

**Adult  
Bible Study in  
Simplified  
English**

# **Teaching Guide**

***Created for  
Relationships***

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Dallas, Texas**

[baptistwaypress.org](http://baptistwaypress.org)



# Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

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First edition: May 2015

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333 N. Washington  
Dallas, TX 75246-1798  
Phone: 214-828-5100  
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## Welcome!

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, Extra 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.

## Which Bible translation does this material use?

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 New Life Version is also available online at [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) and [www.studylight.org](http://www.studylight.org).

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 lawkeeper (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.

## Pray and prepare

Prayer is 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 Simplified English.

## About the Writer

**Jennifer Carson** wrote the teaching plans for this unit. Jennifer and her husband, Mark, are members of Northwood Church in Keller, Texas. They are the parents of six children. Jennifer is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco. She was an English teacher before becoming a stay-at-home mom, and now she teaches English (and everything else) as she homeschools three of their children. She has been a long-time editor and writer in the Simplified English curriculum, as well as a Bible study teacher in the various churches where they have served in ministry. Currently, Jennifer and her family are planting the Gospel and making disciples by intentionally taking Jesus into their neighborhood in northwest Fort Worth.

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## General Suggestions

1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
3. Review the Word List before beginning the study. Provide Study Guide pages for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
4. 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).
5. 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

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
4. Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
5. Discuss lesson using “Things to Think About.”

## Memory Verse

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

6. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

## Picture Sequencing (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 transparency.

## 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.

## Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

**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 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 least proficient student’s turn, 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 to review 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, use these ideas:

- 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****Procedure**

1. Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.
2. Ask questions about the main idea of the story.
3. Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.
4. 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.
5. Beginning or low-intermediate students: Read story again and ask students to repeat it with you line by line.
6. Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.
7. Ask pairs to read the story to each other.
8. Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.
9. Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.
10. 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).
11. 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*

1. New language in every lesson
2. Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
3. Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
4. Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation

5. Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
- Realia or authentic materials
  - Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
  - Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
  - Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

#### *Low Anxiety Environment*

Students should not be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in language learning. The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community:

- 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 students through eye contact and positioning yourself on students' eye level
- Calling students by name

#### *Checklist for Real-Life Interaction*

1. Pace activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
2. Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
3. 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)
4. A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
5. Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
6. Avoidance of questions for which answers are known
7. 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
8. Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, role-play, problem-solving, and interactive games
9. Review previous material.

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

## Online Resources and Study Helps

- **EasyEnglish** is a form of simple English developed by Wycliffe Associates (UK). Their website: ([www.easyenglish.info](http://www.easyenglish.info)) contains Bible commentaries, Bible translations, Bible studies, and other materials written in simple English. They are free for you to download and use.
- Additional teaching help is provided in the Internet edition of the Baptist Standard [www.baptiststandard.com](http://www.baptiststandard.com). Go to the website, then to Resources, then Bible Study.
- Additional adult Bible study helps are available under "Teaching Resource Items" at [www.baptistwaypress.org](http://www.baptistwaypress.org)

# Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study  
in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

## Lesson 1: God

### Lesson Focus

People are made in the likeness of God, and He wants to experience a close relationship with them.

### Focal Text

Genesis 1:26-31; Romans 5:1-11

### Memory Verse

"But God showed His love to us. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

## Prior Preparation

- ◆ For Guide the Study #4, locate copies of the Bible in other languages and bring them to class today.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #7 and #11, locate pictures of the sun, earth, and moon in various stages.
- ◆ If you plan to use the Extra Teaching Idea for Guide the Study, locate a helpful list of the names of God.
- ◆ If you plan to use the Extra Teaching Idea for Guide the Study, find a copy of *A Picture of God: 3 in 1* by Joanne Marxhausen.

## Connect with Life

1. As class members arrive, give each one sheet of paper. Ask them to create a list of titles they hold in life. Using your own life, give examples like the ones below:

*Son/Daughter of...*  
*Husband/Wife of...*  
*Father/Mother of...*  
*Friend of...*  
*Employee/Employer of...*  
*Citizen of...*  
*Member of...*

Ask a few members who are comfortable speaking in front of the class to share a few phrases from their list.

2. Point out that titles tell us how we relate to one another.

Say: *Titles are based on relationships. They explain how we relate to other people in different parts of our lives. God designed us to live in relationship to others. The Bible*

*tells about many important relationships in our lives.*

3. Write this word on the marker board:

**RELATIONSHIPS**

Say: *In this unit, we will see what the Bible says about our relationships. Today's lesson is about the most important relationship we have—our relationship with God. Some people have a good relationship with God. Some people hate God. Other people do not know God. No matter what your relationship with God is like right now, God cares deeply about you. He created you. He loves you. He wants to have a close relationship with you.*

## Guide the Study

4. Ask a class member who is a strong reader to read the introduction for today's lesson to the class. Or retell the writer's experience from the lesson introduction in your own words. Emphasize that God created *all* people.

5. Arrange ahead of time to bring Bibles written in other languages to class. Ask class members who have a Bible in their native language to bring it to class. If that is not possible, check your church's library. Also check out the lessons available in various languages on [baptistwaypress.org](http://baptistwaypress.org). Print out a few scripture pages from these lessons in various languages to share with the class.

If possible, allow class members to share aloud a few verses in their native languages for others to hear. Emphasize that God created all languages and can understand each one. Every people group and every nation is important to God.

6. Read Genesis 1:26-31 for the class. Remind class members that these verses in Genesis are important for understanding many other parts of the Bible. They tell us about God. They also tell us about people.

Discuss Questions #2 and #3 from Things to Think About. Summarize members' responses by saying that while God is greater than people, there are many things we can do that are like God. Refer to verse 26 and point out that people were the only beings created in the image and likeness of God.

7. Locate pictures of the sun, moon and earth to share with the class. Remind class members about the relationship between the sun, moon, and earth.

Say: *The sun is the source of light. The moon reflects the sun's light to the earth in hours of darkness. Being made in the "likeness" or "image" of God means that people can reflect the fullness of who God is. This is similar to the way the moon reflects the light of the sun. The moon is not a source of light, but it can reflect light. God is greater than people, but people can reflect God's image and likeness in the darkness of this world.*

8. Point out verse 31 and emphasize that God was very

pleased with all He created. Say: *People are pleasing to God. They have a special capacity for a relationship with God. He wants people to know Him and relate to Him. That is why God created us. He planned for us to have a close relationship with Him. But His perfect plan was spoiled by sin.*

9. Ask a class member to read the first two paragraphs from the Study Guide section entitled, “The Answer to Our Brokenness.”

Explain that God loved people so much that He refused to let sin spoil His relationship with them. He made a plan to save people from the punishment of sin so that He could have a close relationship with them again.

10. Read Romans 5:1-11 for the class.

Say: *This is good news for all people! Our relationship with God can be made new. Sin does not have to keep us from knowing God. It does not have to keep us from a close relationship with Him. We can be forgiven of our sins because Jesus died on the cross to take away the punishment of our sins. Because of Jesus, we do not have to stay separated from the God who made us and loves us.*

## Encourage Application

11. Refer back to the pictures of the sun, moon, and earth from Guide the Study #7. Remind class members that they were designed to know God and reflect His image in this dark world. Point out that only those who have a new relationship with God through Jesus can do this.

Next, display a few new pictures which display different phases of the moon such as a full moon, half moon, quarter moon, sliver moon, etc. Challenge them to reflect on these pictures and consider how well they are reflecting God’s likeness to others.

12. Summarize the closing remarks from the Study Guide. Remind class members that while we can have a new relationship with God, we still live in a broken world that is deeply affected by sin. However, when we have peace with God through Jesus’ death on the cross, we can show God’s shining-greatness to others even in hard times.

Close in prayer that class members will fully reflect God’s image to those around them—especially in the midst of trials.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Write these two questions on the board before class begins.

***What do I know about God?***  
***What do I want to know about God?***

Ask class members to consider these questions and

then jot down their responses on the marker board. If you feel class members would be more responsive, you may allow them to write their answers anonymously on paper for you to share with the class.

Say: *It’s true that God wants people to know about Him. But did you know God wants something even more than that? He wants you to know Him personally. He wants to have a relationship with you. This unit focuses on relationships. Today’s lesson is about the most important relationship we can have—a relationship with God.*

## Guide the Study

◆ After reading and discussing the Study Guide section entitled, “God Is Greater Than People,” examine the word *Elohim*.

Explain that this is a special name for God, and it tells us something very important about the nature and character of God. Emphasize that although this is a plural word, it does *not* mean that there are many gods. Instead, the Hebrews used this name to describe the multi-faceted nature of God. It is as if God is so magnificent and so wonderful, He cannot be defined by just one name.

In explaining this to the class, it might be helpful to explore a few of the many names of God in the Old and New Testament. Assure class members that while each name describes one of the many praiseworthy attributes of God, all these names refer to only One True God. The name *Elohim* is a Hebrew attempt to sum up all the magnificent names and characteristics of God in one name.

◆ In attempting to explain the triune nature of the Trinity, the children’s book entitled *A Picture of God: 3 in 1* by Joanne Marxhausen might be a helpful resource.



## Encourage Application

◆ Invite someone who is a Bible translator or missionary to share with the group about their work. Ask them to talk about the important process of translating the Bible into the heart language of a people group who does not know God. Ask them to share how this has changed the people’s relationship with God.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

## Lesson 2: Self

### Lesson Focus

God looks at what is in a person's heart, and only He can determine our true worth.

### Focal Text

1 Samuel 16:1-7; Psalm 139:1-18

### Memory Verse

"Your eyes saw me before I was put together. And all the days of my life were written in Your book before any of them came to be." (Psalm 139:16)

### Prior Preparation

- ◆ Prepare four gifts for the opening activity according to the instructions in Connect with Life #1.
- ◆ Create bookmarks for Guide the Study #6.
- ◆ Prepare a list of common English idioms for the Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life idea if you plan to use it.
- ◆ Find a map of the 12 tribes of Israel for Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study if you plan to use one.

### Connect with Life

1. For class today, prepare four small gifts. Select two appealing gifts, such as a small gift card or any other item class members might find desirable. Select two other gifts that are much less useful or appealing, like a pair of socks, a bar of soap, or some other gag gift. Wrap each, placing the most desirable gifts in plain or unattractive packaging such as a brown lunch sack or newspaper wrapping. Place the two less desirable gifts in attractive wrapping paper with a ribbon or a fancy gift bag. Have these items on display when class begins.

Randomly select four students from the group. Have each one select a gift from the display. Then have the students unwrap their gifts and show the class what they received. Help the class members see the humor in the gag gifts with some good-natured joking. Make this a fun activity.

When all four gifts have been revealed, ask the following questions:

- Which gift did you think was the best one?
- What kind of packaging was it in?

- Which was the least desirable?
- What kind of packaging was it in?
- Did things turn out as you expected when the gifts were unwrapped? Why or why not?

