasize verse 15 and how Christ defeated the power of the leaders of this world and the powers of darkness.

6. Read Colossians 2: 16-23 and find the verses which match the Jewish customs of 1 Chronicles 23:31; 2 Chronicles 24: 31:3; Nehemiah 10:33; Hosea 10:11.

7. State that in Colossians 2:19 Paul said the main problem they had was not keeping “Christ as Head.” Ask: *What are the dangers today when a believer or a church does not keep Christ as the Head?*

8. Ask members to look again at verses 18 and 23 to find two words that are the same. Identify the word *pride*. Ask: *How are people who live by religious rules in danger of having pride today? Continue by asking these questions:*

- *Why does it not work to live by religious rules?*
- *What does it do to believers to try to live by religious rules? To non-believers?*
- *How can true Christians tell the difference between doing things we have always done that are important and doing things that are not important.*

### **Encourage Application**

9. Ask the class to consider what they do so that they will focus on trusting in Christ and not on keeping rules. Close with prayer.

### **Review of Lesson**

1. False teaching can sometimes look right. Christians must check everything with Christ as Lord and with God’s Word.

2. Christians can know God through the person and work of Christ. Anything else may point to Christ, but has no power to save.

3. Salvation is possible only through God’s power shown in the cross of Christ. We are changed from death to life by this same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

4. Religious rule-keeping may not be wrong, but it is only a picture of the truth. Truth is found only in Jesus (Colossians 2:17).

5. Each Christian and each church must remember Christ is the Head of all things (Colossians 2:19). When Christ is not first above all, we stop growing and fall into sin.

6. The Christian life is not a life of keeping rules. We are called to be in a growing relationship with Jesus.

7. Christians should not do anything that does not honor God or do anything that hurts others or themselves. At the same time we must not let ourselves become proud of what we are doing.

8. We will win over sinners if we walk daily with Christ. This winning cannot come by our own power.

9. We can never earn our salvation. Salvation comes as a gift from God through the cross of Christ.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 2 COLOSSIANS: CHRIST OVER ALL Lesson 8 *CHRIST IS OUR LIFE*

### Lesson Focus

Christians are to live in such a way that we can show that Christ is our life.

### Focal Text

Colossians 3:1-15, 18-21

### Memory Verse

“If then you have been raised with Christ, keep looking for the good things of heaven. This is where Christ is seated on the right side of God.”

—Colossians 3:1

### Connect with Life

1. Review the two other lessons in this unit from Colossians. Ask: *How can Christians live a life that shows they are related to Christ without acting like they are better than others?* State that Christ is all in all. Since in Christ we live and move and have our being, it is in Christ alone that we find the power to live the Christian life.

### Guide the Study

2. Read Colossians 3:1-9. Instruct the members to listen for what Paul wanted the Colossians to do.

3. Explain that this lessons tells Christians how to live. The last lesson reminded us not to live by rules. This lesson teaches us that Christian living comes from Christ living in us, rather than rules that are outside.

4. Read Colossians 3:1-4. Give 3 x 5 cards and pencils or pens to all class members. Ask them to rewrite these verses substituting the word *I* every time the text says the word *you*. For example, “Since I have been raised with Christ . . . I will

keep my mind . . .” When finished, exchange the card with the person next to them. Or, work together to write one version on the board.

5. Read Colossians 3:6. Comment that God’s anger is not that of someone with a temper. It is the payment for disobeying God’s laws.

6. Read Colossians 3:9-17. List what we are instructed to “put on.” Say: *Some people call these verses the Christian’s uniform.*

7. Read Colossians 1:28. Show how this verse talks about preaching and telling people how to live. Read Colossians 3:5-11. Say: *These are the verses which are a warning.* Read Colossians 3:12-17. Say: *These verses are the teaching part.* Read Colossians 3:16 again and compare with Colossians 1:28.

8. Refer to Colossians 3:16. Ask: *What Christian hymns and songs have helped you have peace and know Christ better?* Plan to sing two or three favorite songs at this time.

