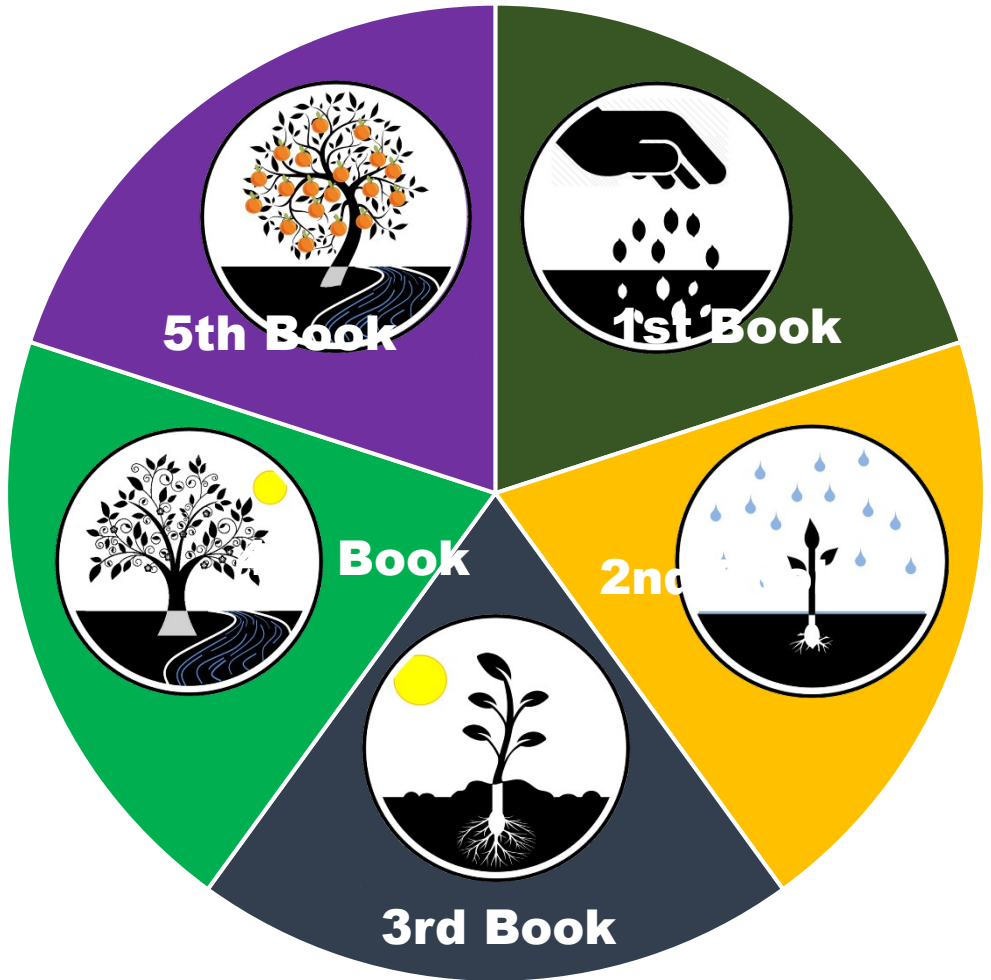


# DISCIPLER'S MANUAL

## Discipleship Material



*He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. Psalm 1:3*

# Preface and Purpose

The spirit and purpose of this discipleship material is that it, 1) be the best possible, 2) be accessible to all, 3) be adaptable to any language and culture, 4) be based on Scripture, 5) apply the inductive method of studying the Bible, 6) be inexpensive or free, and 7) carry no restrictions of use. There is no copyright on this material, and no one can commercialize what is freely given. We ask that you do not charge for this material, other than the cost of printing.

This material is for one-on-one discipleship or with a small group. As this material comes in PDF, it can be done entirely on a smartphone. It can be put in other formats and no copies need be made. However, it can be printed as well. There is a “Disciple” booklet and a “Discipler” book (with all the answers).

This material was done for the Wesleyan church in South Asia, which means it has our history and doctrinal statements, an important part of discipleship. You have the same freedom to make it for your church, with your history, and doctrinal statements. Or you can choose not to use that booklet at all. Anyone can change anything in this material. The church name can be changed as well as the logo. You can use this material as a base and transform it. The last two booklets could look radically different depending on the church.

If this material is translated into another language, we would like to have it in our database so that others can have access to it as well. There is so much work to be done to reach the world for Jesus. Let us work together. Our contact person is Soraya, a Brazilian who lives in South Asia - wesleyanchurchlk@gmail.com

Please adapt and translate this material for your needs. We ask only that you keep the paragraph below that talks of its origin. Also use the QR Code or link that is on the back, to evaluate the material and inform us how it is being used. The purpose is merely to have feedback about the material and to help us with any errors that we may have missed. We aim to improve the material. And it would be helpful to know who is using the material and where it is being used.

This material was originally produced by the Wesleyan Church of South Asia, together with the Igreja Evangélica Wesleyana in Brazil. There have been many people involved in this process, but Gwendolyn (Ensz) Hake had the original vision for this project and then became an author and finally the editor. She is an MK from Brazil. There are no copyrights or restrictions in the use of this material. All glory is given to God for this project. Go, make disciples of all nations! Blessings.

SERIES: DISCIPLESHIP  
**1st Book**



# FIRST STEPS IN CHRISTIANITY



Discipler



*He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. Psalm 1:3*

# Table of Contents

## Book 1 – First Steps In Christianity

A Story – An Introduction to Our Story	p. 3
1. Knowing God	p. 7
2. Introduction to the Bible	p. 16
3. Introduction to Knowing the God of Creation	p. 25
4. A Discussion about Wood and God	p. 33
5. Introduction to Prayer	p. 42
6. Introduction to Discipleship	p. 47
7. Introduction to the Reality of Temptation	p. 53



*Go, make disciples!*

# A Story, An Introduction to Our Story

Greetings! Welcome to our church and to this discipleship experience! This material is designed for those seeking the truth. Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth and the life”. That is what we believe, so we will allow Jesus to show you the way to truth, the way to God and the way to eternal life, to heaven.

But all truth-seekers come with questions.

So, who is this Jesus and how is he the Savior of all mankind?

Who is this God of the Christians?

How can I find out more? *That is what these studies are for, you have come to the right place.*

How does one become a Christian? *This is perhaps a question for the future, but we will start here.*

We will use a story of Jesus with a woman from Samaria. It is also my story, and it is every seeker’s story. Is it your story? What is startling about this story is that we discover that Jesus, that the Lord, is seeking us, even more than we are seeking him... The story (The Gospel of John chapter 4, verses 7-30 and 39-43):



*There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) (vs. 7-9)*

In our world we are surrounded by prejudices, by division. We are surrounded by groups in conflict, even in our own family. We discover the truth that Jesus (the Lord) pays no attention to this animosity, to these cultural factions and friction. We are startled to discover that Jesus is seeking and accepts anyone, independent of their caste or their past, independent of whether they are a man or a woman. He loves everyone. The woman was surprised and said so.

*Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."*

In our world, we are so accustomed to our limitations that we don't see any other way, no hope of an open door, or a change of our circumstance. The woman didn't understand, didn't see the truth. Perhaps it was pride. "Are you greater than our father...?" The woman from Samaria was startled to hear that there was something, someone that could offer life, a promise of unending, abundant life. But, her doubts, her inability to see any possibility of hope, quickly filled her heart and mind, just like it does in our own heart and mind, after many years of seeking, of failure.

*Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."*



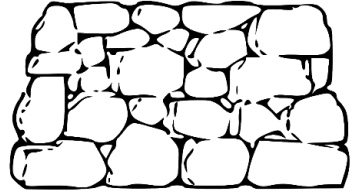
Jesus told her the truth, (very kindly, I think). "I can change your circumstances, I can give you life that will never fade, that will last forever." And here is another startling discovery, this "water" of life, that Jesus offers, will be within us, welling up and overflowing. We see in the woman of Samaria a glimmer of hope! "Give me this water!" She begins to hope that it does exist, life such as this. And, when we hear Jesus, the truth falls on our ears and sinks into our hearts, we also hope.

*Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."*

“OH NO! This person who has offered me so much, he knows the truth!” These could have been her very thoughts. Yes, he knows the truth, the whole truth about us. I am a sinner. I have messed up my life. I am guilty and broken, beyond repair. The true God knows all things, how startling that truth was to her, and it is to you and me. If God knows all our faults, all our sin, then hope is gone...so we think.

*The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.*

The woman of Samaria begins to build a wall between her and Jesus. She changes the subject, to shut out the pain in her life. She points out their religious differences, “You worship in a different place you worship in a different way.” This is a very common thing to feel and to say in Asia. But Jesus reveals a hard truth we sometimes need to hear, “You worship what you do not know.” Do we really know what we worship? Wouldn’t it be wonderful to really know? Jesus says that salvation is from the Jews. He does not say that the one true God is theirs, is Jewish, for He is the God of all nations, of all people. That is the truth, it is also a new thought for many. But the Jews worship the true God because God had revealed himself through this small nation.