2. Say: *In English, we have a popular saying. We often say: "Don't judge a book by its cover." This is an important warning. It is a reminder against deciding the true value of something based only on the way it looks from the outside.*

Be sure to point out that in the opening activity, someone might have overlooked the gift in the plain brown sack because it was not in an attractive or fancy package. By doing this, they would have missed a valuable gift. On the other hand, someone might have picked the gift in fancy or expensive packaging. By doing this, they would have been disappointed to find that the packaging was more valuable than the actual gift.

3. Ask a class member to read the introduction from today's lesson in the Study Guide.

Say: *Today's lesson will show us that God does not judge people based on their outside appearance. God looks at the heart of a person. Our hearts are the most valuable things to Him. He values the heart of each person He created. When we think about ourselves, God wants us to know how valuable we are to Him. Each of us has great worth because God values every person.*

### Guide the Study

4. Take some time to review the background to today's Scripture passage from 1 Samuel. Read or summarize the following information:

*Today we will read about King Saul, King David, and the prophet Samuel. Hundreds of years before Samuel lived, God's people had been slaves in Egypt. At the height of their suffering, God sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt. God planned for Moses to lead the Israelites to a land He had promised to give them. Because of their disobedience along the journey, it took them 40 years of wandering in the wilderness to finally make their way into Canaan, the land God had given them. In Canaan, God's people lived as twelve tribes in one land. They became a great nation.*

*These tribes, or clans, were the family groups of Jacob's 12 sons. Each group lived in a different region of Canaan. The 12 groups were ruled by a series of judges for many years. But God's people became jealous of other nations that surrounded them. The surrounding nations were all ruled by famous kings. These nations took pride in their leaders and boasted proudly about their kings. God's people could not point to any famous leader. They demanded that God give them a king, too.*

*God told Samuel to choose Saul as a king for the people. Saul was a tall, attractive looking king and a skilled warrior. But he failed to follow God with his whole heart. God decided Israel needed a new king. He sent Samuel to Bethlehem to choose a new king from the sons of Jesse's family.*

5. Ask two or three class members to share the reading of 1 Samuel 16:1-7.

Ask:

—Which of Jesse’s sons did Samuel think was fit to be king? Why?

—How did God respond to Samuel’s thinking?

Also discuss Things to Think About #1-3.

**“For the Lord does not look at the things man looks at. A man looks at the outside of a person, but the Lord looks at the heart.”**

**1 Samuel 16:7b**

6. Ahead of time, create bookmarks for each class member which have the words from 1 Samuel 16:7b.

Pass out a bookmark to each member and ask the class to read the verse out loud in unison. Practice saying the verse a few times.

Say: *Eliab was tall and looked like a king from the outside. But God looks at the heart of a man. God chose the youngest and smallest of Jesse’s sons instead of Eliab. God chose David because of what was in his heart.*

Tell the class a little about David by summarizing the Study Guide section entitled “A Personal God.”

7. Tell the class that David wrote Psalm 139. Then read Psalm 139:1-6 aloud for the class. Ask the class to listen for the words *I*, *me*, and *my*. You might also ask the class to circle those words on their scripture page as you read.

Next, read the verses aloud a second time, but this time insert your own name each time the psalmist uses the word *I*, *me* or *my*. For example, say:

*O Lord, You have looked through (Ann) and have known (Ann). You know when (Ann) sits down and when (Ann) gets up. You understand (Ann’s) thoughts from far away.*

Allow some time for class members to read these verses a third time, this time inserting their own names for the personal pronouns.

8. Ask a class member to read Psalm 139:7-12. Read or summarize the Study Guide section entitled “An All-Powerful God.”

Say: *God knows us! He made us. Each of us is important to Him. He knows our hearts. How amazing!*

## Encourage Application

9. Conclude by reading Psalm 139:13-18 for the class. Drawing from the Study Guide section entitled “Created for a Purpose,” point out that God has intentionally

designed each person for a good purpose in His plan.

10. Ask a class member to read the final two paragraphs from the Study Guide. Close by praying that each class member will understand how much they are worth in God’s eyes. Pray that they will see other people the way God sees each of us—as valuable, loved, and important.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Share a list of common English idioms with class members. Include the following phrase: *Don’t judge a book by its cover.*

Ask class members if they know the meaning of any expressions you have listed. Point out that every language has common expressions that make little sense if they are interpreted literally. Ask any international students if they can share an expression from their native language and explain its meaning to the class.

Say: *In today’s lesson, we will learn exactly what it means to “judge a book by its cover.” And we will discover what God thinks about this idea, too.*

Then read the lesson introduction to the class.

### Guide the Study

◆ Provide students with a copy of a map which shows where the 12 tribes of Israel settled in the land God gave them. A helpful image can be found on the Internet at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israelites#/media/File:12\\_Tribes\\_of\\_Israel\\_Map.svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israelites#/media/File:12_Tribes_of_Israel_Map.svg)

### Psalm 139:1-18

vv. 1-6	<i>God knows all about us. (All-knowing)</i>
vv. 7-12	<i>God sees us wherever we are. (Always-present)</i>
vv. 13-18	<i>God made us. (All-powerful Creator)</i>

◆ In exploring Psalm 139, use the following outline to help guide discussion:

## Encourage Application

◆ Give each member a small hand-held mirror or compact purchased from the dollar store to take home with them. Place a heart-shaped sticker in the corner of each mirror.

Say: *I hope each time you look in the mirror and see your own reflection, this sticker will remind you that God is looking at your heart. No matter what a person’s appearance may be, a heart that fully follows God is pleasing and valuable to Him.*

Close in prayer that every person will see themselves and others through God’s eyes and realize how important each is to God.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

### Lesson 3: Husbands and Wives

#### Lesson Focus

The marriage relationship between a Christian husband and wife should reflect the relationship that Christ has with His church.

#### Focal Text

Ephesians 5:21-33

#### Memory Verse

"Be willing to help and care for each other because of Christ. By doing this, you honor Christ." (Ephesians 5:21)

### Prior Preparation

- ◆ Find wedding photos for the opening activity in Connect with Life #1.
- ◆ Locate a map of the Roman Empire after Jesus' death and resurrection if you plan to use it for Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study.
- ◆ Arrange for a staff or lay minister to share with your class today if you plan to use the activity from Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.

### Connect with Life

1. If you are married, bring a photo from your wedding to class today. If you are not married, arrange ahead of time for a married class member to bring a wedding photo. You could also pull some copyright-free photos from the Internet to use in class today.

Show the photo to the class and spend some time telling about your wedding day. Be sure to include the items mentioned in the introduction from today's lesson (*bride, groom, vows, ring, etc.*). Point out to the class that every culture celebrates weddings differently. Ask class members to share what the wedding customs are in their native countries. Take some time to allow members to share and compare their experiences.

*Say: Even though weddings might be different in one country than in another, they are always an important time in our families and communities. Two individual people are beginning another family. A wedding marks the start of something new. It is a happy occasion. It usually requires*

*special planning and a lot of work to make the wedding celebration a special one.*

*But have you ever stopped to think about what happens after the celebration? Many people spend a lot more time preparing for their wedding celebration than they do for the marriage relationship. In today's lesson, we will see what God wants for the relationship between a husband and a wife.*

Next, ask a class member to read the introduction to Lesson 3 in the Study Guide.

### Guide the Study

2. Ask Questions #1 and #2 from Things to Think About. Allow time for members to respond and discuss.

3. Next, create a chart on the marker board like the one below:

<u>Husbands</u>	<u>Wives</u>

Ask class members to help you fill in the chart by discussing what they think are the responsibilities/duties of a husband and a wife in marriage. Encourage them to draw their responses from their experiences in the families where they grew up. Record all their input on the chart without censoring or correcting their responses

*Say: We have many different expectations for husbands and wives, depending on where we grew up in the world and the kind of family we have. The relationship between husbands and wives is important to God. In the Bible, He clearly tells us what His expectations are for a husband and wife when they are married.*

Ask a class member to read Ephesians 5:21-25 for the class.

4. It is important to point out the context of these verses. Remind class members that Paul wrote this letter to Christians in Rome who were living at the center of the Roman Empire during the height of its power.

At this time in history, the Roman Empire covered most of the Middle East and Europe. It was one of the largest empires in history. The Roman Empire was held together by a strict set of codes and rules. There were many important leaders and authorities who enforced those codes and kept the empire in order. Obedience to authorities was an important idea in the Roman Empire. Without it, they would lose control of the empire. Military commanders obeyed the Roman ruler (Caesar), soldiers obeyed their commanders, citizens obeyed soldiers, and wives were expected to obey husbands. That is how life was in Rome.

Paul acknowledged this in these verses. But the focus of these verses is not simply on obedience, but rather on how a Christian husband and wife should treat each other in this kind of environment.

Read or summarize from the Study Guide section entitled “After the Honeymoon.” Relate details from the paragraph which begins by saying, “Paul talked about marriage between believers....”

5. Explain that Paul compared the relationship between a Christian husband and wife to the relationship between Jesus and the Church. Reading from the Study Guide, say:

*Paul used the picture of Jesus and the church as an example for marriage. Jesus is loving and kind. He is gentle as head of the church. He saves the church. The followers of Jesus choose to obey Him because they know they are deeply loved. A husband is the head of his wife in the same way. Husbands should lead as loving servants. The wife responds by choosing to obey him because she knows she is safe and loved by her husband.*

6. Point out that for wives in this culture, obedience was not a new expectation. Be sure to explain, though, that God clearly expects a wife to obey out of love for her husband, not out of duty. A Christian wife should willingly seek to honor and respect her husband. On the other hand, Paul’s words to husbands were a totally new idea in this culture.

Ask a class member to read from the Study Guide section entitled “After the Honeymoon.” Begin with the paragraph which opens, “Ephesians 5:25 was a new command for husbands in Paul’s time....” Have another class member read the next paragraph and a third member to read the following paragraph. Then summarize the comments from the final paragraph in the Study Guide section entitled “After the Honeymoon.”

7. Ask a class member to read Ephesians 5:26-33. Then discuss Things to Think About #3.

## Encourage Application

8. Return to the chart on the marker board from Guide the Study #3. Lead the class in a discussion comparing God’s expectations for husbands and wives with those previously written on the marker board. Pay attention to Things to Think About #4 and #5 as you discuss.

9. Summarize today’s lesson by reading the final two paragraphs of the Study Guide aloud. Then, close in prayer by thanking God for the gift of marriage and by praying for the marriages in your class, that God’s love may be reflected to the world clearly by the way husbands and wives in the class treat each other.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

♦ Show a video clip of a traditional American wedding ceremony. You could use a home movie or a clip from a movie you might own on DVD. Ask class members to share and discuss how an American wedding compares to a traditional wedding in their home country.

Say: *Marriage was God’s idea. At the beginning of*

*time, He gave Adam and Eve to each other. Throughout history, people in different places and times have had very different ideas about the relationship between husbands and wives. But God’s idea has been the same from the beginning. In our lesson today, we will discover what God wants for the relationship between husbands and wives.*

Then read the introduction to today’s lesson from the Study Guide.