9. Look at the word *love* in Colossians 3:14. Ask: *How does love help believers do what they should?*

10. Refer to Colossians 3:16-17. Say: *These verses show how we can receive strength to wear the Christian’s uniform.*

11. Read Colossians 3:18-4:1. Ask the class to listen for the three areas of instruction. (husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and slaves) Emphasize that we understand what these verses mean when we understand God’s kind of love.

12. Read Colossians 3:21. Ask: *How can we encourage children to do what is right?*

### Encourage Application

13. Discuss “Things to Think About” in the study

guide. Review the new vocabulary and the memory verse.

14. Encourage the class to leave behind in their lives one of the things Paul suggests and put on one thing that he suggests. Close with prayer that God will help us do that.

### **Supplemental Teaching Ideas**

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Point out that Paul's letters begin with teachings about God and then end with how to live what we learn. State that this lesson from Chapter 3 is the practical part of Paul's teachings.

#### **Guide the Study**

2. Read Colossians 3:3-4. Explain that these truths are the beginning of verses which will tell about the kind of life Christians are to live.

3. Read Colossians 3:5-9. Ask class members to give examples from the Bible of people who did not destroy the desire to sin. (David, etc.)

4. Read Colossians 3:10-17. Draw two columns on the board.

<b>Take Off</b>	<b>Put On</b>
Old	New
Goodbye	Hello
False	True

Ask: *What words from these verses can you add?*  
Remind the class that it is impossible to "take off" and "put on" at the same time.

5. Read Colossians 3:18 –19. (Suggestion: A woman could read 18 and man could read 19.)

6. Read Colossians 3:21-32. Explain that this was written at a time when people owned other people as slaves. Read verse 17 again. State that every relationship comes from a love for Christ.

#### **Encourage Application**

7. Use "Questions to Think About" from the study guide. Allow time for the class to discuss what is important in this lesson.

8. Review vocabulary words and practice saying the memory verse for the lesson.

9. Close by saying or singing the words of the chorus *The Bond of Love*.

#### **Review of Lesson**

Use the review by cutting apart and giving a different one to a student or group of students. Ask them to find the scripture passage which these summary statements came from.

1. Becoming a Christian brings new life. We are to recognize that this life on earth does not last, and we need to keep our hearts and minds on those things which last forever.

2. Part of the Christian life means that we will stay away from evil. We must destroy the desires to sin.

3. Christ's power changes us. It does not matter where we are from, whether we are men or women, what religion we come from, or what our culture is. The church is a gathering place of all who have Christ as Savior.

4. Christians must do more than stay away from sin. We must add those things which make us like Christ.

5. Christians grow when we learn to respect one another. We must treat others as Christ treats people. In this way we become like Christ.

6. All believers must help bring about peace in their churches and neighborhoods.

7. Christians honor Christ when they honor the different family members.

8. Our faith in Christ must be taken to the places where we work. Christ is honored at work when workers and bosses are responsible and know that they are equal before God.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 3 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS: FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE

### Lesson 9 A CHURCH FOR WHICH TO BE GRATEFUL

#### Lesson Focus

A church for which to be grateful is one which is faithful to the Good News by showing faith, hope, and love.

#### Focal Text

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; 2:14-15

#### Memory Verse

“While praying to God our Father, we always remember your work of faith and your acts of love and your hope that never gives up in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

—1 Thessalonians 1:3

#### Connect with Life

1. Give each person a piece of 8 1/2 x 11 paper. Ask class members to fold, tear, or make their piece of paper into something which shows how they feel about church. Demonstrate by making a door, which shows the church should be open to all people. Or tear the paper into the shape of a person, which says that the church is made up of people-not a building).