*But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*

Jesus startles her again, he himself breaks down the wall that the woman of Samaria had built. He says, “These things don’t matter, the truth is that anyone can worship God, from anywhere!” Really? How can that be? Because “God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.” And Jesus repeats it again here, that God himself is seeking

all people, because they are important. There are no religious walls, there is no prejudice, there are no barriers...not even sin and failure.

*The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."*

The woman from Samaria says, as if clinging to her only hope, her last chance, "All our lives we have been waiting for a Messiah, One that will extend salvation to all nations. He knows all things, including how we can be free from our own sin and shame. The Messiah will know how we can reach the grace and the love of God. Could you be the Messiah?"

And Jesus said, "Yes, I am he. I have come." The woman of Samaria met Jesus, she met the Truth, she met the Way, and found eternal Life. That is the way to become a Christian. In other religions you are born into the religion, it is a part of the culture, and one follows the rituals.

In Christianity too, you must be born into Christianity, into the family of God. Only this can happen after you have already been born. Jesus says in the John chapter 3, "You must be born again". But these are glorious words because they mean that the Lord gives us a new beginning! He transforms our lives for something greater, something better.

It happens when we meet Jesus. Have you met him? Some see Jesus in visions or dreams. Others, seeking, find the Truth in the Bible. Others see a victorious life in others and find hope in their testimony to cry out to Jesus, the Way. Jesus is the truth that sets all of us free.

What has led you here, my friend? I don't think it is an accident that you are here. May all your questions be answered, your doubts replaced with certainty, and your seeking lead you home, to Jesus. This discipleship material is a part of that Journey.

Jesus's last words before being taken up to heaven were, "Go and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19). Discipleship is how we grow, it is how we follow the Way, Jesus. Discipleship is God's way for uniting all those who believe. It is God's plan for reaching those who still have not heard, those who are lost, those who are seeking in every nation.

*[Discipler, this would be an excellent time to share your story!] Let's go!*

## Lesson 1

# Knowing God

**Text:** *Acts 17:22-34*

**Key Verse:** *Acts 17:23b*

*“What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.”*

### **Introduction:**

*[Discipler: before starting the lesson, take a moment to pray, aloud, about this time you will spend together studying God's word and learning more about His truth.]*

In almost every culture of the world, people believe in a god who created all things. Usually, this god is more distant and unknown because, as the maker of all things, they are unimaginably powerful; the distance between such a god and humanity seems insurmountably great. When the early church was just beginning to grow, the cultures around them were no different in their beliefs. In fact, Plato, one of the greatest Greek philosophers, is known to have said, "the father and maker of all this universe is beyond finding out."



In our lesson today, we will learn about the work of the Apostle Paul, a chosen servant of the Creator God, and the words that he spoke to a society with that same belief. Being an apostle meant he was a leader in the church who had met Jesus personally and had been appointed by Him

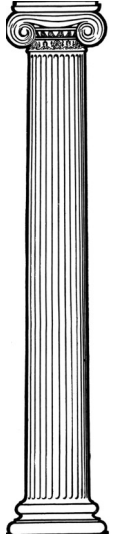
to do His ministry. Having been given the work of proclaiming God’s truth to the nations, Paul traveled far and wide, far enough that he made it from the Middle East to Europe—which is where today’s story takes place.

## **Studying the Word:**

### ***Part 1: Seeking Truth—Who is speaking?***

#### **A. Who is Paul?**

As Paul walked for the first time through the city of Athens, in Greece, he saw many temples and idols. The Bible says that “his spirit was provoked within him.” Paul was “burdened” by this—his heart was heavy, it hurt for the people that were looking to gods that could not help them. So, he sought to tell this people about the one true God, the God of all creation, the God unknown to them. His sermon that he preached to the leadership council in Athens, the Areopagus, is what we will be looking at today. It can be found in Acts 17:22-34.



*[Discipler, you can explain how to find and get to this passage, if you think it necessary. Try to encourage the disciple to try and find the answers to questions themselves. Feel free to guide them if you feel they need it, but also give them the opportunity to try it for themselves]*

But before we get deeper into the message spoken there, who is the speaker? Who is Paul?

Paul was a Jew, one of God’s chosen people. The Lord chose the Israelites as His people to help Him reveal Himself to the world and its nations. The Old Testament tells this story. Paul, being a Jew, was someone who was familiar with all the history of Israel and how the God of Creation had worked with them.

The Greeks and the other nations around them did not have the Bible, nor did they know of the God of Creation, the True God. As we mentioned, most cultures recognize that there is a God who created the world, who made us, who initiated all things—but often He is the least known. Such it was in Athens. Paul found an altar to “the unknown God,” and, since he knew this God of creation, he used it as an opportunity to proclaim what God had taught his people.



*[Discipler: if you haven't already read the passage together, do so now.]*

## **Part 2: Seeking Truth—What Does God Not Want?**

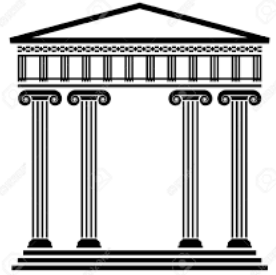
### **A. Temples - Acts 17:22-25**

What does the God of Creation reveal to us about Himself in Acts 17:24-25?

*[Discipler, help point out the verses they're supposed to be looking at, and let them respond from that verse. The answer would be some variation on "God doesn't live in temples made by man, isn't served by human hands, doesn't need anything, is the originator of life and breath and everything." They don't have to give the full answer but encourage them to be as specific and detailed as they can. Finish the answer if you feel like you need to expand on it.]*

Is this different from how most gods are? In what way? *[Usually, the worship of gods consists in giving sacrifices (often of food, or some form of sustenance, or some form of special service), or dedication is measured in how grand or ornate the temples are. The gods dwell in the temples, and are often tied to it and the worship done there. Discipler, if you or the disciple has a personal story connected to the differences in worship between Christianity and another religion, this would be a good place to discuss it; however, don't spend too much time here.]*

The Creator God’s Word contradicts this common pattern of thinking. Through Paul’s sermon, the idea of this kind of worship—that of humans sustaining and giving life to the gods—is described as illogical. After all, if the Creator God made everything, why would He need us to bring Him something from the world He made? He says in verse 25 that God is not “served by human hands, as though he needed anything.” The Creator God is not dependent upon us. Why would He be?



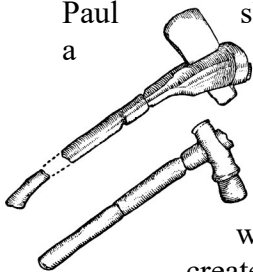
So, if we want to worship and serve God, how *can* we? We will get to these answers soon, but first, let’s discuss one more instance of misplaced worship.

### **B. Images – Acts 17:26-29**

Looking in verse 29, what else does this passage have to say about God’s divinity?

*[Discipler, again, help them find the verse if necessary, but give them time to try and figure out the answer themselves. The answer would be, more or less, “the divinity of the True God isn’t something that can be accurately represented in gold, silver, stone, or any image that the mind of man can come up with—it is something so much more.” Also, possibly, “it is something that He has shared with us, if we are His offspring.” (though, to be clear, that isn’t to be confused with us being like God or capable of being on God’s level)]*

Paul shows us that our own attempts at making a god or making a representation of a god are not, in fact, honoring to the God above all gods, the True God, the God of Creation. Reducing God, above and beyond anything in this world, to an image of a beast or a man, or of anything in nature, is a mistake done in ignorance. Why would our bowing down to an image of something He created be honoring to the Creator? In the end, we would be worshipping nothing more than something we had made with our



own hands, something accessible and visible, and not Him who Created all things.

God forbids His followers from doing it (we can see that here, but also in passages such as 1 Corinthians 10:14, Exodus 20:3-6, Deuteronomy 5:7-10, and many more places throughout the Bible). Using images for our worship of the Creator God is an obstacle to any kind of meaningful relationship that we can have with Him.

*[Discipler: Ask them if they have worshipped images before, and why they might have done that, looking at the reasons behind it. Discuss this alternate view of worship and images and see if they have any doubts or questions.]*

So, we've outlined several ways that we are *not* supposed to worship God. How, then, *are* we to worship Him?