## Guide the Study

♦ In setting the context for Ephesians 5:21-33, it might be useful to share a map of the Roman Empire during the time Paul was writing. The following map is located on the Internet at:

<http://www.bible.ca/maps/maps-roman-empire-peak-116AD.jpg>



The Roman Empire at its greatest in 116 AD

Source: <http://www.bible.ca/maps/maps-roman-empire-peak-116AD.jpg>

## Encourage Application

♦ Invite a staff or lay minister who works with married couples in your church to come and talk with the class today. Ask them to share about any opportunities for married couples in church, such as small groups, classes, seminars, retreats, service opportunities, mentorships, or resources that are available.

Be sure to highlight if your church has a counseling center for those who might be struggling in their marriages. If your church does not have professional counseling services, promote local biblical counselors by providing brochures or other contact information.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

### Lesson 4: Children

#### Lesson Focus

Children are a blessing from God, and parents are responsible for teaching them about God and His ways.

#### Focal Text

Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 22:6; Deuteronomy 6:1-9

#### Memory Verse

"See, children are a gift from the Lord. The children born to us are a special reward." (Psalm 127:3)

### Prior Preparation

- ◆ Bring pictures to class if you plan to use the suggestion from Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life.
- ◆ You will need an envelope, some hot wax, and a coin for Encourage Application #6.
- ◆ Invite your children's minister or youth minister to share with the class as you discuss Things to Think About #2.
- ◆ Locate pictures of tefillin or phylacteries if you plan to share them with the class today.

### Connect with Life

1. At the opening of today's class, ask if any class members have children in their lives. Point out that some may be parents, some may be aunts or uncles, and others might teach young children. Hopefully many will find some point of reference for thinking about children. Allow time for members to identify and share about the children who are part of their lives.

Ask them to think about important milestones in the lives of children. Explain that the word *milestone* describes an important event in the growing-up years of a child or youth. Write the word on the marker board.

## MILESTONES

Have class members assist you in listing important milestones on the board. Include things like first steps, first words, first haircut, first day of school, first time to ride a bicycle, first time to drive a car, and first job.

Say: *Parents guide their children through many important phases—from infant, to toddler, to child, to young adult. It is a great privilege and responsibility to help children grow up. We teach them to walk, dress themselves, read, ride a bike, go to school, drive a car, and get a job. Parents know that children must learn these things.*

*But who should teach a child about God's ways?*

*In today's lesson, we will discover that parents are responsible to teach their children about God and train them to live godly lives.*

### Guide the Study

2. Ask a class member to read Psalm 127: 3-5. Tell members to listen for three words and circle them.

Say: *God values children. The psalmist describes children in three ways. First, he says they are a gift. Second, he says they are a reward. Third, he compares them to arrows in the hands of a soldier. The first two images are easy to understand. The last is a little harder.*

### Psalm 127:3-5

**Gift  
Reward  
Arrows**

Read or summarize the information from the Study Guide section entitled "Thankful for Our Children." In exploring these verses, please be sensitive to the possibility that there may be class members who desire to have children, but have been unable to become parents yet. Infertility might be a silent struggle for some in your class. (Another possibility for silent pain in this topic is those who are single and are longing to be married so they may have children.) If you feel led to add these comments, it can acknowledge the pain which the absence of children brings to those longing for them.

Say: *Maybe you or someone you love is longing for a child through birth or adoption.*

—*Maybe you have a child you gave up for adoption or a child who died too soon.*

—*Maybe you have a long list of "why" or "why me" questions for God.*

—*Maybe you're not married, so you've never been able to fulfill that dream of becoming a parent.*

*To be honest, this lesson may be hard because you so deeply want to be a parent. But my hope and prayer is that this time with God's Word will give you some strong words of truth to help you as you wait on God's timing. Ask God right now to open your heart to the wisdom that He particularly wants you to hear today, something that will strengthen you for the particular journey you are on.*

3. Ask a different class member to read Proverbs 22:6. Help class members to understand that when the psalmist wrote this proverb, it had a very practical application. The Jewish people lived a very different life than Americans do today. Jewish parents trained their children to live the life of their parents. Children of shepherds became shepherds, children of farmers became farmers, and so on.

Point out that today we think of this verse as advice on training our children spiritually, but that was not the clear intention of the psalmist in this verse.

4. Tell class members that Deuteronomy 6:1-9 are important verses to the Jewish people. They were written to the Jewish people just as God was preparing them to enter the special land God had promised to give them. Ask a class member to read Deuteronomy 6:1-3.

Say: *God gave His people many blessings in their new land. Moses, their leader, wanted them to stay close to God. He knew they must keep God's ways. We all have a way of forgetting God when things are easy and good. God did not want that to happen, so Moses gave a strong reminder to obey God's Law.*

5. Read from the Study Guide by saying: "Verses 4-5 were very important to the people of Israel. Jewish people today still say these words every day in prayer."

Ask a class member to read Deuteronomy 6:4-5.

Say: *Jews call this the Shema. Shema is the Hebrew word for hear. The word does not mean simply to hear what is said. It means to hear and obey. God's Law instructed the Jewish people to have only one God. They were to worship Him with their whole lives—their thoughts (soul), their actions (strength), and their attitudes (heart).*

## Encourage Application

6. Read Deuteronomy 6:6-9 for the class. These verses explain how important it is for parents to impress God's commands on the hearts of their children. Write the word **IMPRESS** on the board:

Illustrate the meaning of this word with the following activity.

**Impress**

Say: *In early times, important papers were sealed shut using wax and a special mark. Let me demonstrate.*

Drop a bit of hot wax from a candle to secure the flap on an envelope. Gently press a coin into the wax to leave an impression. Carefully remove it and let the wax cool.

Now say: *The mark on the envelope served two primary purposes. First, it held the envelope shut so the papers did not fall out. Second, it showed who sealed the envelope, since each person used their own special mark.*

Go on to explain that this represents what it means for a parent to *impress* God's commands on the hearts of their children. The soft wax is like a child's heart. The coin is like God's commands.

Say: *To make a clear mark, or a clear impression, you must apply slow and careful pressure. The same is true if we want to impress God's ways on our children's hearts. We must apply steady, slow pressure on a consistent basis.*

Discuss Things to Think About #2. Help class members learn about ways that your church can help them with this task. Inform them about child dedication, any mentoring programs for parents, and any ways children can be included in the overall life of the church. Invite your children's minister or youth minister to share with the class.

7. Conclude by reading the final two paragraphs from the Study Guide. Close in prayer that parents will take seriously their responsibility to teach their children about God and His ways. Also, pray for any children of class members by name, asking that God's ways will leave a lasting impression on their hearts.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Display a few pictures of your child's early years which show important milestones. Good examples might include a child's first steps, first birthday, first day of school, etc. Use this illustration to lead into Connect with Life #1.

◆ Before class today, write this outline on the board:

### **Created for Relationships: Children**

*Thankful for Our Children (Psalm 127:3-5)  
Responsible for Our Children (Proverbs 22:6)  
Speaking Truth to Our Children (Deut. 6:1-9)*

Ask class members to identify three key words in the outline (*Thankful, Responsible, Speaking*). Explain that in today's study, we will follow this outline.

## Guide the Study

◆ When discussing Psalm 127:3-5, emphasize that parenting is a life-long journey. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled "Thankful for Our Children" to make this clear. Caution that some might think a parent's work is finished when a child leaves home, usually around the age of 18. In Jewish culture, parenting was viewed differently. Important Jewish writings like the Talmud advocate further intensive training from the ages of 16-24.

◆ The Book of Proverbs focuses on the difference between the way of the wise and the way of the foolish. Proverbs 22:6 is a word to the wise, not a promise. Relate this story:

*A mother and father had five sons. They taught them to love God. They taught them God's Word. They set a godly example. As adults, four of the children followed God, with three serving as pastors in local churches. But one son stopped following God and quit going to church. The whole family was sad.*

*These parents taught all their children the same things. Because they followed the advice of Proverbs, four of their children now serve God faithfully all around the world. Proverbs 22:6 is an important verse. It is right advice. But it is not a promise to all parents. Sometimes children still make foolish choices.*

◆ Discuss Deuteronomy 6:8. Tell class members that some Jews take this verse very literally. They wear special boxes on their heads and wrists which contain written copies of verses 4-5. Use the Internet to find a picture of someone wearing tefillin or a phylactery. Share with the class.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

### Lesson 5: Parents

#### Lesson Focus

Children are to love and honor their parents.

#### Focal Text

Exodus 20:12; Luke 2:45-52; John 19:25-27

#### Memory Verse

"Honor your father and your mother, so your life may be long in the land the Lord your God gives you." (Exodus 20:12)

### Prior Preparation

- ◆ Create or locate a poster of the Ten Commandments for Guide the Study #2.
- ◆ Locate a set of balance scales for the illustration in Guide the Study #4. You will also need some small stones and a large rock for this activity.
- ◆ Collect a calendar and some greeting cards to bring to class if you plan to use Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life.

### Connect with Life

1. Share this case study with the class at the opening of today's lesson:

*In August of 2003, there was a severe heat wave in France. Temperatures were dangerously high. More than 10,000 elderly people died of heat-related deaths because their families and many healthcare workers and government officials had gone on long vacations. They left these elderly adults alone with no help or air conditioning.*

Guide a class discussion using these questions:

- What causes people to neglect the needs of their aging parents?
- How does our culture contribute to the problem of neglecting the elderly?
- How can children take care of their aging parents?
- What are your expectations for how your children should care for you when you are older?

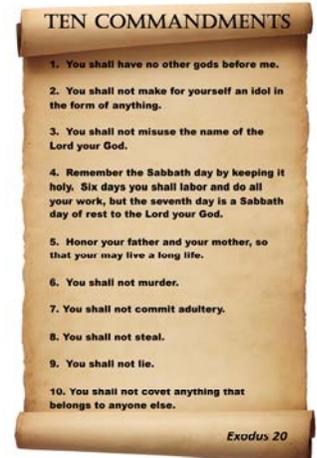
Say: *Today's lesson explains how both children and adults can love and honor their parents.*

### Guide the Study

2. Create or locate a poster of the Ten Commandments like the one below to display for your class today. A PDF document of the picture below can be downloaded from the following Internet site (scroll to the very bottom of the web page and look for the "Downloads" section): <http://fbchouma.nextmeta.com/kids>

Remind class members that God gave these ten rules for living to His people for an important reason. God wanted a special relationship with His people, and these rules helped them know how they could please God and know Him better.

Using your poster, read the first four commandments out loud for the class. Explain that these commandments teach about our relationship with God. Next, use the poster to read the last six commandments. Explain that these commandments teach about our relationship with others.



Source: <http://fbchouma.nextmeta.com/kids>

3. Ask a class member to read Exodus 20:12. Say: *This is the fifth commandment. It says to honor your father and your mother.*

Write the word *honor* on the marker board.

**HONOR**

Lead a discussion about the meaning of the word, drawing from the second paragraph in the Study Guide section entitled "God's Command: How to Treat Parents."

4. Demonstrate the meaning of the word with the following activity. Show the class a set of balance scales or draw a picture of them on the marker board. Explain that the Hebrew word for *honor* means to give weight to something. Illustrate the concept as detailed below.