2. Comment that in this study we will learn about Paul’s joy and thankfulness for the church at Thessalonica.

#### Guide the Study

3. To preview the study, read Acts 17:6. Then read Acts 17:1-13 and ask the class to find the answer to the questions Who? What? Where? When? Why? State: *Beginning the church at Thessalonica was not an easy task. There were those who mistrusted Paul, opposed him, and used violence. Starting the church in a short amount of time shows a great example of church growth in the New Testament.*

4. Prepare a poster with the following outline for the class to see:

- I. *A Missionary’s Prayer of Thanksgiving*  
(1 Thessalonians 1:1-5)
- II. *A Church Planter’s Dream*  
(1 Thessalonians 1:6-10)
- III. *Suffering Servants*  
(1 Thessalonians 2:13-14)

5. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5. Ask: *If you were writing a letter to the church, telling your feelings, what would you say? How does this compare with what Paul said?*

6. Read this phrase from verse 3: *work of faith, acts of love and hope that never gives up.* Ask class members to underline it. Point out that Paul used the words *faith, love* and *hope* in many of his writings. See Romans 5:1-5; I Corinthians 13:13; Galatians; Colossians 1:4-5.

7. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10. Ask: *What did the church do when there were troubles?* Point out that Paul did not have to say anything to them because they were doing so well.

8. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14. Write these words on the board: *Power* and *Action*. Ask:

- *What was the source of power for the church?*
- *What was the action of the church?*

#### Encourage Application

9. Share that churches today face problems like the Thessalonian church did. Ask: *What are some problems that our church may be facing? How are we doing at solving these problems? Because of what we learned in this lesson, should we do something differently?*

10. Ask: *On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate how grateful you are for your church?* Allow time

for response or ask class members to write down the number on a piece of paper. Ask: *Are you as grateful as Paul was?*

11. Close by reading 1 Thessalonians 1:2. Point out that this was Paul's prayer for the church in Thessalonica. Ask: *How often do you pray for your church?* Close with prayer for your church.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

1. Say: *I am going to say a word, and you say the first words that come to your mind when I say it.* (Words might include: church, family, love, growth, body of Christ.)

2. State that this study is about Paul writing to tell how thankful he was for the Thessalonian church.

### Guide the Study

3. Read Acts 17:1-9. Tell about the city of Thessalonica. (The largest, most important city, it was the capitol of Macedonia. It was a wealthy city on the trade route from east to west. There was a large Jewish community as well as other religions. Paul came here after he was forced to leave Philippi and started a church in this port city.)

4. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5. Ask the following questions:

- *How did Paul feel about the church in Thessalonica?*
- *What words in verses 1 and 2 show his true feelings?*
- *In verse 3, what three words are most important?*
- *What does verse 4 tell about God and the church?*
- *How did the Good News come to those who received it?*

5. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10. Ask the class to look at these verses and learn about how the church faced their problems:

- Verse 6 — followed the example of the missionary team, had the joy of the Holy Spirit
- Verse 7 — showed others how to live
- Verse 8 — spoke the Word of Christ in many

places

- Verse 9 — never worshipped false gods
- Verse 10 — waited for Christ's return

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8. Point out that this church became known through the whole area.

Use these questions to guide discussion:

- *How important is the reputation of a church? Why?*
- *Why does the church face problems?*

7. Point out that verse 10 gives us hope that God's church will win, and verses 13-14 tell how these believers were faithful.

### Encourage Application

8. Use the study guide "Questions to Think About" to guide class discussion.

9. Ask: *How have your feelings about your church changed after this study?*

10. Invite church staff members to come to the class towards for the end of the class session. Ask each one to introduce themselves and be prepared to tell the class how to best pray for them. If they can not come, bring a picture display and written prayer requests for staff members.

11. Close by asking for members to pray for the church.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 3 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS: FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE Lesson 10 LEADERS WHO INSPIRE FOLLOWERS

### Lesson Focus

Church leaders help us want to be followers when they serve God and the church with faith, honesty, and love.

### Focal Text

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 5:12-13

### Memory Verse

“You must think much of them and love them because of their work. Live in peace with each other.”

—1 Thessalonians 5:13

### Connect with Life

1. **Before class**, prepare and place the following sentences about leadership on large pieces of paper around the room:

- A leader should be a servant.
- A leader should develop a team around him or her.
- Our church needs more leaders.
- A true leader places people above programs.
- A good leader talks with those he or she leads.
- A good leader is a good listener.
- A good leader should always be honest.
- A good leader must also be a good follower.