**Activity:** *Before moving on to the next section, draw a simple picture of Paul preaching (can just be a stick figure, but maybe try to add some kind of background element). Write a verse you like from today's passage (Acts 17:22-34) underneath or beside the drawing.*

*[Discipler: this is an activity for the both of you. You can do yours ahead of time, as an example, or you can do it at the same time. Help the disciple wherever necessary]*

### ***Part 3: Seeking Truth—Worship that God Does Want***

Paul, God's Apostle, says in verse 27: "Yet he [God] is actually not far from each one of us." Often it feels like the God of Creation does not notice us, does not care about what happens to us, is distant. It is easy to imagine that the God of the universe has so many things under Him to pay attention to that He wouldn't have time for us. Wouldn't we just be insignificant and unimportant in the eyes of an Almighty God? His apostle, Paul, says that this kind of thinking is incorrect, far from reality. God is near to us, He gives us everything we have, gives us life, and He wants people to draw near to Him.

But how can we do draw near to Him?

[*Discipler: this part has less questions, since some of the answers are less clear and some of the answers are based in Bible study methods that we are hoping to slowly introduce to the disciples (meaning that they don't know them right now). However, feel free to let them try and puzzle out the answers to these "how" questions for themselves.*]

A. To worship God, to honor Him, **we must seek Him** (verse 27).

This urging for us to seek God is pointed out in verse 27. But how do we do so? It doesn't give exact instructions in this passage, but one of the best ways to seek the Lord is to study His Word—the Bible—and to talk to Him in prayer. And in studying His Word, we are reassured by verses 27-28 that seeking God is not a futile effort. He is not far from us. Let's take a look at some words that repeat often in this section: **all, man, mankind, all people, everywhere, the world.**

These aren't the same exact word, but they are related words that convey the same kind of idea. So, what can this tell us? [*Give them a chance to answer, first*]



These words indicate that people, mankind, are important to both the speaker and the God he's telling us about. It's pointing us towards a God who wants to be known by all mankind, a God who cares for all people, great

or small, dark or light, men or women. This God of Creation, as we know from other parts of the Bible, offers grace and salvation, and wants to be close to everyone, including you and I.

In verse 28 Paul quotes a Greek philosopher to say that we are God's children—and this a theme that runs deeply throughout the whole Bible. In fact, at the very beginning of God's word, in Genesis 1:27, it says that we were made *in God's image*. This shows us that God is indeed our Creator and that we are specially made and made to be like family. He is

not a capricious or cruel or distant god. He desires that we have life, justice, and peace. We can see that even here—the main quality we are assured of in His servant (verse 31) is *righteousness*.

But, as it says in verse 27, we must *seek* Him. Many reject Him or fully ignore Him. We can start by reading the Bible, His Word, and praying to Him. What else?

**B. To worship God, to honor Him, *we must repent* (verse 30).**

The power and majesty of a God who created the universe can make our Lord seem distant. But there are other forces at work in perpetuating this belief, including our own fears. We can be afraid to draw near to Him. The God of creation is also a righteous God, and in verse 31 it says that He will judge the world in righteousness—and being judged can be a frightful thing.

But first, what does it mean that God will judge the world in righteousness? What is righteousness? Can we trust this God to be a judge?

In almost every culture there is a concept of hell, and consequences for those who are evil. We know that evil, violence, injustice, and cruelty exist. We also know that there is right and wrong. It is wrong to steal, it is wrong to kill, etc., even though it happens. But a hope we have with a righteous God who establishes what is right and moral and good, is that there will be correct judgments, a divine justice. A righteous God, a God who abhors evil, can decree that those who use their time and efforts to exploit others, to abuse or crush them, will suffer hell as a consequence.

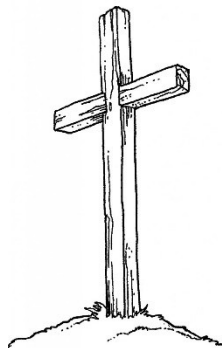


Verse 30 says that: “the times of ignorance, God overlooked. But now, He commands all people everywhere to repent.” The time of ignorance is over because the God of Creation sent His Son, Jesus, to reveal the truth about God, and to offer life to those who will draw near to God. For

all those who hear the Good News of Jesus—like the Greeks who heard Paul speak—like us who hear today—the time of ignorance is over.

Most of us are fully aware how weak, unholy and imperfect we are, though often we brush it off. But we can't, not if we want to live. We *are* a sinful people! It makes us afraid to fall under the scrutiny of the all-seeing eye of the Creator God, who is fully righteous, fully good, and fully powerful.

*[Discipler: ask them “is there anyone here who feels like they are perfect? Can you remember having done something wrong, something that hurt others?” Use a short discussion here to underscore the point: none of us are without guilt, without some kind of stain on our souls from sin.]*



In verse 31 Paul talks about the man God appointed to judge all mankind, a righteous man who God raised from the dead for our assurance. This “man” is Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, and God has appointed Him as *our* mediator. He is the one who can reconnect us to God the Creator, our Father. Jesus is the one who can draw us nearer to Him...if we repent.

### **Conclusion**

We need to seek the Creator God. One of the important ways we can do that is to follow what He tells us—and here we see that the God of Creation asks us to “repent,” to turn away from our old ways of worshipping gods, of conforming to the injustices around us, and He calls us to return to Him. Jesus is our mediator, enabling us to do so; He is our Savior, and He was sent to us by God. Jesus can take away our fear, our ignorance, and even our sin so that we can draw near to God. This is the story that all four Gospels tell us, and this is the hope that the whole of the Old Testament was building up to.

### **Application**

The passage touches on several different topics and ways to act, and perhaps the clearest, most urgent thing we are called to do is repent.

Repentance such as the Creator God seeks starts with praying to Him, acknowledging our sin, and asking for His help and redemption. How can we do that? This week, set aside time to talk with God about repentance, and pray to Him, asking for forgiveness, and about what your next steps should be. [*Discipler: you should do this activity/application as well!*]

***For next week:***

- ✓ Memorize the key verse (17:23b). [*Discipler, to help them in this, repeat it with them several times, until they can say it without looking at the Bible. Then, after they're more secure in it, have them write it out three times. Later, we will get into different games or methods for memorization, but for now let's start simple!*]
- ✓ Do the next lesson, if available to you.
- ✓ Read chapter 3 of 2 Timothy. Next week will be focusing on verses 16 and 17, but it is always good to have further context when studying the Bible! [*Discipler: make sure they know where to find this passage before they leave*]

## Lesson 2

# Introduction to the Bible

**Text:** 2 Timothy 3:16-17

**Key Verse:** 2 Timothy 3:16

*“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”*

### **Review:**

Last week we were in Acts, getting to know Paul and learning how to approach the God of Creation. We also memorized the key verse of the passage, and were assigned “homework” [*setting aside a time to pray during the week, and reading 2 Timothy 3*]. Were you able to do this? How did it go? [*Discipler: make sure they did their homework! Perhaps offer some candy, or other small prize, as an incentive and a reward. Some questions for further review: Do you still remember the verse (ask them to recite it)? Were you able to set aside time to pray? How was that? Any comments or questions?*]

### **Introduction to the Bible:**

*[Start with a word of prayer, asking the Lord to give us wisdom as we learn about His word. Then ask if they have a Bible. Some questions you can ask about their Bible to help set up the lesson: Can I see it? Do you read it regularly? Do you feel like you can understand it? Have you read this week’s chapter? Do you have any thoughts about it so far?]*

### **What is the Bible?**

The Bible is the written Word of God, which gives us guiding principles covering all areas of life. Through the Bible, God communicates His will, His laws, His nature, and His purpose of saving humanity.

The Bible is a compilation of 66 books, written by more than 40 authors over a period of



approximately 1,500 years. The original text of the Bible was set down in three languages: Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. And yet, all the pieces fit together to tell a singular story, the story of God blessing and saving mankind since the beginning, working with and through the people of Israel to set up for the coming of Jesus—the Savior of humanity.

## **Why do we have the Bible, and why do we need it?**

John Wesley, a man of God, is known to have said: “If the God who created the universe wrote a book just for us, to tell us how to have eternal life, *then give me that book!* There is no more important book in the world.”

It is through this Book, this Word, that we come to know the character of God. We can discover what His plan and purpose is; we can learn how to live as His children, and how to become a “new creation” in Jesus. [*Discipler, if asked, the phrase “new creation” is used in the Bible (2 Cor 5:17) to describe the process of salvation—the idea is that Christ renews us. Who we used to be is purified and made into a new identity; we are transformed from sinner to child of God*]

Today’s lesson is a study on how the Bible works, both practically (so that we can navigate it easily) and spiritually (understanding what the message of the Bible is). Our first step is to become acquainted with how the Bible is laid out.

## **How is the Bible Organized?**

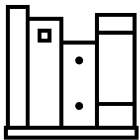
First, there are two major divisions, called the Old Testament and the New Testament. They are generally organized by when the individual books were written.



The Old Testament takes us back to the beginning of history, starting with the story of creation. We read of the history and literature of God's people, Israel—their failures and successes in following God, their poetry and proverbs, and their prophets speaking God’s messages to guide the people.