Say: *See the two sides of the scale? Pretend that one side represents me, and the other side represents my parents. (Label each side of the scale to represent you and your parents.) Let's think about all the things in my life that are important to me like my spouse, my children, my job, my friends, and my hobbies. Let's imagine that each of these small stones represents the parts of my life that we just mentioned. (Place several smaller stones on the side of the scale that represents your own life.) Now, let's think about my parents. (At this point, place a heavy rock on the side of the scale which represents your parents. The scales should tip in that direction because of the weight of the rock.) The Hebrew word for honor means that I give*

*weight to my parents. I pay a heavy amount of attention to what they might want or need. That is how I show them honor. That is how I can fulfill the fifth commandment.*

5. Ask a class member to read aloud from the last two paragraphs of the Study Guide section entitled “God’s Command: How to Treat Parents.”

6. Say: *Today we will look in the Bible to find two examples of how we can honor our parents. The first example shows how a child can honor his or her parents.*

Read Luke 2:45-52 for the class. Drawing from the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus’ Example: How a Child Treats Parents,” be careful to explain the Jewish custom of celebrating Passover in Jerusalem and how Jesus could have gone missing without His parents realizing it for a whole day.

7. Discuss Question #4 from Things to Think About. Explain that Jesus’ first loyalty was to God. But He also knew that He would honor God by obeying His parents, so He returned to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph.

8. Say: *Children can honor their parents through obedience. But how can an adult honor his parents? Let’s look in the Bible for a second example which shows how adult children can honor their parents.*

Ask a class member to read John 19:25-27. Point out how Jesus addresses His mother in verse 26. Explain that although today this term would be considered insulting and disrespectful, it was a polite expression of respect in the Jewish culture during the time Jesus lived.

To give more meaning to this Bible text, read or summarize the information contained in the first two paragraphs of the Study Guide section entitled “Jesus’ Example: How an Adult Treats Parents.”

## Encourage Application

9. Ask: *What are the greatest challenges you face today in fulfilling the fifth commandment to honor your parents?*

Allow time for responses and list them on the marker board. Some possible responses are included below.

- Living far away from parents
- Having your own children to care for
- Pressures of a demanding job
- A difficult relationship with your parents
- Siblings who don’t help in caring for parents

Help class members see that they are not alone in their struggles to fulfill God’s commandment to adult children concerning parents. Point them to any resources your church may have, such as support groups for caretakers or respite services for those who are providing elder care.

10. Read the final paragraph of the Study Guide aloud. Close in prayer that God will lead class members to fulfill this important commandment in their own families.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

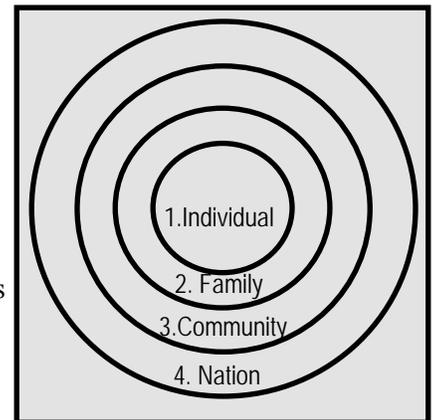
◆ At the beginning of class, explain that in America, we have two special holidays for honoring parents. One is Mother’s Day. The other is Father’s Day. Show these holidays on a calendar. If possible, bring some greeting cards from these holidays to show the class. Be sure to share some of your family’s traditions for celebrating these special days. Ask if any class members can share about special occasions which honor parents in their home countries. Allow them to share with the class.

### Guide the Study

◆ Discuss Question #1 from Things to Think About. Explain how obeying the fifth commandment would help the Jewish people live long in the land God was giving them. Point out that this is not a universal promise to individual people, but a larger promise for God’s people. Using a diagram like the one here, label the circles as follows:

1. Individual
2. Family
3. Community
4. Nation

Point out that individuals who honor and respect their parents make for strong families, strong families make strong communities, and strong communities lead to stable nations.



Help class members to see that acts of individual obedience can ultimately have a much larger impact. God knew that the strength of the entire nation would depend on personal obedience. In these verses, He carefully points out that there will be sure rewards if His people will follow His commandment concerning parents.

To emphasize this point, draw from the third paragraph in the Study Guide section entitled “God’s Command: How to Treat Parents.”

## Encourage Application

◆ Encourage class members who are not currently faced with caring for aging parents to brainstorm ideas about how they might help or encourage others in this situation. Could they sit with an elderly parent to give an adult child a much needed break from caretaking? Could they meet the needs of some older folks in the church whose adult children live far away and can’t be there to meet all of their parents’ needs? Consider the possibilities of a class service project which revolves around the needs of the elderly.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

### in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

## Lesson 6: Friends

### Lesson Focus

Loyal friends are a gift from God.

### Focal Text

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 1 Samuel 20:1-17, 27-42

### Memory Verse

"A man who has friends must be a friend, but there is a friend who stays nearer than a brother." (Proverbs 18:24)

## Prior Preparation

- ◆ Provide butcher paper and markers for the opening activity.
- ◆ Make copies of the survey entitled "What Kind of Friend Am I" for Encouraging Application #6.
- ◆ Find a way to share the hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" if you plan to use this activity from Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.

## Connect with Life

1. Begin today's lesson by telling a story in which a friend demonstrated loyalty to you. Share how your friend encouraged, inspired, or helped you.
2. Write the word *loyalty* on the marker board.

# LOYALTY

Explain the meaning of this word by reading the last paragraph from the introduction of today's lesson in the Study Guide. Write a clear definition on the marker board.

Ask:

—*What experience of loyal friendship do you remember?*

—*What effect did this friendship have on your life?*

Say: *Today's lesson will focus on what the Bible shows us about God's plan for friendship. We will look in the Bible to find the benefits of friendship and learn about an important example of loyal friendship between King David and Jonathan.*

## Guide the Study

2. Divide the class into two groups. Have the first group read Ecclesiastes 4:9-10. Ask the group to work together in order to find two benefits of loyal friendship that are identified in these verses. (*Good pay for their work, Help when one falls down*)

Ask the second group to read Ecclesiastes 4:11-12. Ask this group to find two additional benefits of loyal friendship that are identified in these verses. (*Share warmth, Protection when attacked*)

3. Summarize the groups' responses by writing an outline like the one below on the marker board. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled "The Benefits of a Friend" to give the discussion more meaning.

### Two are Better than One (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

*Friends work together to get more done (v. 9).*

*Friends help each other in times of need (v. 10).*

*Friends share what they have (v. 11).*

*Friends protect each other when threatened (v.12).*

4. Say: *One of the most famous friendships in the Bible is that of young King David and Jonathan, the son of King Saul. We will read about this in today's Bible text.*

Ask two or more class members who are strong readers to share the reading of 1 Samuel 20:1-17 and 27-42. Draw from the Study Guide sections entitled "Friends Help" and "Friends Keep Promises" to help the class gain a better understanding of the story.

5. After examining the passage, ask the following questions:

—*What can we learn about friendship from this story?*

—*How did Jonathan and David express loyalty to one another? (They made promises to one another.)*

—*What sacrifices did Jonathan make to help and support David? (He chose loyalty to David over loyalty to his father even though it put him in danger. He stayed loyal to David even though he understood that it meant giving up his own chance to become king.)*

—*How did David show his loyalty to Jonathan? (David promised to be kind to Jonathan and his family. This was important because it was common for kings in David's day to kill the family and friends of the previous ruler in order to get rid of any potential rebellion. David was even kind to Jonathan's crippled son, Mephibosheth, by providing a home for him after Jonathan died. See 2 Samuel 9:1-13.)*

—*How would you like your friendships to be like the friendship between David and Jonathan?*

## Encourage Application

6. Reading from the Study Guide, say: *Loyal friends are gifts from God. They help us in times of trouble. They comfort us when we are hurting. They protect us from enemies. Friends help each other always. What kind of friends are we? Let's use this short survey to think about it.*

## What Kind of Friend Am I?

Place a check mark beside all of the statements that apply to you. You will not share your answers with the group, so be honest in your responses.

- I choose my friends based on how I can help them, not how they can help me.
- I walk away from my friends when they are having trouble and need my help.
- I am willing to help my friends even when doing so is not easy or convenient for me.
- I give up on my friends instead of working through our problems or disagreements.
- I keep my friends' secrets when they tell me something in private.
- I gossip about my friends and say bad things to others about them when they are not present.
- I forgive my friends when they hurt me.

Provide a survey like the one above and pass out a copy to each class member. Help them to read the instructions and give time for them to respond to the survey. Allow time for members to reflect on their responses. Then ask the following questions for further reflection:

—What kind of friend are you?

—What are you willing to sacrifice to demonstrate loyalty and love toward your friends?

7. Point out today's memory verse. Practice saying it out loud a few times with the class. Explain that Jesus is the Friend who "stays nearer than a brother." Jesus' friendship lasts forever; He will never leave us.

Say: *If you do not know Jesus as this kind of friend, please talk to me. I would love to spend some time helping you understand this. That is why Jesus came to earth. He makes a way for us to have friendship with God.*

8. Close in a group prayer, praising God for Jesus—the Friend who stays nearer than a brother. Thank God for all the loyal friends in your life and ask Him to provide these kinds of friends for class members. Pray that He will make class members into the same kind of loyal friends for others.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Before class begins, attach a large piece of butcher paper to one wall in your classroom. At the top, write the words *Loyal Friends*. Use this paper to create a graffiti wall as a way of introducing today's lesson.

## Loyal Friends

As class members arrive today, direct them to the wall. Provide markers and ask them to draw pictures or write words which reflect their ideas of what makes a loyal friend. When class begins, examine what's been written on the wall. As a group, determine the top three characteristics written on the wall and lead a discussion about why the class feels these things are important. Explain that today's lesson will show what it means to be a loyal friend.

### Guide the Study

◆ Give some background for the Book of Ecclesiastes. Read or summarize the following information:

*Ecclesiastes is part of the Bible that we call wisdom literature. These writings help people deal with practical and deep-thinking matters of life. In Ecclesiastes 1:1, the writer of this book calls himself the Preacher (or Teacher), the son of David, king in Jerusalem. Most Bible scholars identify the writer as Solomon, King David's wise son. He wrote this book to help others learn important truths from his personal experience. The main idea of this book is that the only way to find fulfillment and happiness in life is by seeking God.*

*The writer describes people who are foolish and people who are wise. He says that the efforts of people who choose to be completely alone without family or friends are foolish. Even today, some people work hard to make lots of money. But they are not satisfied by their money. They work so hard that they do not have time to share their lives with other people, and so they miss one of God's best gifts — friendship. This is a foolish way to live. The writer makes this idea very clear when he says that "two are better than one."*

### Encourage Application

◆ Use the Internet or other resources to find a video or audio recording of the old hymn entitled "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." If possible, invite a church member to sing it for the class today. Provide the lyrics for class members to sing along.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

## Lesson 7: Enemies

### Lesson Focus

Jesus expects His followers to love their enemies.