As members arrive, call attention to the sentences and tell them they will be used later.

2. Vertically on the board write: *LEADER*. Make and acrostic by asking class members to give words for each letter that tell something about a good leader. For example:

- L—loving
- E—energetic, enthusiastic
- A—attentive, active
- D—devoted
- E—encourager
- R—ready, reliable

3. Ask: *Which of these words are words that are helpful to those in a church?* State that this lesson will talk about leaders who inspire others to follow.

### Guide the Study

4. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-2. State that Paul shared in his missionary work; he did not do it alone. The word “we” means Paul, Timothy, and Silas.

5. Ask: *Why is a team important for doing missions?* Allow time for members to speak and comment that every leader must have others on the team.

6. Read 1Thessalonians2:1-12. Make one list that tells what a leader is. Make a separate list that tells what a leader is not. Ask members to fill in the blanks. Your list might look like this:

<b>What a Leader Is</b>	<b>What a Leader Is Not</b>
Has difficult times (v. 2)	Not wrong (v. 3)
Trusted by God (v. 4)	Trying to fool (v. 3)

Continue the list through verse 12.

7. Explain to the class that the lives and words of Paul and those who helped him showed that they were good leaders. Paul knew that church leaders must act this way.

8. Ask: *How should we think about leaders in our church?* Allow time for comments. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 to see what Paul said.

9. Say: *Leaders must lead by example. Leaders earn the right to be leaders by their example of hard work, by being filled with the spirit of Christ, and by caring for God’s people.*

### Encourage Application

10. Point to the leadership sentences on the wall. Ask class members to get up and go stand by the sentence that they agree with the most.

11. Ask the class to look at “Things to Think About” in their study guide. Allow time to share and discuss.

12. Give a note card to each class member asking them to write a thank you note to a church leader. Collect the cards and deliver them for your class. Close in prayer, thanking God for good church leaders.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

1. Ask: *Who is the best leader (of any kind) that you know? What makes that person such a good leader?* Write answers on the board.

2. Prepare a poster with these fill in the blanks:

#### Church Leadership Needs

Our church needs leaders who are \_\_\_\_\_.

Our church needs leaders in the area of \_\_\_\_\_.

A person would want to be a leader in our church because \_\_\_\_\_.

### Guide the Study

3. Read the “Lesson Focus” aloud. Allow time for discussion.

4. Prepare the following outline:

*Leaders Who Inspire Followers*  
1 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 5:12-13

- I. Working as a Team (2:1)
- II. The Right Spirit (1-6a)
- III. What Makes a Good Leader? (2:6b-12)
- IV. Earning the Right to Lead (5:1-13)

5. Discuss how important it is for leaders to work as a team. Share examples from your church.

6. Ask the class to turn to Acts 17:1-9 from the past lesson. State that the things that happened in Acts help us understand what Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 2:1-2.

7. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-6a. Ask: *What do these verses teach us about real leaders?* Share the following:

- Paul and his team came to Thessalonica with great courage.
- They came with honesty.
- Paul, Silas, and Timothy did not serve so they would gain praise from people.

8. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:6b-12. Ask class members to look at each verse and list what a good leader is. Write the answers on the board. Explain that some verses may give more than one.

9. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13. Use the following questions to help with the discussion:

- What did Paul think the church’s feelings should be toward church leaders?
- What do you think “work” in verse 12 means when we talk about leaders?
- Where does a leader get his or her authority?
- How should we treat those who lead us?

### Encourage Application

10. Make a list of church leaders to give to the class. Ask class members to pray regularly for these leaders.

11. Ask members to think about themselves as leaders. Read the following:

*Paul and his fellow leaders showed us how to be good leaders. Do any of the following apply to your life?*

- *They spoke the truth which they knew about Christ.*
- *They led because they cared about people.*
- *They did not try to trick or fool crowds of people, but spoke the truth about God’s Son, Jesus.*
- *They did not care about making lots of money.*
- *They did not try to get people to say good things about them.*

12. Close with prayer, asking God to help all of us become the kind of leaders He wants.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 3 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS: FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE Lesson 11 INSTRUCTIONS FOR LIVES THAT PLEASE GOD

### Lesson Focus

Christians are to love so they may please God and bless others.