The New Testament tells us about Jesus, His ministry, life, and death; it also records the beginning of the church, the obstacles that faced the first Christians, the teachings of Christianity, and the book of Revelation.

As mentioned, within the Old Testament and the New Testament are smaller divisions, called books. The Old Testament has 39 books. [*Ask the student to open their Bible to the first book. Show them that it is called “Genesis,” which means “beginnings.”*]



The New Testament has 27 books. What is the first book called? [*Help them find it in their Bible and, once you’ve asked, confirm that it is Matthew, named after the writer of the book*]. What is the name of the very last book in the Bible? [*direct them to open to the very back of the Bible. The name “Revelation” refers to a series of visions that the writer of the book had*] In total there are 66 books in the Bible.

At the beginning of the Bible there is a page with all the books listed and where they can be found, usually called “*the Table of Contents,*” or simply “*Contents.*” Let’s look at the front and see where to find 2 Timothy. [*Turn there together.*] This is the second letter that we have from Paul to Timothy.

[*Discipler: remember to be working with the needs of your disciple. If they’re already familiar with the Bible, and are beyond needing to know the small details of how it works, you can skip ahead to the next section (reading 2 Tim. 3:16-17 / “Studying the Word.”)*].

Looking at 2 Timothy, you will notice larger numbers in bold (“1,” “2,” “3,” “4”). These mark the chapters. Within the chapters are smaller, more frequent numbers, marking the verses. The verses divide up the chapter into smaller parts and are usually comprised of a sentence, but could be shorter (just a phrase), or longer (several sentences or more). The length of verses varies a lot through different books and chapters. The Bible is organized this way so that we can find, reference, memorize, or read specific parts of the Bible during our studies.

Today’s passage is in 2 Timothy, chapter 4, verses 16 and 17. As you can see, it becomes easy to simultaneously find the *same* part of the Bible to read together. This is helpful for Bible study and preaching—everyone is able to find and read from the same place.

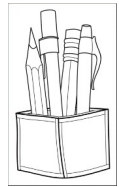
The notation that tells you where to find the verse is called the “reference.” In the “reference,” it shows the book of the Bible, the

chapter, and the verse (or verses) to read. Our reference today is in the book of 2 Timothy, chapter 3, verse 16 through verse 17, or: 2 Timothy 3:16-17. The chapter is separated from the verses by a colon (:). For reading verses in sequence, we use a hyphen (-), and for alternating verses, we use commas (,). For example, if we had the reference of 2 Timothy 3:14, 17, we would only read verses 14 and 17 of chapter 3 of the book 2 Timothy. Also, it is worth noting that oftentimes the name of the book is abbreviated—for example, in today’s reference 2 Timothy would be shorted to 2 Tim. So, a common reference notation would read: 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

*[Now read 2 Tim. 3:16-17 together and then work on the questions below]*

### **Studying the Word:**

*[Don't forget to let your disciple try to answer first; only give the answer when they need or want help. But remember, too, that this is just the second lesson—it is okay if they don't know how to respond just yet. The important thing is to be patient.]*



### **Why/How We Have the Scriptures:**

How are the Scriptures described at the beginning of verse 16? [*Breathed out by God. This means that the Scriptures were written by God working through writers. So, He is the author and originator of the Scriptures, but He used His servants as His method to transcribe it.*]

Here, with “Scripture,” Paul was most likely referring to what we know as the Old Testament—however, this also applies to the New Testament (which hadn’t fully been written yet). Both are equally inspired by God. It is also likely that Paul and Timothy were most familiar with the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament; the Word did not lose its power through translation. *All* Scripture, in any language, is “breathed out by God.”

All that to say: the source of the Bible is **divine**. Peter, another follower of Jesus, said, “men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God and He **inspired** the writers to record the truth.

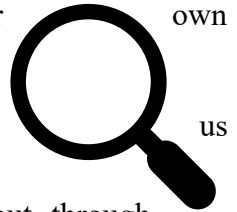
***Because the source of the Scripture is the Lord, we have total confidence!***

### **Why We Need the Scriptures:**

Now, why exactly *do* we need the Bible? In the rest of verse 16, it shows us four ways the Bible is “profitable.” What are those four ways? [*It is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.*]

These four uses can be further divided into two categories, belief and behavior; each category has a positive (+) and negative side (-).

Belief includes teaching (+) and reproof (-). We need to be taught what truth is, learn what to believe in, understand how our religion works. Reproof shows us where we are wrong in our beliefs, the ideas and assumptions we carry that are incorrect; it shows us how to tell the difference between truth and lie. We often need our beliefs to be corrected so that we don’t continue to put our trust in things from our culture, people around us who are against the Lord, or even our own wrong thoughts and desires. But we can’t learn to tell what is fake until we know what’s real. We need the teaching (+) to show us truth and the reproof (-) to show what is false.



But belief only matters, truly, once it is carried out through *behavior*. So, we need to be corrected (-), There are many old habits, hatred or sin that clings to us. We need to eliminate the evil or unhealthy things we do.

But the Word also trains in righteousness (+). If we have been taught how to believe, how shall we act in accordance with those beliefs? What are the ways we can live, practically speaking, as a Christian? The Bible provides instructions in that as well, showing us ways we can conduct ourselves. As we read, we learn what things we already do that need to be changed (-), and what new actions we should learn to take instead (+).

So, another way of phrasing this verse could be: the Bible is useful for teaching true doctrine, correcting false doctrine, reproofing immorality,

and instructing us how to live a life of righteousness.

*[Discipler, give a personal testimony about how the Bible has spoken to you—something it has taught you, revealed to you about yourself, or helped you understand about life, or more. It can be any story about a personal experience with the Bible, but ideally it would fall into one of the above categories (teaching, reproof, correction, living in righteousness).]*

So, we know that we have the Bible through God’s inspiration of human writers, and we know that it was given to teach us how to believe and behave. Is there anything to add to that?

Verse 17 adds a second layer of importance to what the Bible does in us. What is another reason it gives us to use the Scriptures? *[We have the Bible so that we may be complete and equipped for every good work. The Bible exists to capacitate Christians, people following God and seeking to emulate Him. Someone who seeks God and does so through His Word will be equipped to live a godly life, and to minister to others (whether professionally or just in daily life).]* Do you want to have everything you will need to help you follow Christ, to serve the Lord? That can be added to you as you read and study the Bible.



**Activity:** Letter Scramble

*[Discipler: today’s activity is a short game, called “letter scramble.” The goal is for the disciple to figure out what word the mixed-up letters are supposed to be. These letters are the “scrambled” version of the original word. For example—**emti** = **time**, or **terwi** = **write**. You can participate together (the answers are at the end of this lesson), or you can let the disciple do it alone.*

*So, to start the game, set a timer for a minute and see how many words the disciple can figure out! There are six regular words, plus four more (optional) words if you and the disciple want to lengthen the game, or if you get through the words long before the timer goes off. Bring a small prize, such as chocolate or candy, for if they complete the words in time. If they’re having trouble, or you want a shorter game, you could also say that they win if they guess over half of the words. The words*

*being used are different words related to the Bible—names for the Bible, parts of it, etc. You can either tell them this beforehand, or let them figure it out on their own.]*

BLBEI / DOWR / CIPSURETR / LWA / NASTETEMT / SEVRE

Optional words: DENPIIRS / ODG-THEERABD / TIFLEBAROP / FREENCEER

### **Conversation Questions:**

*[questions designed for you to discuss freely from your own perspectives, if time allows.]*

What challenge or encouragement does this passage give you?

What can we do to make sure Scripture is rooted in our lives? *[this question and answer depends on you and your disciple specifically, and it doesn't have any right answers; the purpose is to outline some practical things they could do. Some examples, in case you might be stuck, would be: memorizing more verses; trying to do a scripture doodle once a week (a verse that they like, which they then draw or write creatively); or reading the Scriptures more. Try to figure out a reasonable time frame (for example, reading a chapter of the Bible every other day, or memorizing two or three verses a week—something simple and doable)]*

### **Key verse:**

Often a text contains a verse that can summarize the central message of the passage. That's what we call a key verse. These verses are good to memorize because they can help us remember important lessons of the Bible, encourage us, or can be useful in sharing about our faith with others. Today's key verse is one of the most important verses in the Bible. It is well worth memorizing!