### Focal Text

Luke 6:27-36; Romans 12:17-21

### Memory Verse

"Do for other people what you would like to have them do for you." (Luke 6:31)

### Prior Preparation

- ◆ Locate a suitable cartoon clip for Connect with Life #1.
- ◆ Collect a sponge, shallow dish or container, and grape juice to bring to class for Connect with Life #4.
- ◆ Bring a pair of eye glasses to class for Encourage Application #5.
- ◆ Prepare bookmarks for Encourage Application #6.

### Connect with Life

1. Use the Internet or purchase a DVD to locate a video clip from a classic cartoon like "Bugs Bunny (and Wylie Coyote)" or "Tom and Jerry." These two examples would work well for basic English speakers because they do not rely heavily on dialogue. Select a scene which is humorous, but which clearly illustrates the two characters working against each other.

When the clip is over, write this word and its definition on the board:

## ENEMY

*A person or a group of people who work against you.*

*Say: The characters from the cartoon clip are enemies. They are working against each other. They are making*

*problems for each other. They want to hurt each other. We laugh when we watch enemies in a cartoon. In real life, though, our enemies can hurt us deeply. It is nothing to laugh about. In today's lesson, we will learn how God wants Christians to treat their enemies.*

### Guide the Study

2. Divide the class into two groups. Have one group work together to read Luke 6:27-31. Have a second group work together to read Luke 6:32-36. Ask both groups to be ready to discuss some questions related to their passage. Pass out questions to each group before beginning. Allow the first group to help lead a discussion about the following questions:

—Who spoke these words? To whom was He speaking?

—What do these verses command?

—Where (or in what areas of life) will we find opportunities to obey these commands?

Allow the second group to help lead a discussion about the remaining questions:

—When should we act on these commands?

—Why are these commands unusual?

—How can we obey these commands?

Draw from the Study Guide sections entitled "Choose to Act in Love" and "Follow God's Example" to help guide the conversation and summarize main points.

3. Read Romans 12:17-21 aloud for the class. Focusing on verse 17, discuss what it means to pay back evil with good.

*Say: God does not want Christ-followers to bring bad to anyone, no matter who hurts us or why. Instead, He helps us accept and absorb the hurt. In this way, we imitate Christ's actions on the cross.*

4. To illustrate this, place a sponge in a shallow dish or container. Pour some grape juice onto the sponge until it is almost saturated, but not dripping, with the grape juice.

*Say: Christians have God's Holy Spirit living inside of us. God's Spirit is like a sponge. A Christ-follower is able to accept and absorb the hurt from an enemy because God's Spirit helps him to see his enemy the way God sees that person. God's Spirit helps a Christ-follower to love his enemy like God does. God's Spirit helps a Christ-follower to trust that God alone knows what is the right punishment for an enemy. A Christ-follower does not let the sin of his enemy have power over him. Instead, he lets God's goodness have power over his enemy's sin!*

Be sure to emphasize that forgiveness is not a natural response. It can only be demonstrated by God's love working through us in the midst of our pain.

Also be sure to emphasize that absorbing the sins of others does not mean we completely ignore the pain they caused us. It is right to acknowledge pain and grief. But instead of returning that pain and grief to our enemy, we can take our hurt to God and seek comfort from Him. By doing this, we bring glory to God and help others to see the kind of loving and comforting God we serve.

## Encourage Application

5. Display a set of eye glasses for the class. Ask them to explain the purpose of a pair of glasses. Discuss the idea that glasses help us to see things clearly when our eyes do not work well. Point out that sin, pain, and grief can sometimes affect the way we see others. Remind the class that God wants us to see our enemies clearly. He wants us to see our enemies the way He sees them. He wants us to see their needs. He wants us to see their hurts and wounds. He wants us to see that even our enemies were created for a relationship with God. He wants us to see our enemies as people whom God created and deeply loves.

Put the glasses on your face. Say: *Just like these eye glasses make it possible to see clearly, we need to see others through the lens of God's love.*

6. Using this week's memory verse, create bookmarks for each member of the class. Pass them out and practice saying this week's memory verse.

7. Take a few moments to guide the class in some reflective questions. Ask:

- Who has hurt me deeply?
- Who has been against me?
- Who has tried to harm me?
- Who is my enemy?

Guide class members who are willing to write the names of any people or groups that come to mind on the back of their bookmark. Challenge them this week to pray daily for any person whose name they have written on the back of their bookmark. Ask them to place the bookmark in their Bible alongside Luke 6:27-36.

8. Read the final paragraph from the Study Guide. Close in prayer, asking God to direct class members in specific ways in which they can pray for and bless their enemies. Together, ask God to change class members' hearts toward their enemies. As class members pray for them, ask Him to show Himself to their enemies. Thank God for the opportunity to show His love in this way.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Read the following case study:

*At his yearly job review, Joan's husband Tom received several low scores on his evaluation. Tom's boss said mean and insulting things about him. Tom knew the things his boss said were not true. Tom believed that his boss was trying to get him fired. His boss had done this to another worker who was Tom's friend. Tom told his wife what happened. Joan did not like how the boss treated Tom. Joan had many bad feelings toward Tom's boss. She felt he was against Tom. She did not like Tom's boss. She said negative things about him. She thought of this man as her enemy.*

Say: *Today we will learn how God wants His people to treat their enemies.*

### Guide the Study

◆ Remind class members that Jesus' words must have shocked the first Jewish hearers. The Jews lived each day alongside their most hated enemies—the Romans. They faced mistreatment daily from people who had taken control of their country and their daily lives. In those days, many groups were working to overthrow the Romans and rid them from the land. Many of the Jews firmly believed this was God's will. Imagine how surprising Jesus' words must have been to them!

◆ Ask two class members to read Colossians 1:21 and Romans 5:10 for the class. Explain that all of us were enemies of God. And God loved us while we were still hating Him. Take a few minutes to consider the cross as the ultimate example of loving your enemies.

## Encourage Application

◆ Return to the case study from Extra Teaching Ideas. Ask class members to put themselves in Joan's place. Discuss what it would look like for Joan to love her enemy the way Jesus commands. Apply questions from Things to Think About to Joan's situation.

*Bookmark for Encourage Application #6*

"Do for other  
people what  
you would like  
to have them  
do for you."  
(Luke 6:31)

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

### Lesson 8: Neighbors

#### Lesson Focus

By respecting, loving, and serving our neighbors, we can show them what God is like.

#### Focal Text

Exodus 20: 13-17; Leviticus 19:16-18; Zechariah 7:8-10;  
Matthew 5:13-16

#### Memory Verse

"Let your light shine in front of men. Then they will see the good things you do and will honor your Father Who is in heaven."  
(Matthew 5:16)

### Prior Preparation

- ◆ Obtain a local map and push pins or sticky notes for Connect with Life #1.
- ◆ For Encourage Application #8, bring a flashlight or candle, some cooked, plain popcorn, and a shaker of salt.
- ◆ If you plan to replicate the illustration in Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study, bring sheets of paper for the class.

### Connect with Life

1. As members enter class today, have a map of your city or local area displayed on the marker board. Encourage them to gather around the map with you and locate local landmarks on the map. These might include your church, a library, local schools, local stores, neighborhood parks, etc. Give each class member a small push pin or sticky note to place on the map showing where he or she lives.

As members mark their homes on the map, allow them to be seated. When all members have participated in the activity, guide the class to look over the map together. Point out any class members who live near each other or in the same neighborhoods.

Say: *People tend to live in groups. Groups form when people share common traits with each other. We call these groups communities. We can be in a community with all kinds of people. We might have a group of friends from our sports activities or other hobbies. We might be in a group of friends from our church. We might have a group of friends from school or work. Our study today will focus on*

*the community who lives near us—our neighbors.*

2. Write "NEIGHBORS" on the marker board.

Continue by saying: *In today's lesson, we will study four sections of Scripture that talk about our relationship with our neighbors. As you study these verses, think about how they show us ways that we can help people connect to one another and to God.*

### Guide the Study

3. Create or locate a poster of the Ten Commandments like the one below to display for your class today. (Or reuse the poster from Guide the Study #2 in Lesson 5 in this unit. Remind class members that God gave these ten rules for living to His people for an important reason.

#### ***Ten Commandments***

1. Have no gods other than the one and only God.
2. Do not make for yourselves a god to look like anything that is in heaven above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. Do not worship them or work for them.
3. Do not use the name of the Lord your God in a false way.
4. Remember the Day of Rest to keep it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. Do not kill other people.
7. Do not do sex sins.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not tell a lie about your neighbor.
10. Do not have a desire for your neighbor's house, his wife, his servants, his animals, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

*(paraphrased from the New Life Version)*

Emphasize the idea from the Study Guide that many people think of the Ten Commandments as a list of *No's* or *Thou Shalt Not's*. But the Ten Commandments are really much more than that. God wanted a special relationship with His people, and these rules helped them know how they could please God and know Him better. Just as children learn boundaries for living when we tell them *No!*, God's people were learning boundaries, too. They were, after all, a new nation in its infancy as the people of God. They needed to know what behavior was acceptable to God and what was outside the boundaries.

4. Using your poster, read the first four commandments out loud for the class. Explain that these commandments teach about our relationship with God. Next, use the poster to read the last five commandments. Explain that these commandments teach us how to live in relationship with our neighbors.

Call on a strong reader to read Exodus 20:13-17 for the class.

Then, refer to the Study Guide section entitled, “God’s Rules for Being a Good Neighbor” and read or summarize the five commandments in bold text. Note that each of these commandments also has a New Testament application. (New Testament references are listed with each of the five commandments.) This helps us to understand that God intended these commandments to be timeless truths for His people because they are presented in the Old Testament and restated in the New Testament.

5. Say: *These verses from Exodus focus mainly on our actions toward our neighbors. The next group of verses will focus on the words we say to our neighbors.*

Ask a class member to read Leviticus 19:16-18. Pay careful attention to verse 16. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled, “Neighbors Love Neighbors” to make comments, pointing out that words have great power to hurt and to heal.

Ask: *How can our words be even more damaging than our actions?* Consider using the illustration from Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study to make this point clear.

6. Say: *The next set of verses comes from the prophet Zechariah who led God’s people when they returned to Jerusalem after being slaves in Babylon around 520 B.C. Zechariah deeply wanted God’s people to love God with all their hearts, from the inside out. He did not want the people to be taken away again because of hard hearts and disobedience to God. He told the people four important ways they could show that their love for God was real.*

Write the following list on the marker board. Instruct class members to listen for these ideas as you read the verses from Zechariah.

### **Zechariah 7:8-10**

- *Do what is right for your neighbor*
- *Show mercy (loving-pity) to your neighbor*
- *Do not make it hard for neighbors in need*
- *Do not make sinful plans against your neighbor*

7. Say: *We will examine one more section of Scripture today about how God wants His people to treat their neighbors. In Matthew 5, Jesus points out two important purposes that His followers have in their relationships with their neighbors.*

Ask a class member to read Matthew 5:13-16 for the class. Tell members to listen for two important descriptions that Jesus uses in this passage.