### Focal Text

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; 5:14-21

### Memory Verse

“By doing this, you will be respected by those who are not Christians. Then you will not be in need and others will not have to help you.”  
—1 Thessalonians 4:12

### Connect with Life

1. **Before class**, find an object which looks different on the outside from the inside, such as a coconut. Or bring a picture. Ask members to describe the object, then ask: *How is the inside of the object different from the outside?* Explain that just because we do not know the value of what is inside does not mean that it has no value.

2. Note that in this lesson Paul encourages the people of God to live out their faith in all parts of their lives. Say: *Our Christian lives should not be hidden from others inside a shell (like a coconut shell). We should show God’s nature in all we do.*

### Guide the Study

3. Hand out slips of papers with the following scriptures for your class to look up and find. Deuteronomy 5:15; 7:18; 8:2; 8:18; 9:7; 9:27; 15:15; 16:12. Prepare copies of the verses if it would be hard for your class to find them.

4. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2. Comment that in this passage Paul encouraged the Thessalonian church to do what God asked His people to do in

the book of Deuteronomy. Ask for the assigned verses from Deuteronomy to be read. Suggest that one word is repeated in these verses. Ask: *What is that word?* (remember) Note that Paul understood how easy it was for people to forget God’s teachings, so he often talked about our need to remember.

5. Write these words on the board: *We are called to be holy.* Read 1 Thessalonians 4: 3-8. After each verse is read, repeat: *We are called to be holy.* Say: *Name some ways we are to be holy.*

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 4: 9-10. Point out that love can help us be pure and holy. Discuss how much the church members in Thessalonica loved each other.

7. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12. Point out that Paul kept on encouraging the believers. Explain the verses using the following thoughts:

- Make it your goal to lead a quiet life.
- Take care of your own business.
- Work with your hands.

8. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:14-22. Read the information about living a life the way we should. Say: *This final section teaches us how to help those in the church who are having difficult times. We can imagine a picture of those who have grown tired of living the Christian life. They are pulling away from being faithful. How do we treat these people?* Ask:

- *How were early believers to respond to those who did not want to work?* (speak to)
- *How were they to respond to those who felt they could not keep up?* (comfort)
- *How were they to respond to the weak?* (help)
- *How was bad to be paid back?* (do good)
- *How often was a child of God to be full of joy?* (all the time)
- *When should a child of God pray?* (never stop)
- *What should a child of God avoid?* (everything that looks like sin)
- *What should a Christian welcome?* (the work of

the Holy Spirit)

## Encourage Application

9. Call attention to the object from step 1. Remind the class that we should show the nature of God in everything we do and everything we are—both on the outside and on the inside.

10. Remind the class that they will have choices to make this week. Say: *Each of us will decide what to eat and drink, what to say or not say, how to treat someone else, etc.* Use the “Things to Think About” in the study guide. Close with prayer.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

1. Ask: *Do you know who Superman is?* (Lived in Metropolis, allergic to kryptonite, had x-ray vision, faster than a speeding bullet, able to leap tall buildings with a single bound, he was known as Clark Kent, the mild mannered reporter)

2. Ask,

- *Did anyone know who Superman really was?*
- *Did anyone really know Clark Kent?*
- *Why did Superman keep who he was a secret?*
- *Do we ever keep our identity a secret?*

3. Explain that today’s Bible passage gives instructions for godly living. We cannot be Clark Kent part of the time and Superman part of the time. Our lives must show that we are Christians, that we love God and want to serve Him.