“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

*[As a way to help them memorize the verse, write out the verse on a piece of paper, but leave gaps for them to fill in. After repeating the verse together several times, let the disciples fill out the verse, without looking at the text. As an example: “All \_\_\_\_\_ is breathed out by \_\_\_ and is profitable for \_\_\_\_\_, for \_\_\_\_\_, for \_\_\_\_\_, and for training in \_\_\_\_\_.”*

*Either prepare this beforehand or take a piece of paper to do it in class]*

*[A note about using repetition to help with memorization: don't try and immediately start reciting the verse from the beginning straight through to the end. Let the disciple read it a few times out loud, and then start repeating the verse in chunks, until you have the whole thing put together. As an example, work on repeating “All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable,” before moving on to “for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” For shorter chunks, you can try “All Scripture is breathed out by God,” “and is profitable for teaching, for reproof,” “for correction, and for training in righteousness.” After you've gotten a handle on the chunks, repeat the full verse several times. Overall, don't be afraid to experiment and figure out what works best. Remember, too, that after you repeat the verse here there is the activity, mentioned above, to help them further retain the memory.]*

### **Conclusion:**

The main questions of this lesson were: Why and how do we have the Bible? What is the reason or purpose behind us having the Bible? Having read and studied today's passage, we can say that we have Scripture through God inspiring human writers to write His words, and we can trust it because we can trust God. We have the Bible so that we can grow as followers of Christ, being equipped to so by learning truth and learning how to tell what is false, and by applying our beliefs to our behaviors so we can do what is right—and avoid what is wrong.

### **Weekly Challenges:**

*[this section is for the disciple to try and do on their own during the week]*

- ✓ Memorize the key verse. *[Every time you meet, ask the disciple to recite the key verse from the lesson before. During this period of discipleship, we will learn and memorize several verses, helping you to be a man or woman of God, equipped for every good work!]*
- ✓ Read over the next lesson.
- ✓ Read the passages for next week (Isaiah 42:1-9 and Isaiah 44:13-20). If you want to get the full context of the passages, feel free to read the full chapters (Isaiah 42 and 44); but it's not required reading.
- ✓ Practice finding references more easily. Try these verses: Psalm 119:11. Proverbs 1:5-8, John 1:1,14. When you find the verses, copy them down in a notebook. (It would be a good idea to have a notebook for the discipleship process, so you can write down important things that the Lord will show you!)

*[Answers to the letter scramble game: Bible / Word / Scripture / Law / Testament / Verse) (Extra words: Inspired / God-Breathed / Profitable / Reference)*

## Lesson 3

# God's Purpose – Our Salvation

**Main Text:** *Isaiah 42:1-9 and Isaiah 44:13-20*

**Key Verse:** *Isaiah 42:6c*

*“I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations.”*

**Review:** [*Discipler, while review is important for retaining the lessons, don't let this section go on too long; remember, there's still the whole rest of the lesson to get to!*]

In the previous lesson, we learned about how the Bible works, and how it applies to our lives as Christians. Can you list one of the ways the Bible could be used? What are the two main divisions of the Bible? [*Discipler: further questions to ask them: do you remember the verse from last week? (have them recite it) Did you do the homework? (For reference, homework was: memorizing the key verse, reading this lesson and the passages for this lesson, and practicing how to find references—Psalm 119:11, Proverbs 1:5-8, and John 1:1,14) Did you have any thoughts or questions from or about the homework that you would like to bring up?]*]

**Introduction** [*Discipler, pray over the lesson with your disciple before going on.*]

First of all, Isaiah was a prophet. In the Old Testament, prophets were those who had been set apart by the God of Creation to be His voice to the world, to convey His messages to His people. Through Isaiah, God declared that a change was coming, and began preparing people for the transition from Old to New Testament. He told Israel how the covenant between them and God would change, and prepared the faithful to recognize Jesus when He arrived. Through Isaiah, God offered a message of hope and renewal in the midst of destruction and desperation. Through him, too, we gain further understanding of God's purpose throughout history, and the love with which He planned to save the world.

So, having understood more of the context, it's time to focus on the

passage itself, starting with the question: *who is the Servant?*

## **Studying the Word**

### ***I. The Servant***

*[Discipler: open your Bibles together to read through Isaiah 42:1-9]*

One important tool used in Bible Study is the introduction, or conclusion. Basically, this is a verse at either the beginning (or the end) of a passage which more or less summarizes that Scripture, pointing out the message and/or important points succinctly. Sometimes this is the key verse, sometimes it isn't.

*[Discipler: not every passage has an introduction or conclusion. One or the other can be helpful for better understanding a text, but we also shouldn't force a verse to fit a category it isn't suited for. Also, there will be times where the passage chosen isn't in line with the natural starts and stops of the scripture itself—for example, last week we looked at only a few verses from 2 Timothy. In that case the introduction would be half the passage. But if we had looked at, say, the whole chapter, or the entirety of the section talking about the Scriptures, there may have been one or the other. Bring this up if you think the student would benefit from it.]*

With Isaiah 42:1-9, we find our introduction in verse 1. Having found it, what can we learn?

*[Re-read the verse together, and give the disciple a chance to answer and observe before moving on with the lesson. Some potential answers they might note: this servant is someone who God supports, delights in, and has put His spirit into; the servant was chosen by God.]*

From this introduction we know that the message will be about the servant. The first word, “*behold*”, is a mechanism to grab our attention, to tell us to pay attention to what the Word is about to say. And we are told to “*behold my servant,*” the servant of the Lord. So, again, who is this servant and why is our attention being called to him?

Looking at the larger Biblical context, this passage is also quoted in other parts of the Bible to refer to Jesus (for example, Matthew 12:15-21), and in other places we see this prophecy being carried out in Jesus' life (He cures the blind, God rests His Spirit upon Him, etc.). Jesus is The Servant

of God. He is the “Messiah,” the “chosen one,” the coming Christ who was prophesied about for centuries. [*Discipler have them look up Matthew 12:15-21—both to verify the claim being made here, but also to continue practicing how to find references. There will be more moments for that throughout the lesson, as well*]

This is the new thing being announced by the Lord (verse 9). This passage was preparing the people for the message of the New Testament, for Jesus.



## **II. Justice**

One of the next points we find in Isaiah 42:1 is that the servant has the “*Spirit of the Lord upon him.*”<sup>1</sup>

Let’s ask some questions so that we understand what the Lord is saying. **What** is the Spirit of the Lord? [*Let the disciple see if they can figure out the answer first, and do this with all the questions. If they need help or confirmation, there will be answers provided. Here the simplest answer is: the power and blessing and personal presence of the Lord—there are more theological answers but that will be learned later.*] **What** does it mean that the Servant has the Spirit of the Lord upon Him? [*the Servant is acting for God, and is doing so in His power and with His approval.*] **Why** has the Servant come? (Or, **What** is His purpose?) [*He comes to bring justice to the nations.*]

From there, let’s dig a little deeper into the servant’s purpose. The word “justice” is repeated 3 times in 4 verses (Isaiah 42:1-4), and all three times the term is used in connection with what the Servant is doing. But **how** does God plan to bring about this justice? [*Quietly, but with persistence until justice is established everywhere (verse 4). The servant will face opposition in this, but will be unwavering in the power of the Lord*]. **What** does justice mean here? [*that answer is what this next section is about, so once giving the student a chance to answer you can simply keep going.*] In looking for answers, we find out what justice is by

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<sup>1</sup> In the Bible, when we see the phrase “the Lord,” (with the “L” capitalized), or sometimes “the LORD,” (with the whole word capitalized), it is referring to the Creator God. It isn’t talking about a lord, it is talking about **the** Lord, Lord over all the earth, God above all.

what the Servant does, and in the kind of kingdom that He promises to establish. We see the results of it in Isaiah 42:6-7, in how He will open the eyes of the blind, free prisoners, and bring to the light those who sit in darkness.

This idea of justice is based on a promise of a just world or kingdom to live in, more than simply punishing wrongdoing. A just society would be full of mercy and peace, where people can live in dignity and grace, expecting kindness instead of cruelty. The idea of justice set up in verses 1-4, a justice to be established throughout the world, is a vision that would enable and support the merciful actions of verses 5-9.

*What* is justice, then? It is deliverance for those who are oppressed; it is saving grace for those who are under judgement; it is hope for those who have only known darkness in this life. Divine justice seeks restoration of life and honor and virtue for all mankind.

Isn't that a great purpose for the Servant to have? Furthermore, the Servant being God's Chosen One shows us what God values, as well—justice, mercy, love, kindness. Furthermore, all of this echoes what we learned in the first lesson, in Acts 17:31, where Jesus is described as someone appointed by God to judge the world, and who will do so in righteousness.

### ***III. The God of Creation***

Now we'll be moving away from the points outlined in the introduction to take a closer look at what all of this shows us about the God of Creation.

God is directly involved throughout the passage—three times the Lord tells us that He is speaking, that He is acting (verses 42:5, 6 and 8). In vs. 5, God speaks, specifying who He is. In vs. 6, He calls the Servant, takes Him by the hand, forges a covenant, and gives light to the world (both through the Servant). In vs. 8, He states that He is declaring new things, and doing so before they happen.