### **Encourage Application**

8. Write the following words on the marker board. Point out that Jesus compared His followers to two common things: *salt* and *light*.

**SALT      LIGHT**

Draw from the Study Guide section entitled, “Neighbors Make a Difference” for this discussion. Display a salt shaker and a candle (or a flashlight) for class members to consider.

Ask: *What use does each of these things have?*

To illustrate, turn off the lights and light the candle (or shine the flashlight). Comment that light helps us see where we are and guides us where we should go. Explain that God’s people should always point others to Him.

As a second illustration, offer the class some plain popcorn. Allow them to try it, then offer some salt to add to it. Salt is a useful seasoning that enhances the flavor of food. Just so, God’s people should enhance the lives of others—especially their neighbors. In other words, our neighbors’ lives should be better because of the relationships they have with Christians.

For details on other important uses of salt in the ancient world, go to Wikipedia.org and search “Salt in the Bible.”

9. Read aloud the final two paragraphs from today’s lesson. Close in prayer that our relationships with our neighbors will enhance their lives and shine the light on Jesus so that they can see who God really is.

### **Extra Teaching Ideas Guide the Study**

♦ To help members understand the power of words, share the following story. Or use this story as an activity; bring paper for everyone and distribute, then have the class crumple their papers.

To use the story as a simple illustration, say: *Paula, a teacher in New York was teaching her class about bullying and gave them the following exercise to perform. She had the children take a piece of paper and told them to crumple it up, stamp on it and really mess it up, but don’t rip it. Then she had them unfold the paper, smooth it out, and look at how scarred and dirty it was. She then told them to tell it they’re sorry. Now even though they said they were sorry and tried to fix the paper, she pointed out all the scars they left behind. Those scars would never go away no matter how hard they tried. That is what happens when a child bullies another child; they may say they’re sorry but the scars are there forever. The looks on the faces of the children in the classroom told her the message hit home.*

(Source: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/mjs538/awesome-bullying-lesson-from-a-new-york-teacher#.ewR7Aklqv0>)

### **Encourage Application**

♦ Before class, go to **pray4everyhome.com** and watch the 60-second overview. Praying by name for neighbors is the key to reaching a neighborhood for Jesus. The following activity will help members begin to identify their neighbors. In class, pass out pens and paper. Ask class to draw a map of their neighborhood, including the homes closest to them. Label the homes of every family they know personally. Think about each family and list their needs. How can they be prayed for? Allow class to share their drawings and ideas. Mention **pray4everyhome.com** as a resource for discovering their neighbors and how to pray.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

### in Simplified English

Created for Relationships

## Lesson 9: Employer

### Lesson Focus

The way a Christian works at his job reflects his devotion to Christ.

### Focal Text

Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:22-25; 1 Timothy 6:1-2;  
Titus 2:9-11

### Memory Verse

"Be happy as you work. Do your work as for the Lord, not for men." (Ephesians 6:7)

## Prior Preparation

- ◆ Bring a mirror to illustrate Guide the Study #4.
- ◆ Prepare the work survey for Encourage Application #8.
- ◆ Use YouTube to find the video for "Do Everything" if you plan to use it in Extra Teaching Ideas.

## Connect with Life

1. Have the following statements on the marker board for class members as they enter today.

The best job I ever had was \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

The worst job I ever had was \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

Direct class members to consider their responses to these statements while everyone arrives. When class begins, ask class members to share their answers.

Say: *Christians work in all kinds of jobs with all kinds of people. They work in many different situations. Today's lesson will explore how Christians can show their relationship with Christ through their attitude and actions at work. We will talk about the way that God wants His people to relate to bosses and other workers.*

## Guide the Study

2. Before beginning the study, share the following

background information with class members to help them understand the verses in today's lesson.

Say: *Paul was one of the first and most important followers of Jesus. He wrote all of the words in the Bible text for today's lesson. In our lesson today, Paul talks about work. He tells how Christian servants and masters should act.*

*In Paul's time, many people, even most people, were servants (or slaves). It was a fact of life. People in Paul's time were not servants because of the color of their skin. Instead, people became servants because they were poor and had no way to earn a living. There were not many different kinds of jobs then. Some people lived their entire lives as slaves, or servants, just so they could meet their basic needs for food, clothing, and housing. Many Christians were probably servants; some were masters (or owners of slaves). Paul and other writers of the New Testament talk about servants and masters. However, the Bible does not support the sin of treating people as objects, like the slavery in America's early history.*

3. Write an outline on the board like the one below.

### Ephesians 6:5-9

- I. Do your job by obeying your \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 5)
- II. Work as if you were trying to please \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 6)
- III. Be \_\_\_\_\_ as you work (v. 7)
- IV. Good \_\_\_\_\_ will be rewarded (v. 8)

Ask class members to listen ask you read Ephesians 6:5-9. Instruct them to listen carefully for missing words from the outline. When you are through reading, ask class members to help you fill in the blanks. (*Answers: I. owner; II. Christ; III. Happy; IV. Work*)

Use the outline to guide a discussion of this passage. Draw from the Study Guide section entitled, "Servant and Owner, Employee and Employer," to enhance members' understanding of these verses.

4. Show the class a handheld mirror. Ask: *What does a mirror do?*

Discuss the idea that a mirror reflects the likeness as of an object. It shows a reflection. Say: *Colossians 3:22-25 is like a mirror. It is a reflection of the same ideas we discussed in Ephesians 6:5-9.*

5. Ask a class member to read Colossians 3:22-25. Instruct class members to listen for ideas from Ephesians 6:5-9. List their responses on the board.

Say: *Remember that Paul wrote the words in Colossians and in Ephesians. He shared similar ideas with two churches who were about 100 miles apart. Christians often need to be reminded about these principles, so Paul wrote them in his letters to both churches. These ideas were worth repeating, because they were very different from the attitudes held by servants and owners during this time. Just as we studied about*

husbands and wives in Lesson 2, Paul taught that all Christians should serve each other. One person is not more important than another in God's eyes. God respects everyone the same, not husbands more than wives or bosses more than servants. So husbands and wives, as well as servants and master, should seek to serve and honor one another. This gives honor to God.

To help make this point clear, consider sharing the story of Onesimus from Extra Teaching Ideas.

6. Divide the class into two groups. Have the first group read and discuss 1 Timothy 6:1-12. Have the second group focus on Titus 2:9-11. Allow some time for the groups to work through their verses.

Ask each group to tell the main idea of their Scripture sections for the whole class. Help guide the discussion by emphasizing points from the study guide sections entitled, "Showing Respect" and "Putting a Good Face on Faith."

## Encourage Application

7. Say: *Christians do all kinds of work. They work with all kinds of people. They have a special chance to show their relationship to Christ by their attitude and their actions at work. How well do you show Christ in the work you do?*

8. Pass out a survey like the one here to help class members evaluate how they show Christ at work. Give them time to complete the survey.

Direct the class to look back over their answers and determine one aspect of their work they want to improve. Allow time for silent prayer in which class members can talk with God about their work and the people with whom they work. Close in a group prayer, asking God to use class members as salt and light in their jobs.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

- ◆ Begin today's class with a discussion about work. Ask:
  - What did you want to be when you grew up?
  - What job do you have right now? (Remember that for

some, their job right now is to be a student or to raise a family. These are important jobs, even though they might be unpaid positions.)

- Are you studying to enter a specific occupation?
- Are you happy in your work right now?

After allowing class members to share in the discussion, say: *Our jobs are important to God. In our work, we have many important relationships. God wants to use His people in their work. In today's lesson, we will learn that the way we work matters.*

## Guide the Study

◆ Say: *The Book of Philemon shows how Paul's teaching applies in a real life situation. Paul loved both Philemon (a master) and Onesimus (Philemon's servant). Philemon was Paul's dear friend, fellow worker, as well as his brother in Christ. Paul called Onesimus his son and his very heart. Onesimus had run away from Philemon and had become a Christian while on the run. He helped Paul when he was in prison in Rome. Later, Paul sent Onesimus back to his master, Philemon. Under Roman law, Philemon could have punished or killed Onesimus for running away. Paul asked Philemon to accept Onesimus back without punishment and receive him as a brother.*

## Encourage Application

- ◆ Find the following video on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEqDdVFXZ0>

Have the class listen to the words and music from Steven Curtis Chapman's song, "Do Everything." Talk about how this song reflects the truth of this lesson's memory verse (Ephesians 6:7).

Note: If you have time during your preparation, watch this short YouTube video from Chapman about why he wrote this song and what it means to him personally: *Whatever we do, it all matters. Everything we do can be done as an act of worship to God.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NOMv90r9xM>

In class, after listening to the song, allow feedback and discussion. Then close in prayer that God will use us all for His good purposes in the jobs we do every day.

## *Attitudes and Actions at Work*

	Always	A lot	A little	Never
I complain about my job to my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I complain about my job to my co-workers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I work harder when I know my boss is near.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I slack off when I know my boss is on vacation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I treat my boss with respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I work just so I can earn a paycheck.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I work half-heartedly because my job is frustrating.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My supervisor does not do what is right, so neither do I.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My co-workers would say that I honor God and obey my boss.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Created for Relationships

## Lesson 10: Government

### Lesson Focus

Christians are to pray for people in charge of the government and to be good citizens as

### Focal Text

Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-4

### Memory Verse

"Pray for kings and all others who are in power over us so we might live quiet God-like lives in peace." (1 Timothy 2:2)

### Prior Preparation

- ◆ Bring a map and push pins or sticky notes for Connect with Life #1.
- ◆ Use the Internet to locate names and pictures of local, state, and national leaders for Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life. Also gather small prizes or treats for the trivia game.
- ◆ Prepare a handout of local and state government leaders to pass out to the class for Encourage Application #7.
- ◆ Locate a map of the persecuted church or a prayer guide from one of the resources in Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study.

### Connect with Life

1. Display a map of the world today as class members enter. Gather around the map with them and encourage each member to use a push pin or a sticky note to identify their family's native land. When everyone has completed this activity, spend some time looking at the results on the map. Encourage class members to share about their native countries, leaders, and governments.

Say: *Christians live in many countries around the world. The countries of the world have very different leaders and governments. But God has one thing to say about what kind of citizens Christians should be no matter where they live. In today's lesson, we will discover that God wants Christians everywhere to pray for their country's leaders and respect those in charge of their governments.*

### Guide the Study

2. Before examining the Bible texts from today's lesson, take some time share about what was happening to the people to whom Paul was writing in these verses. Read or summarize the following information:

*Life was not easy for the first Christians. They lived under a harsh Roman government. The Romans ruled their land by cruel force. Paul wrote to Christians in Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire. In fact, Christians were not the majority. Christians did not have power in the government. Christians were mistreated and even killed in the name of the Roman law. Paul himself was put in prison and beaten by Roman leaders. Even so, Paul encouraged Christians to please God by respecting their leaders.*

3. Ask a class member to read Romans 13:1-5. Instruct members to listen for words to complete the outline.

(Answers: *I. God; II. leaders; III. respect, punishment; IV. servants; V. peace*)

### Romans 13:1-5

- I. Leaders are given by \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 1)
- II. Citizens should not work against their \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 2)
- III. By doing what is right, citizens will receive \_\_\_\_\_ instead of \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 3)
- IV. Citizens should honor leaders as God's \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 4)
- V. Honoring leaders brings \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 5)

Guide a discussion of these verses by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled, "God's Plan for Governments." Be sure to emphasize the idea that not every government follows God's plan. Not all leaders seek to serve God by serving people. Ask about the native countries of your class members. Consider whether or not any class members come from countries where the government mistreats people or where Christians are persecuted by the government. Allow these class members to share their experiences if they wish.