### Guide the Study

4. Display the following outline for the class:

*Instructions for Lives That Please God*  
*1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; 5:14-21*

- I. *A Reminder of Earlier Teachings (4:1-2)*
- II. *Holiness (4:3a)*
- III. *What to Do (4:3b-8)*
- IV. *How to Live with Love (4:9-10)*
- V. *A Life That is Right (4:11-12)*
- VI. *A Reminder of How to Live (5:14-22)*

5. Read I Thessalonians 4:1-2. Say: *If we want to live a life that is pleasing to God, a holy life, we must begin with remembering God’s teachings.*

6. Point out that the Christian life is a relationship and is much more than keeping a list of rules. God gives us teachings so that we can do His will. Ask the class to remember some of the laws God has given us.

7. Read I Thessalonians 4:3-8. Note the contrasts between God’s desires for our lives (v. 3a) and how the people in Thessalonica were living. Ask:

- *What does our culture (the world) teach us about sex?*
- *What is God’s plan for sexual relations?*
- *Do the struggles we have with holiness seem like those the early believers had? If so, how?*

8. Read I Thessalonians 4:9-10. Ask class members to tell one good thing about this young church. Point out their love for one another. Point out that this kind of godly love is necessary for a healthy church.

9. Read I Thessalonians 4: 11-12. State that most Christians do not find it easy to live the way they should. Ask: *Is this because we do not know what to do or because we do not want to do it?* Remind the class that God’s desire for our lives is very clear and understandable. Ask: *According to these verses, what is God’s desire for our lives? What will happen if we are faithful?*

10. Read I Thessalonians 5:14-22. Say: *This passage gives us clear teachings about how to live a holy life.* Ask:

- *What do these verses tell us to do?*
- *What do these verses tell us not to do?*

## Encourage Application

1. Say: *We know that salvation is a free gift from God (Ephesians 2:8-9), so why is it important for Christians to do good works? Why is it important for Christians to live a different life from the way the world lives? When others look at my life, do they see Christ living in me?*

2. Close with prayer, asking God to be present and give strength to live a life that honors Him.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 3 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS: FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE Lesson 12 HOPE FOR LOVED ONES AND OURSELVES

### Lesson Focus

Christ's resurrection and promised return give assurance that we and our loved ones who trust in Christ are with Christ, in death as well as in life.

### Focal Text

1 Thessalonians 4:13—5:11

### Memory Verse

"You know for sure that the day the Lord comes back to earth will be as a robber coming in the night."  
—1 Thessalonians 5:2

### Connect with Life

1. Bring to class several objects like the following and display them in the room: telescope, horoscope clippings from the newspaper, picture of a fortune teller, picture of a hand (for palm reading), fortune cookie, etc.

2. Show objects to class members. Ask: *What are all these things?* Explain that people use these when they try to see the future, or send a message to someone who has died.

3. Write this question on the board: *What hope is there when death comes?* Allow time for answers. Then ask: *Why do people call telephone numbers that promise to tell you what those who have died are saying (psychic hotlines)?* Explain that Christ's resurrection and promised return is the real answer. He gives us true hope that we and our loved ones who trust in Him are with Christ in death as well as life.

### Guide the Study

4. State: *It is normal for us to think about what has happened to those we love who die. Paul's*

*prayer was not that the Thessalonians would feel no grief or sorrow at the death of loved ones. Rather he wanted them to understand their grief and what Jesus' death and resurrection means.*

5. Prepare a study outline for the lesson:

*Hope for Loved Ones and Ourselves*

*1 Thessalonians 4:13—5:11*

*I. Grief and Hope (4:13-18)*

*II. Tell us When (5:1-3)*

*III. In the Meantime (5:4-11)*

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Ask: *How would the early believers have found comfort from these words?* Allow time for discussion.

7. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3. Ask: *What questions are asked and answered in these verses?* Work together and write a one-word summary of these verses. Write it on the board. Repeat with 1 Thessalonians 5:4-10.