#### **A. Only One God**

But we also want to know **which God is this?** Are there not many gods? In verse 6, God states that He is, “*God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it.*” He is the God who creates and was never created. This is the God of the Bible, the God of Christianity...the God above all.

Furthermore, in Isaiah 44:6 He says, “*I am the first and I am the last, besides me there is no god.*” **What** does this mean? How can we understand this? Let us be careful. Let us also listen to God the creator, who has knowledge beyond us, who has authority to speak as the one who made all things. There are spiritual beings. But in God’s category, there is only one. There are other spiritual beings, some more demonic, some more angelic, but there is only one God. *To be God is to NOT be created.* All things created are not God. He makes a distinction. In Hinduism there are many gods. But their own stories tell of how they were created or procreated, therefore they had a beginning. But just like in the Greek culture, there is a God who created all things, from which all things came. In Hinduism there are also many levels of spiritual beings, from gods and demi-gods to man and to animals. In Buddhism there is a great spiritual leader, but he also was created. The God of creation says there is only one God. These are His terms. He has the right to define them. The God that created all things can make this distinction.

## **B. Gods of Gold, Silver, and Stone**

Let us also note that the God of creation says in verse 8, “*my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.*” **What** does this mean? The truth is that He is the God who created all things, including us. He says in verse 8 that it is not right to give His glory to others, to statues or to images.

**Why** is that? Let’s remember, from the first lesson, what the Word of the Lord said in relation to worship - that God doesn’t need our food,

our service, nor does He live in our temples. This is not good thinking, not what He, the God of creation wants.

**What** does the God of creation want, if not food or flowers or to serve him in a temple? He wants us to seek Him, to seek Him in prayer, to seek Him in His word, the Bible, to serve Him in other ways.

### C. God of the Future

There is one more important quality of the God of Creation that we see in this passage. The Lord declares in verse 9 that, “*Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare, before they spring forth, I tell you of them.*”

The one true God, the God of creation, knows the future. He challenges the false gods in Isaiah 44:7, “Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen.” And then He responds, “*have I not told you from of old and declared it (about the coming Messiah, Jesus)? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me?*”

In Isaiah there are many places where the Lord, through the prophet, tells about the coming Messiah. In places it is told with such detail what would happen in Jesus’ life and ministry, that there could be no doubt. For those who were not Christians, who did not believe in God, there was only one conclusion – Isaiah had to be written after Jesus’ death, it is too exact and clear a description.

These non-Christian historians and archeologists openly declared that Isaiah was written after Jesus death and that it was written to falsely present itself as written before Jesus. Isaiah had to be written after Jesus, they said. “Because if it were written before, it would be a miracle, and we do not believe in miracles,” they boldly stated.

In the Lord’s justice and timing, soon after these statements, in 1946, a copy of the book of Isaiah (and other parts of the Bible) was found in a cave



in Israel that was conclusively dated to have been written more than a hundred years before Jesus birth. According to the historian's own words, this meant that a miracle had been proven. The true God can tell us what will happen. The true God is the creator of all things. The true God is not far, He gave us His word to show us the way and He sent his Servant to be the way. That is the message of the New Testament. In other discipleship lessons, we will learn more about how to worship and live for Him.

## Conclusion

So, to sum up, today we learned about the prophet Isaiah, the Servant of the Lord and His purpose, how this reveals God to us, and what that revelation shows us about His character.

The God of Creation is teaching us, revealing Himself through His Word. He gave us His Word to show us the way—and He sent His Servant to be that way. He desires justice and mercy, and has the power to establish it; He knows the future and works in it. The Lord wants to free us from lies, meaningless worship, and aimless living; He invites us to instead participate in His truth, His coming kingdom, and His purpose. Let us continue to seek Him!

**Activity**: Creative Key Verse (also called “scripture doodling”)

*[Discipler, this activity is also paired with learning/memorizing the key verse. So, the first step is to read aloud the whole verse, several times, pointing out the part that they are to focus on. Then, help them figure out some way to write the key verse (Isaiah 42:6c) “creatively.” Maybe they can draw a picture of something that the verse reminds them of, or maybe they can write the words in some kind of pattern, or write different sections/words in different kinds of lettering, or write it out simply and draw decorations around the verse to “frame” it. There are some examples throughout this book, including the one to the right. Feel free to*

I WILL  
give you  
as a  
COVENANT  
for the PEOPLE, | a Light  
for the  
NATIONS  
I.s.a.i.a.h 42:6c

*experiment, or maybe even do a few different iterations. You can either do this at the same time as them, or bring one already prepared, or both.*

*After you both have done at least one Creative Key Verse, work on finishing the memorization process. Having said the verse out loud a few times, and then having written it, you should both be familiar with it. Divide the verse into chunks and work on repeating those until you both can accurately say it, without looking at the passage for guidance.]*

### **Next Week:**

- ✓ Read the Bible passage for next week (Isaiah 44:13-20); pray for understanding, and spend some time studying it. We will further examine the topic of worship as it relates to God versus other gods. [*Discipler – make this meeting different or special, and maybe invite the disciple(s) to your home for tea or coffee, or otherwise make it a more relaxed time of fellowship*]
- ✓ Memorize the key verse from this lesson, Is. 42:6c. It is also recommended that you try to write/draw out other creative key verses, too. Maybe use a verse from the upcoming lesson.
- ✓ Bring a question or concern to the Lord in prayer, something you've been struggling with, and try to do it in confidence and trust—we know God cares for us immensely, and is immensely powerful, but it can still be intimidating if you haven't practiced! After that, tell Him about something small that happened during your day. He already knows, but it can be an important part of learning to talk to God—and besides, He likes hearing from us in the small things, too. Try to also spend some time thanking Him for something He has done and praising Him for Who He is.

*[Close with a final repetition of the key verse and a time of prayer]*

*[Note: this lesson is targeted towards cultures dealing with literal worship of gods and idols, but it should have broader application as well. As the discipler guiding the discussion, spend some time beforehand thinking out how to properly adapt the lesson to your disciple's needs,*

*and whether or not this is a concern. There will be extra tips and instructions throughout.]*

## **Lesson 4 – Activity**

### **Discussion: Why Not Idols?**

**Text:** *Isaiah 44:13-20*

**Key Verse:** *Isaiah 44:17a*

*“And the rest of it he makes into a god, his idol, and falls down to it and worships it.”*

#### **Review:**

Did you have any questions or observations that you would like to share from your reading of Is. 44:13-20? [*As this isn't a normal lesson, don't worry about homework, etc. That will be covered in the next, more regular lesson. Here, check in to see how they're doing, and if they have something they want to bring up before moving on to the rest of the discussion*]

#### **Introduction:**

In the last lesson we studied Isaiah 42:1-9, learning about God's Servant, the kingdom He plans to establish, and what the passage could teach us about God's character. This lesson is more relaxed in format and tone, focused primarily on discussion and reflection. Take whatever time is needed to consider and converse.

*[Discipler, open with prayer.*

*[This lesson will be a bit different in flow and focus; for example, “right” or “wrong” answers aren't as big a concern. Instead, this is an opportunity for you to dig into these topics with your disciple, to speak openly about the matter. Before coming to the lesson, be sure to spend time thinking about your own answers, so that when the time comes you will be properly prepared. This will help encourage your disciple, give a model and/or example for how to approach the questions, and will make sure your answers are thought-out and useful. But be sure to let the disciple take whatever time they need to answer, and try to let them*

*answer before you—don't use your more complete preparation to talk over them.*

*[As far as time goes, you can either plan to spread the lesson out over two (or more) sessions, or you can pick and choose which questions you believe to be most important/relevant for your disciple. You don't have to ask/answer every single question; some questions may not apply, or you may not have the time. However, you are encouraged to go through as many of them as possible.*

*[Some questions will have answers attached to them, and the purpose of those is to add depth, to provide options of how to answer, or to give information and guidance. Some will simply be tips on how to make these questions meaningful even if literal idol worship isn't as pervasive a part of your culture—this may or may not apply to the situation your disciple is in, and so may or may not be worth spending time on. As with the questions, chose which answers to include based on relevancy or time.]*

### **Discussion Questions**

*[Before going further, open the Word and read the passage together]*

#### **Why do you think people seek after idols?**

*[For those adapting this to a culture less literally connected to idols: spend some time thinking how to context this to your disciple—either on your own or with the disciple. What idols exist in your culture? Maybe it's work, or money, or family, or self-care. Whether or not you know people who actively worship idols, the concept and idea of them is prevalent in every country. Discuss with the disciple.]*

#### **What is the advantage of having an idol, or a picture, in front of you?**

*[It can keep our mind from wandering, since we can see the object of our devotion. Perhaps it feels more real, being a physical object. It can maybe feel closer and more personal. For less literal idols (work, family, self, etc.), they can be easier to focus on because they have more easily measurable impacts on the world around us and on ourselves. Either*

way, it feels tangible and that means something to us, bound as we are to physical realities.]