Emphasize that God gave governments and leaders to help protect people. He is grieved when leaders do not follow His plan. Sometimes, people must choose between obeying government and obeying God. In those situations, we must obey God first.

4. Stop and pray for Christians living in places where they are mistreated by the government. Consider using resources in the Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study to enhance this time of prayer.

5. Ask a class member to continue by reading Romans 13:6-7 for the class. Instruct class members to listen for words to complete the outline. (Answers: *VI. taxes; VII. respect*)

Draw from the Study Guide section entitled, "What

Good Citizens Do” in order to guide discussion and increase understanding of these verses.

### **Romans 13:6-7**

VI. Pay \_\_\_\_\_ and bills (v. 6)

VII. Give leaders honor and \_\_\_\_\_ (v.7)

6. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-4 aloud for the class. Ask:
- How are we to pray?* (Pray much; give thanks)
  - For whom are we to pray?* (all men; kings and men in power over us)
  - What are the benefits that come to us for doing this?* (peaceful lives, pleasing to God, others may know the truth and be saved from the punishment of sin)
  - What parts of Paul’s instructions are most challenging for you?*

### **Encourage Application**

7. Prior to class, go to the Internet for names of the leaders listed on the handout (at right). These websites will help:

- [www.whitehouse.gov/administration](http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration)
- [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) (for House of Representatives)
- [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) (for U.S. Senators)

Look to your state government website and local government website for names of state/local leaders. Prepare and duplicate the handout, or be prepared to write the information on the board.

In class, review the list, and briefly tell about the work that different leaders do. Remember all class members might not be familiar with the structure and function of the U.S. government.

Divide the class into groups of two or three members. Assign each group a few leaders from the list. Instruct them to pray for these leaders. Direct them to their handout (or the board) for suggestions to help them pray effectively. Close with a time of prayer for leaders.

### **Extra Teaching Ideas**

#### **Connect with Life**

◆ Begin today’s class with a short trivia game about local, state, and national leaders. Give small treats or prizes to class members who can give the names of leaders like your local mayor, state governor, the president and vice president, or any local senators or congressmen. It might be helpful to print pictures of these people from the websites listed in Encourage Application #7.

#### **Guide the Study**

◆ Share some information about persecuted Christians around the world. Two reputable websites on the Internet are Campus Crusade and Voice of the Martyrs. You can find them at the following web locations:

- <http://www.cru.org/train-and-grow/devotional-life/pray-for-persecuted-church.html>
- <http://www.persecution.com/public/prayermap.aspx>

### **Encourage Application**

◆ Encourage your class to lead a prayer campaign in your church for local, state, and national leaders. Have them use their phones or mobile devices to start exploring ways in which they can pray for these leaders. Direct them to the following website: <http://www.pray1tim2.org/>

Consider this website as a useful resource in helping class members to lead a grass-roots prayer effort among church members. Be prepared to help connect them to resources they might need to publish a prayer guide in print, by email distribution, or online (such as a post on your church’s website. Help introduce them to church leaders who can help get the word out to your church family. These may include staff pastors, lay leaders, or Bible study teachers. Be sure to let your church leadership know what the class is doing and ask for their support of and involvement in this project.

*Encourage Application #7*

#### **National Leaders**

U.S. President: \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. Vice President: \_\_\_\_\_

Selected Supreme Court Justices: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Selected Cabinet Members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

U.S. House of Representatives Member: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

U.S. Senator: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **State/Local Leaders**

Governor: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Judges: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Local State Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Local State Senator: \_\_\_\_\_

City Mayor: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **How to Pray for Leaders**

- Pray for their health and well-being.
- Pray that God will grant them wisdom and guidance to do what is best and right for people.
- Pray that God will give them knowledge and skill so they will be capable and respected leaders.
- Pray that God will help them know and understand the truth of the Gospel.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

## Lesson 11: Church Leaders

### Lesson Focus

Church leaders and members are to give each other mutual respect and support, keeping their eyes on Jesus, the ultimate leader of the church.

### Focal Text

Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13;  
Hebrews 13:17-18

### Memory Verse

"We are to grow up and be more like Christ. He is the leader of the church." (Ephesians 4:15)

### Prior Preparation

- ◆ You may wish to make copies of the statistics on pastor burnout for your class follows along as you read.
- ◆ Use your church's website or photo directory to locate pictures of ministry leaders in your church for Encourage Application #8.
- ◆ Bring blank note cards and pens if you plan to use the activity from Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.

### Connect with Life

1. Ask a class member to read the brief story from the introduction to today's lesson in the Study Guide. After sharing in the humor of this short story, say:

*This short story makes us laugh. Sadly, in real life, some church leaders feel exactly like this. In fact, current research gathered from church leaders in America shows an alarming trend. Many are depressed, confused, and lonely in their roles as church leaders.*

Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ and the Global Pastors Network, printed these statistics gleaned from various sources from across denominational lines, such as *Pastor to Pastor*, *Focus on the Family*, *Ministries Today*, *Charisma Magazine*, and *TNT Ministries*.

Share some of these statistics with your class members. *Source: [www.leadershipresources.org/blog/christian-ministry-burnout-prevention-signs-statistics-recovery/](http://www.leadershipresources.org/blog/christian-ministry-burnout-prevention-signs-statistics-recovery/)*

### Church Leaders in America Today

- 500 pastors leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout, or contention in their churches
- 4,000 new churches begin each year, but over 7,000 churches will close
- 50% of pastors are so discouraged that they would leave the ministry if they could, but have no other way of making a living
- 80% of pastors and 84% of their spouses feel unqualified and discouraged in their role as pastors
- 70% of pastors feel grossly underpaid
- 70% of pastors constantly fight depression
- 80% of seminary and Bible students who enter the ministry will leave the ministry within the first five years
- 80% of adult children of pastors surveyed have had to seek professional help for depression
- 70% of pastors do not have a close friend, confidant, or mentor
- 70% said the only time they spend studying the Word is when they are preparing their sermons.
- 85% of pastors said their greatest problem is they are sick and tired of dealing with problem people, such as disgruntled elders, deacons, worship leaders, worship teams, board members, and associate pastors

Ask for comments from the class about what you have just shared. Explore whether or not class members are surprised by this information. After a short discussion, say: *Today's lesson will help us understand how we can respect and support leaders in our church.*

### Guide the Study

2. Before going further, stop and call attention to the Word List. Divide the class members into four groups, assigning one word from the list to each group. Ask the groups to study the meaning of their assigned word. Then instruct each group to write a sentence which uses the word correctly. Give guidance where needed. When you are sure each group has successfully completed their sentence, allow them to share their word, its definition, and their sentence with the group.

3. Read Ephesians 4:11-16 aloud to the class. Guide discussion, drawing from the Study Guide section entitled, "Learn from Your Leaders." Use an outline like this one to help increase understanding of this passage:

### Purpose of Spiritual Leaders

- Prepare God's people to serve Christ (v. 12a)
- Build up the body of Christ to make it strong (v. 12b)
- Foster unity among believers in Christ's body (v. 13a)
- Guide believers to become mature in Christ (v. 13b)

4. Ask a class member to read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 for the class. Lead the class to discuss Question #4 from Things to Think About (*How can your class show support for your church leaders?*)

5. Take a few moments to explain more about the cultural setting of the new church in the first century A.D.  
 —*There were no vocational (paid) church staff as we know them today. More often, Christians might be bivocational—keeping their jobs as tentmaker, fisherman, shop owner, blacksmith, farmer, housewife—and giving time to establish and grow a new group of believers.*  
 —*There were no Christian seminaries that turned out thousands of trained vocational ministers each year to fill church positions, start new churches, etc.*  
 —*There was not a hierarchy of church staff (pastor emeritus, executive pastor, senior pastor, pastor, assistant pastor, minister of music, minister of evangelism, children’s director/minister, etc.). Instead, there were Christians who loved and nurtured the believers of a local church for years, and by their dedication, became its leaders.*  
 —*There were Christians who left behind family and jobs to take the Gospel of Jesus to other cities and people groups. These became known as the first missionaries, of which Paul was the premiere example.*

Paul wrote to the people living in the cultural setting described above, and we should read these passages with that in mind. He was not writing with the 21st century church in mind with its (often) full-time paid staff with benefits, church campuses, websites, and multi-tiered educational programs. What he wrote is certainly still applicable to us today, but it helps to understand his message when we understand the setting in which it was written.

6. Ask a class member to read Hebrews 13:17-18. Point out that God allows leaders to emerge in order to protect and care for His people. God’s design for the role of a leader is truly one of a servant-leader. God did not empower leaders with the right to “lord it over” the congregation or to have the right to push through their own agendas. Instead, the relationship between church leaders and church members should be one of mutual submission, much like that of a husband and wife or an employee and employer as described in previous lessons.

For example, it is possible to disagree with a leader’s actions, ideas, or opinions without attacking or insulting his character. Honoring leaders means seeking to work for their good in the Lord, not working to bring about their personal destruction.

7. Write a list like the following on the board. Then guide class members to strike out (or erase) any words from the list that do not reflect the teachings from today’s lesson.

Say: *Why should we do*



*these things? Out of love for Christ and His body, the church.* Conclude this illustration by drawing a large heart around the remaining words.

## Encourage Application

8. Present your class with the pictures and names of staff and lay leaders in your church. Be sure to remember those who might often be overlooked because their work is not easily visible (nursery workers, media workers, janitors, etc.). Divide the class members into groups and distribute the names and pictures among the groups. Allow time for prayer, with each group praying specifically over the leaders given to them. When groups are finished, lead the class in a closing prayer, asking God to help them be a source of joy to both Christ and the leaders in your church.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Guide the Study

◆ Use a chart like the one below to help class members understand the more common names for the leadership roles discussed in Ephesians 4:11.

### Kinds of Leaders (Ephesians 4:11)

- **Apostles:** missionaries; leaders who are sent to reach people who do not know Christ
- **Prophets:** leaders who work to preach truth to God’s people
- **Evangelists:** leaders who go from place to place sharing the Good News
- **Pastors (Shepherds):** leaders who care for God’s people in a specific location
- **Teachers:** leaders who teach God’s Word to help God’s people become mature

## Encourage Application

◆ Provide these additional statistics about families in ministry. Then provide blank notecards and pens for your class members. Allow them the opportunity to write an encouraging note to a staff member’s family.