8. Call attention to the three words in 1 Thessalonians 5: 8: faith, hope and love . Ask, *Who can find these same words in another place in Thessalonians and another letter of Paul's?* (Thessalonians 1:3; I Corinthians 13:13)

9. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11. Say: *After Paul talked about those who die in Christ and the Day of the Lord, what did he ask believers to do? Why?*

10. Explain what is meant by this word "Day": *In the Old Testament, there was a day when the proud would come to see the power of God. The New Testament adds to this the time when Jesus is coming again. There will be the final redemption of the faithful (Ephesians 4:30). It will be a time to glorify and praise the Lord.*

### Encourage Application

11. Point out that every person will go through a

time when someone they love dies. You, or someone in the class may share your feelings about the difficulties of this time.

12. Ask: *What did you learn in today's lesson that gives hope to our understanding of death?*

13. Close with prayer, thanking God that we do not have to wonder or worry about our loved ones who have already died in Christ. Thank God for the victory that will come when Jesus returns.

### **Supplemental Teaching Ideas**

#### **Connect with Life**

1. Share this sentence from the movie Braveheart: *All men die; few men ever really live*. Discuss this quote. Then point out that some of the believers in Thessalonica were thinking about nothing but death and dying. Some of them were thinking about death and Jesus' return, but they were not working for a living. Say: *They were dying, but they were not living!*

2. Comment that Christ's soon return was something early Christians talked about often. Read the following verses: 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:16-17; 5:23. Note that each chapter in 1 Thessalonians ends with words of hope and assurance for those who accept Christ as their Savior.

#### **Guide the Study**

3. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Use the following questions to begin discussions:

- *What has Jesus already done about death?*
- *What will Jesus do in the future?*
- *Why should the Thessalonians (and we ourselves) not grieve the same way as those who have no hope?*
- *What will happen to the dead when Christ returns?*
- *What will happen to those who are alive when Christ returns?*

4. Call attention to verse 18. Note that Paul encouraged the believers to "comfort each other." Direct the class members to 1 Thessalonians 5:11. Paul called on believers to "comfort each other and

make each other strong." Ask: *Why is it so helpful to belong to a church family when someone you know dies?*

5. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3. Ask: *When is the Day of the Lord?"*

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11. Ask:

- *What is the difference between being in darkness and being in light? (5:4-6)*
- *Why did Paul encourage the early church not to sleep? (5:7-8)*
- *What was God's desire for the believers in Thessalonica? (5:9-10)*

#### **Encourage Application**

7. Call attention to the "Lesson Focus." Christ's resurrection and promised return give assurance that we and our loved ones who trust in Christ are with Christ, in death as well as in life.

8. Comment that all people, whatever their age, will have to deal with death.

9. Read the last phrases from 1 Thessalonians 4:13,17 in unison: *"You have no reason to have sorrow as those who have no hope"; "We will meet the Lord in the sky and be with Him forever."*

10. Lead class to discuss this question: *How does the example of Jesus' death and resurrection encourage His followers when we have tragedies and difficulties?* Share from your personal experience or ask a class member to share with the class.

10. Close with prayer, thanking God for His encouragement and assurance as we face death.

# Teaching Guide

## Unit 3 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS: FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE Lesson 13 *FAITH THAT WORKS IN THE WORKPLACE*

### Lesson Focus

Daily work is a way of putting the Christian faith into action.

### Focal Text

2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

### Memory Verse

“When we were with you, we told you that if a man does not work, he should not eat.”  
—2 Thessalonians 3:10

### Connect with Life

1. Ask everyone to draw a picture of their job.
2. Lead class members to share a brief description of their job. If they are not working now, ask about a former job or a job they wish they had.
3. Ask: *Have you ever received an invitation to something and you did not think the person who invited you really meant it? Say: When God gives us an invitation, He does mean it.*
4. Comment that daily work, whether in the office, on the job site, or in our homes, is not just something we have to do, but it is an opportunity to put the Christian faith into action.

### Guide the Study

5. Remind the class that Genesis 1-2 shows God’s activity in creating the world. It shows God is not idle, He is active. Say: *God did not create men and women to be idle. Genesis 1:28 shows we are to become partners with God as stewards and managers in taking care of God’s creation.*
6. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13. Ask the class to listen for the problem and the problem’s answer.