**What was your experience with worshipping gods, or other supernatural forces? What about idols, either literal or metaphorical?**

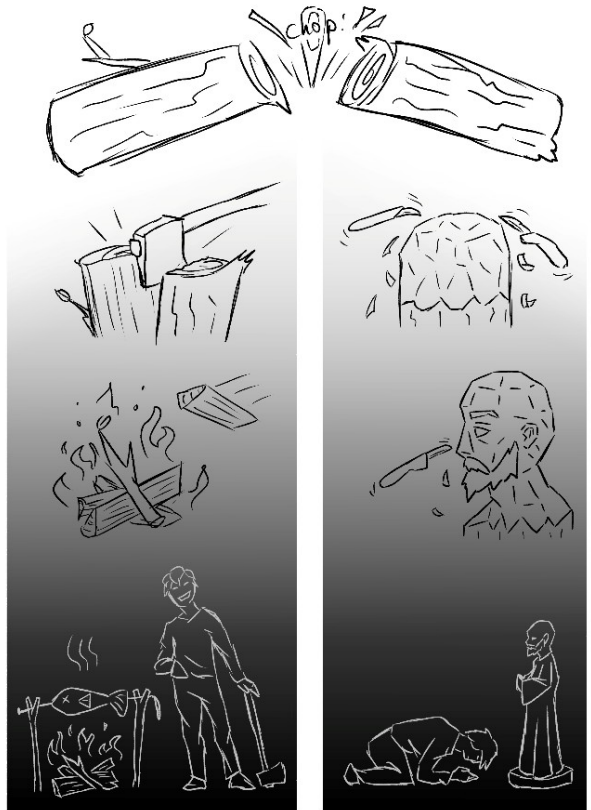
**Do you have any tangible experience of these gods/forces/idols coming to your rescue, hearing you, speaking to you? How have these idols impacted your life?**

*[In Isaiah 44:8, God claims to have witnesses for what He has done—and He does! They are the Israelites, and they have a whole history behind them, bound in how He saved them, provided for them, and delivered them. In modern times, His witnesses would be the followers of God. Disciple, you surely had a moment in your life where you witnessed God working. Share one of those times with your disciple.]*

*[In contrast to God's tangible witnesses, He says in verse 9 that the witnesses for idols "neither see nor know." In vs. 18, God says that idols have shut the eyes and hearts and mind of those who worship them. In what way is this true? Discuss.]*

**In Is. 44:13-20, the process of making an idol is explained. When you read that, what came to your mind?**

*[Discuss the question on your own, first. But after*



*that, or if it hasn't come up, here is something to consider: the carpenter is worshiping the idol—but what has the idol done? Right now, all it has done is be made. Even the tools used to create it were manmade, or curated by men. And men took care of the tree—but men cannot make trees grow. God, the Creator, made nature and trees and taught them how to grow. The glory of a living tree becoming strong should belong to God, its Creator. So, even just making an idol from the world around us is stealing from God's bounty, giving praise to something that doesn't deserve it.]*

**Which part of the text corresponds to which part of the illustration? How do you think the illustration captures the ideas of the scripture? Does it correlate with your own experience or things you have seen?**

*[For those less literally involved with idol worship, have you seen this same principle being borne out in other ways? Have you seen people blessed by providence (good health, for example) deciding that it was all their own hard work that got them there? Or getting so involved with their own works that they become blind to people around them? Discuss.]*

**Why do you think God did not want us to carve an image and worship that?**

*[Spend some time discussing from your own experiences and perspectives, but also keep in mind that there is also a clear Scriptural answer to this (it steals praise, idols cannot save, etc), which we have talked about over the past few lessons as well as this one.]*

**Have you ever worked on something that ended up being a waste of time, not worthwhile? How did it make you feel? What happened with it/what did you do with it?**

**What has God promised to do in Isaiah 42:1-9, and what have idols here promised to do? What are the promises that gods/idols make? What has God done? What have idols/gods done?**

*[We know from looking back over history, that God always fulfills His promises. It can be seen in how He kept His covenant with the Israelites, how He brought Jesus to the world, and how He has been faithful in*

*our own lives. Spend some time discussing times that the Lord has been faithful.*

*For those without literal idols, what does the world promise? If work can be an idol, what does it promise to give in return for work? What does family promise to give you in return for love? Are these promises true? Have you seen ways this can go wrong?]*

**Do you think the verse about eating ashes (Is. 44:20) is an accurate depiction of the truth of worshipping idols? Why or why not?**

**Do you think worship should come from love, gratitude, and/or joy? Or perhaps it should come from duty, routine, and/or ritual? Why or why not? Would you say rituals are a comfortable form of worship? Why or why not?**

*[While this question is based more on opinion, observation, and personal approaches, remember that there is nuance! We need love and gratitude to properly worship, but sometimes that is best shown through duty and routine during times that we struggle with feelings or doubts. But simply going through the motions won't have meaning without a personal relationship. There are varying shades to this question and this answer, so try and also discuss how a different point of view to yours might be a faithful way to worship. The Bible supports different ways to worship God, mostly emphasizing that they be done in the right time and with a spirit of order (spontaneity is not the same as chaos, but that is a different discussion).]*

**If you look at all the images of the gods in the pantheon of the Hindu religion, what is the common characteristic of those images?**

*[They all have human or animal characteristics. Often both. Buddha is also in the image of a human. They are consistently in the image of things we know and can see.]*

*[For those adapting this lesson to different cultures, try to apply this principle to other areas. For example, evolution could be seen as a kind of religion, and it also plays on what we are familiar with (change and time), often refusing to deal with the idea of the unknown (God). Or, if work is an idol, how does that become made in the image of man? If*

*family is an idol, how is that rooted in our own ideas of how the world should be?]*

### **What does that tell us?**

*[These gods and idols are limited to our human experiences; they all relate to things that can be experienced through our five senses.]*

*[In the pantheons there is a god for everything. The stories of these gods tell us that they need to be appeased. When there are so many, and when they all need appeasing, it becomes impossible to keep them all happy. The characterizations of these gods are dotted with anger, hatred, jealousy, rivalry, destruction, and competition.*

*This is true of the world around us, too, even without literal gods.*



*Anything set up as a god instead of God—family, work, pleasure, ourselves—becomes tyrannical in the end, demanding we give up all else for the sake of that idol. God demands we give up ourselves—but He does this so that He can give back to us tenfold, to free us the needs that we cling to. We must die to live, but we are not to become menial slaves.]*

**Is there a god that you know you can trust? Is there one that will protect you from the others?**

*[Allow the disciple to answer. But you, as the discipler, should have a firm answer. The God we worship is One. God provides everything, God protects everyone, God sees everything, God knows everyone, and, most importantly, God loves. Some of this we discovered in our last lesson, in Isaiah 42:1-9. We know that this God does not behave like others who claim his category—He is superior in attitudes, power, and presence. Here, and earlier in 44, He is challenging the other gods, contrasting His power and what He can do against the powers and workings of idols, which are made entirely by humans, and need humans to even exist.]*

No other god has been known to love. Yes, there is a god of romance, etc. But we do not know of any god that loves human beings enough to die for them. Some say that is to be expected; gods have their own lives to live, and so do we—why should we expect them to care about beings so removed from their plane of reality? But the Creator God is different. He created the world, and He created humans, and He did so out of love. Now that we have turned away from the blessings He meant for us, He seeks to bring us back, to bring us into a new fullness and a new place in His kingdom, to lift us to a higher plane of reality than we can imagine from our perspective in time and space. Isaiah 42:6 and 7 show us that the Lord Jesus come to bless, to save, to free from prison, to bring captives from darkness into the light. What motivates all this is His love for mankind, His children made in His image.

**Some people say that the benefits of worshipping a god you can see and physically interact with (through images/idols, statues, special places, rituals) outweigh the risks of rejecting the True God that you cannot see. What do you think?**

*[How can you worship or understand the God of creation if you could never capture Him in an image made by man? How would you worship a God that isn't dependent on you, isn't appeased by food or flowers? It can be a disquieting thing to think about. If we don't earn His love, then how do we know we have it? We have to trust Him, and that can feel like stepping off a cliff without a parachute. ]*

**What is an experience that has drawn you to God? Why are you trying to learn more about Him?**

*[Discipler, take some time to share something from your time following Christ, to encourage your disciple. Why do you continue to follow Him? Why have you chosen to serve Him? This could be building off of the story you shared earlier (from the fourth question, about experience with idols impacting your life), or it can be something different.]*

**Is learning about Him and growing in your relationship with Him more important to you than idols? Why or why not?**

**Key Verse:**

The key verse for this week is Isaiah 44:17a.