### Families in Ministry

- 80% of pastors' spouses feel their spouse is overworked.
- 95% of pastors do not regularly pray with their spouse.
- 80% of pastors’ wives feel pressured to do things and be something in the church that they really are not.
- 80% of pastors' wives feel left out and unappreciated by the church members.
- A majority of pastors’ wives who responded to the survey that the most destructive event in their marriage and family was the day they entered the ministry.
- 50% of pastors' marriages will end in divorce.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

## Lesson 12: Christians

### Lesson Focus

As members of God's family, Christians should encourage, serve and sacrifice for each other.

### Focal Text

Acts 4:32-37; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Galatians 6:9-10;  
Hebrews 10:24-25

### Memory Verse

"Because of this, we should do good to everyone. For sure, we should do good to those who belong to Christ." (Galatians 6:10)

## Prior Preparation

- ◆ Bring blank index cards for Encourage Application #7
- ◆ If you plan to use the idea from Extra Teaching Ideas/Connect with Life, bring a family or childhood scrapbook.
- ◆ If you plan to use it, prepare copies of the survey for Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application.

## Connect with Life

1. Before class members enter today, write the Memory Verse on the board in two parts.

### Galatians 6:10

Because of this, we should do good to everyone.

For sure, we should do good to those who belong to Christ.

As class begins today, introduce the Memory Verse from this lesson. Divide the class into two halves, and practice saying the verse with one group saying the first line and another the second line. Then have the groups switch. Finish by having the groups say the entire verse aloud in unison.

Say: *In our last lesson, we learned the importance of*

*encouraging church leaders. Today's lesson will reveal that church leaders are not the only ones deserving our encouragement. In fact, all of our brothers and sisters who belong to Christ are deserving of our encouragement. In God's family, we must remember to honor and encourage each other. This is how God wants relationships in His family to be.*

## Guide the Study

2. Before examining the Bible texts from this lesson, write these phrases on the board.

Serve together  
Share with others  
Spur each other on  
Stay on course

Make sure that class members understand the meaning of each phrase. Explain that each passage from today's lesson will demonstrate one of these ideas. Leave these phrases on the board for reference throughout today's lesson.

3. Ask a class member who is a strong reader to read Acts 4:32-37. Ask class members which of the phrases on the board best represents the main idea from these verses. Affirm that these verses encourage Christians to share with each other. Guide the discussion by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled, "Believers Sacrifice for Each Other."

4. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 for the class. Ask class members which of the phrases on the marker board best represents the main idea from these verses. Affirm that these verses encourage Christians to "Serve Christ together" with their gifts.

5. Divide the class into three groups. Ask each group to listen for a specific point below from the passage while you read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 aloud for the class again. When you have finished, use these points and the Study Guide section entitled, "Believers Serve Each Other" to guide discussion about this passage.

### 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

- Listen for the danger of thinking one's gifts are not important
- Listen for the danger of thinking one's gifts are more important
- Listen for how Christians should view all gifts

5. Ask a class member to read Galatians 6:9-10. Then ask class members which phrase from the board best represents the idea from these verses. Affirm that these verses encourage Christians to stay on course even when they are tired or things are hard. Be sure to explain that “staying on course” means keeping focused on the goal even when you are tired. Ask:

—What promises are named in these verses?

—What do you do when you get tired of doing what is good?

—What can we do to help others who grow tired and want to give up?

6. Ask another class member to read Hebrews 10:24-25. Then ask class members which phrase from the board best represents the idea from these verses. Affirm that these verses encourage Christians to “spur each other on” in good things.

## Encourage Application

7. Pass out a blank notecard to each class member. Ask them to think of someone they know who might be tired of doing good. Instruct them to write down that person’s name on the index card and place it in their Bible next to Hebrews 10.

Close class today with a time of reflection and a call to action. Ask class members to consider how they can genuinely encourage someone they know who is always doing good for others.

Consider the first half of Question #2 from Things to Think About (*How have others served you?*) in order to help class members think of someone who fits this description.

Challenge them to follow through with their idea this week. Make time during next week’s lesson for class members to share how they met this challenge to encourage others.

## Extra Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Bring a family or childhood scrapbook to share with the class today. Share some important things recorded in the scrapbook. Discuss the idea that a scrapbook is a written or visual record of an important time in a person or a family’s life.

Say: *The New Testament, especially the Book of Acts, is like a scrapbook of the early church. We learn important things about the first Christians by examining these writings. One of the most important things we can learn is how Christians should treat one another. In today’s lesson, we will read four passages that will help us see that God wants Christians to encourage, serve, and sacrifice for each other.*

## Guide the Study

◆ When discussing the example of Barnabas, point out the significance of his *nickname*. Be sure to point this

vocabulary word from the Word List.

Ask class members if they or any members of their families have interesting or significant nicknames. Ask several to share with the class. Then, consider Question #5 from Things to Think About (*If someone at your church were to give you a nickname that means something, what would it be?*).

As a fun illustration, allow class members to come up with a nickname for you or others who are in your class.

## Encourage Application

◆ At the end of class today, distribute the following checklist for members to complete confidentially. Provide time for silent prayer, during which adults can respond to God’s leading in this week’s study. Then close in a group prayer, thanking God for the gift of other believers and the role they play in our lives.

## Lesson 12 Survey

- During today’s lesson, I discovered a specific way I can start to serve or continue to serve my church and God’s family.
- I have not recently thought of myself as having gifts that might serve others. With prayer and help from other Christians, I will consider how I can serve others with the gifts God has given me.
- This week, I will seek out a fellow Christian brother or sister who may need encouragement through words or deeds.
- I have become tired of doing good. I am worn out from serving. I will take this burden to the Father, and I will talk to a fellow Christian brother or sister who might be an encouragement to me at this time. I will consider the fact that in the past, I might not have been willing to allow others to serve me when I have needed it.

# Teaching Guide

## Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Created for Relationships*

## Lesson 13: All People Everywhere

### Lesson Focus

Christians represent Christ to all people, including those who are far from God's love and salvation.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 5:11-21; 1 Peter 3:15; Colossians 4:2-6

### Memory Verse

"Be wise in the way you live around those who are not Christians. Make good use of your time." (Colossians 4:5)

### Prior Preparation

- ◆ Prepare a vocabulary worksheet for Guide the Study #2.
- ◆ Find a map of Corinth to use as background information or enlarge the map on the next page (optional activity from Extra Teaching Ideas/Guide the Study).
- ◆ Choose and locate the lyrics to an appropriate hymn and find someone to perform it for the class (optional activity from Extra Teaching Ideas/Encourage Application).

### Connect with Life

1. Begin class today using these questions to guide discussion:

- Who was the first person to ever tell you about Jesus? Was it a parent? Teacher? Friend? Grandparent? Church leader? Television preacher?*
- When you became a Christian, who was the first person you told about Jesus?*

Allow class members to share their experiences with the large group or in small groups.

Say: *In today's lesson, we will discover that God has an important plan for our relationships with those who do not yet know Jesus. He wants Christians to represent Christ to all those who do not know His love and salvation.*

### Guide the Study

2. Ask a class member to read 2 Corinthians 5:11-15. Pass out worksheets like the one on this page. Have class

members work together to summarize the ideas in these verses by using the vocabulary words from the Word List to fill in the blanks in the following sentences. (Answers: *deserve; gratitude; persuade; passion*)

### 2 Corinthians 5:11-15

In these verses, Paul explains the reason why he shares Christ with everyone. Paul fears God. Paul is not afraid of punishment, but understands that without Jesus all of us \_\_\_\_\_ punishment. Knowing that Jesus Christ died for our sins, Paul has \_\_\_\_\_ for what Jesus did on the cross. Paul knew that many others did not understand Jesus' sacrifice for sin. He knew that others were still in danger of punishment without Jesus. Because of this, Paul wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ others to turn to Jesus and give their lives to Him. Paul had a deep \_\_\_\_\_ to share Christ with others because he had a deep understanding of what Christ had done for him.

3. Ask another class member to read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. Say: *We are Christ's missionaries! We represent Jesus everywhere we go. What a privilege! What a responsibility!*

Return to the opening activity from Connect with Life #1. Ask a few class members who shared in that discussion to tell more about the person who first shared Christ with them. Ask: *What kind of "missionary" was this person? How did they represent Christ to you?*

4. Read 1 Peter 3:15 for the class. Guide discussion of this passage by drawing from the Study Guide section entitled, "Be Ready with Your Answer."

5. Present this question by writing on the board or reading it aloud: *Do you believe in God? Why?*

Guide class members to share their responses. Acknowledge that not all class members may have a firm belief in God. Let them know that God can handle the doubts and questions of a person who is sincere in their desire to know if God is real. Make it clear that doubt is not the enemy of faith. The true enemy of faith is pride. God promises to reveal Himself to a person who humbly and truly seeks Him.

Ask a class member to read aloud Jeremiah 29:13: “You will look for Me and find Me, when you look for Me with all your heart.”

6. Write the sentences below on the board, then ask a class member to read Colossians 4:2-6. Instruct class members to listen for the missing words from the phrases on the board as these verses are read.

(Answers: *praying; watching; thankful; wise*)

**Colossians 4:2-6**

Keep \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 2)  
 Keep \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 2)  
 Be \_\_\_\_\_ always (v. 2)  
 Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the way you live (v. 5)

### Encourage Application

7. Call attention to this week’s Memory Verse. Lead class members in practicing the verse aloud several times.

**Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.**

**Colossians 4:5 (NIV)**

Then share another translation of this verse from the New International Version:

Say: *One Bible translation puts it like this: “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity” (Colossians 4:5, New International Version)*

- Ask:
- What is an outsider? (someone who doesn’t belong)
  - What does Paul mean when he uses that word in this verse? (those who are not Christians and do not belong to Christ)
  - Who are the outsiders where you live and work?
  - What kind of attitude should Christians have toward outsiders?
  - How can a Christian’s attitude influence outsiders for Christ?

8. Lead the class in a time of prayer, asking God to open doors of opportunity for class members to talk to others about

Jesus. Pray that they will be motivated by the love and gratitude for Christ to share what they believe.

### Extra Teaching Ideas

#### Guide the Study

◆ Use a map like the one below to let members search for the city of Corinth.

Say: *Corinth was located on a major waterway. It was a port city and a center of international trade. It was full of people from many different parts of the world. Corinth was known for worshipping false gods and many other sinful acts. Its reputation was so strong that it inspired a common expression. In the ancient world, to Corinthianize something meant to corrupt it completely.*

*The Corinthian church was no stranger to living among non-Christians. They faced the same challenge as many Christians today. How can a Christian live a life that honors Christ in the middle of so much sinfulness?*

### Encourage Application

◆ Close class time with a traditional hymn which emphasizes our role as Christ’s missionaries. Possibly choose a hymn like “Tell Me the Story of Jesus,” “Send the Light,” “Rescue the Perishing,” or “I Love to Tell the Story.”

Consider inviting a class member or other church member to perform the hymn for the class today. Or possibly use the Internet to locate a video on YouTube. Be sure to provide lyrics for the class.

Source: *GenerationWord.com*