**The problem:** Some of the early believers were lazy, and did not do what they were taught (2 Thessalonians 3:6-8.) They were also busy doing the wrong things. They did harm to the name of Christ and the work of the church. They were not a good example of living the life of a Christian.

**The answer:** Follow the example of Paul (2 Thessalonians 3:7-8). Follow Paul’s instructions in 2 Thessalonians 3:12. They should be quiet, go to work and eat their own food.

7. Remind the class that the Bible talks about work in both the Old and New Testament. Prepare pieces of paper with these Bible verses which talk about work: Proverbs 13:4; Proverbs 13:11; Proverbs 26:13-15; Ecclesiastes 5:18; Luke 12:31; Matthew 6:19-21; Matthew 25:14-15; Luke 10:38-42; Ephesians 4:28; Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:17; Colossians 3:23-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 5:8; and Titus 2:9-10. Say: *It is clear from these verses that a lazy lifestyle is not something for God’s people. The new life we have in Christ gives us a new reason to work. We get to do what God does, for God is a worker.*

### Encourage Application

8. If you are familiar with the television show, *Survivor*, explain how people on this show will do almost anything to win a million dollars. Say: *God’s people work for a very different reason. Money, titles, and having things is not all that Christians want. Daily work is a way to put our faith into action.*
9. Prepare the following list for the group and ask members silently to choose the one that best describes them:
  - *I always work as hard as I can.*
  - *I always do a little more than is expected of me.*
  - *I enjoy my work and am thankful for the opportunity.*
  - *I willingly accept additional jobs.*

- *I work harder when I think someone else is watching.*
- *I do an okay job at work, but I could do better.*
- *I do only what I have to do in order to get by on the job.*
- *I try to get others to do my share of things.*
- *I work only because I need the money.*

10. Ask: *What does the way you work show others about your relationship to Christ?*

11. Encourage class members to think about any change they need to make in the way they think about work this week. Close with prayer, thanking God for the opportunities class members have to share Christ as they work.

## **Supplemental Teaching Ideas**

### **Connect with Life**

1. Ask the class to think about the kind of work they enjoy the most. Use the following contrasts to give examples:

I prefer

Working with my hands	Using my head
Working indoors	Working outside
Working alone	Working with others
Traveling sometimes	Staying close to home
Working at night	Working during the day
etc	etc

2. Ask: *If you could have any job in the world, what would choose to do?* Allow time for sharing.

3. Note that some people find jobs they love, but others must remember that work is not just a job, it is an opportunity. Today's Bible lesson teaches that whatever our work, we can use our daily work as a way of putting our Christian faith into action.

### **Guide the Study**

4. Point out that it was important for the church to glorify Jesus. The lives of Christians should show we are new creations. The main problems others have in seeing a clear picture of Christ is not the non-Christians in our culture. It is the people of God who do not act like the people of God.

5. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6. Use the following questions to guide discussion:

- What command is given?
- What problems did the Thessalonian church need to deal with?

6. Say: *If a person starts working at age 23 and retires at 65, he or she will spend about 89,440 hours working. Nothing else we do takes as much time except sleep. Yet we, like the Thessalonian believers, often find it difficult to use our work to show God's love and grace to others.*

7. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9. Look at the example of Paul. Ask:

- *Did Paul work? (night and day)*
- *Did Paul take free food from the believers in Thessalonica? (no)*
- *Why did Paul work so hard? (to be an example of discipline, so he would not be a burden)*

8. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:10. Ask:

- *What do you think happened if someone was unable to work?*
- *What do verses 11-12 say about this?.*
- *Does this happen today? Is this a problem in our church? How?*

9. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:13 together. Then ask: *How does this verse say we should act at work?*

### **Encourage Application**

10. Say: *In putting your faith to work in the workplace, consider these questions:*

- *Have I really thought about my work as a gift through which I can honor God and give thanks for a job to do?*
- *How is my work today helping others?*
- *Do I work only for myself? Am I honest?*
- *Do I treat my fellow workers with Christ's love?*

11. Close with prayer that we honor God with our work.