*[While this should be memorized, leave it for the disciple to do on their own time. Read over it a few times with them and make sure they are familiar with it, but don't spend too much time on it. Just be sure to check in next lesson to see if they remembered to memorize it!]*

**Conclusion:**

God, the One who created the heavens and the earth, says that only He is God, that it is wrong to worship others. We should not worship any other spiritual being, however good, powerful, or impressive. Why is that?

Well, God, the Creator, gave them that power, designed them to be who they are. God created them with purpose and with value—though some have broken faith with Him, twisting that purpose and falling into darkness. But no matter how powerful they are, they are not God, and they cannot save. Maybe for a while they can “protect” us, physically, but they cannot free us from sin, they cannot keep us from hell, they cannot save us in any way that truly matters. When we appease or negotiate with other spiritual beings (“gods,” demons, or even angels), by our actions we are refusing to trust in God, and are turning away from our Creator.



We can respect others. We can, and should, remember those who have passed away, for example, and be grateful for their teaching and influence. But to bow down and worship another person or created being, dead or alive, is the wrong way to show this appreciation.

So, what *is* Christian worship? It is embracing God's purpose and plan for our lives, and for our society. Worship is to recognize Him for who He is, and accept that only He can save and forgive sins. It is to serve Him and obey Him and His commandments; to study His word for knowledge of Him and for instruction; to pray to Him and form a relationship with Him and seek to know Him; to love and care for His creation without mistaking it as anything more than a shadow of His glory and creativity.

No other god has been known to love. Yes, there is a god of romance, etc. But we do not know of any god that loves human beings enough to die for them. Some say that is to be expected; gods have their own lives to live, and so do we—why should we expect them to care about beings so removed from their plane of reality? But the Creator God is different. He created the world, and He created humans, and He did so out of love. Now that we have turned away from the blessings He meant for us, He seeks to bring us back, to bring us into a new fullness and a new place in His kingdom, to lift us to a higher plane of reality than we can imagine from our perspective in time and space. Isaiah 42:6 and 7 show us that the Lord Jesus come to bless, to save, to free from prison, to bring captives from darkness into the light. What motivates all this is His love for mankind, His children made in His image.

### **Next Week:**

- ✓ Prepare for the next lesson by reading over it, and the scripture passage it studies (Matthew 6:5-8). Be sure to write down any thoughts or questions.
- ✓ Spend some time thinking and praying about any questions, doubts, or concerns that stood out to you from this lesson. Perhaps you could write them down, documenting the questions and any answers you might find. If doubts or questions persist, try to seek out someone from the church to help you work through those (your discipler, or your pastor, or someone else trustworthy).

[Close in prayer]

## Lesson 5

# How to Pray

**Text:** Matthew 6:5-8

**Key Verse:** Matthew 6:6a

*“But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.”*

[Discipler: Don't forget to go over the verse that the disciple was asked to learn during the week! Ask them to repeat it. It could be a good idea to bring a piece of paper with the verse written on it, but leaving gaps for the disciple to fill words in.

Example: For God so \_\_\_\_\_ the world that He \_\_\_\_\_ His only \_\_\_\_\_, so that whoever \_\_\_\_\_ in him should not \_\_\_\_\_ but have \_\_\_\_\_ . John \_\_:\_\_\_)

Take the opportunity to ask a few questions about the last lesson, to help make sure they're retaining information. For example: How is the Bible divided? Why did God send His son? What does it mean to be saved?]

### **Introduction:**

Today we are going to talk about something vital to the life of a believer: prayer. It is our connection with our Lord, and it is something that anyone can do—nothing prevents us from talking to our Savior! There are many ways to approach prayer, however. By studying today's text, let's take a deeper look at what prayer is and what it is not.

Open your Bible to Matthew 6:5-8. [Discipler, let



*the disciple try to find the passage alone, even if they are having difficulty. Only help them if they can't find it. Keep in mind, though, that if that is something they continue to struggle with throughout the first discipleship book, it would be good to set apart some time to work more on navigating the Bible.]*

### **Discussion Questions:**

*[To start the discussion, ask a few questions: Do you pray? What happens when you pray? How do you feel when you pray? What is the effect that prayer has on your life?]*

*[Discipler, be sure to take the questions slow and give them time to think about it]*

**The text tells us what kind of person we should *not* be like when we are praying. What kind of person is that? Why not? What is the reward of those people? (vs. 5)** *[We should not be like the hypocrites who do 'good' things just to be seen. We shouldn't be like that, because they care only about appearances and don't really have a relationship with God. Their reward is just that—that they will be seen by men, but they do not earn any reward in heaven. What they are doing is not really prayer or worship, because it is done to receive praise from others instead of seeking God.]*

**Is verse 6a saying that every time you pray, you need to literally go into your room and shut the door? Explain what you think this verse means.** *[No, it doesn't have to be literal—the idea is that we should do the opposite of what hypocrites do. So this verse is not prohibiting public prayer, but it is prohibiting the use of prayer as a way to seek praise and attention. Instead, we should focus on what matters: our relationship with the Lord. This verse is saying that we should seek a private place for personal prayer, so it will only be you and God. That is what our devotional time is for: to communicate with God and deepen our relationship with Him.]*

**What does it mean to pray with “empty phrases,” or “vain repetitions,” as some versions say? (vs. 7)** *["Empty phrases" are words that are said because they are beautiful, but not because they are meant or understood. Some people also think that using certain phrases makes*

*prayer more powerful. But it is not the words themselves that make prayer effective or important, and there is no phrase that will “make” your prayer work if your heart isn’t right before the Lord.]*

**What do you think it means when the text says that “they think that they will be heard for their many words”? (vs. 7)** [*Sometimes, people believe that, not only can we say the “right” words, but also that the more we say them, the better our chances are of receiving what we asked for. Or if we use a lot of words, we can ‘convince’ the Lord to act on their behalf. But God doesn’t work that way—and so the phrases and words become empty.]*

**God already knows everything we need before we speak (vs. 8). So what is the purpose of praying to Him, and asking for help or counsel? Doesn’t He know everything? Why doesn’t He just help us?**

*[Prayer is about more than getting things from God, it is more about talking with our heavenly Father, who is the true and living God. We should be seeking to get closer to Him, to talk to Him, but also to listen to Him. As a child of God, we can ask for God’s provision for our needs, or for our wants. But we need to also make sure to live for Him and to serve Him. In the end, our goal is to form a relationship with our heavenly Father. A relationship where no one talks or listens to the other doesn’t grow, nor can it be healthy. We want our relationship with our Father to both grow and be healthy!]*

### **What Is Prayer?**

This is both simple and difficult to answer, since there are many ways of praying and talking to our Father. So, in an attempt to get a clearer picture, let’s start with what prayer is not. There are many examples, but let’s look at two:

- 1) The first is when a person has memorized a prayer and uses only this prayer and repeats it until the words no longer have meaning, speaking it because it is a prayer and not because they believe what it says.
- 2) The second is when a person prays for a long time, but never actually says anything meaningful. These prayers may be pretty words, but they

don't reflect their personal life. For example, this person prays at length for more people to come to Sunday school and that the church would grow, but this is the first time they've come to church in months, and they never share with others about their faith.

Prayer is not a performance to show people. It is also not simply saying things as if the words were a magic formula.

➤ *So, what is prayer?* The purpose of prayer is to create and deepen our relationship with God. It is for our benefit, it is a lifeline, it is a direct connection with the Lord, and it nourishes spiritual growth.

➤ *How can I pray?* It's like scripture says—go into your room or a private place and talk to God. There is no specific position or formula that must be conformed to.

➤ *How can I avoid “empty phrases”?* Speak frankly, remembering that the prayer in and of itself isn't power—instead, the power comes from our Father who always hears our prayers. Also remember that your prayers are for God to hear, not for the people around you to think more highly of you. That being said, there is nothing wrong with making your prayers more elaborate! Just make sure that the motivation is more to create something beautiful to praise God, and not to impress other people or make yourself feel more spiritual.

➤ *What can I pray about?* You can pray about anything and everything! It's a conversation with God. Every activity in your life, every problem or concern, can all be brought to Him. The fundamental purpose of prayer is not to convince the Lord to do things, but to grow our relationship with Him. So, while you should be respectful, you can speak to Him as you would a close family member.

In a later book, we will look at Jesus' example and how He prayed and how He taught his disciples to pray.

*[discussions questions: Do you already have a habit of praying? Where do you pray? What do you pray for most often? When praying, what is your greatest challenge?]*

*[Discipler: share about a time that God answered one of your prayers, or when you had a great time of prayer with the Lord. Also ask if your*

*disciple has ever had some kind of special experience with prayer.]*

Our key verse for today is found in **Matthew 6:6a**: "*But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.*"

Another example of how to draw in a creative way can be seen on the right:

### **Weekly Challenge:**

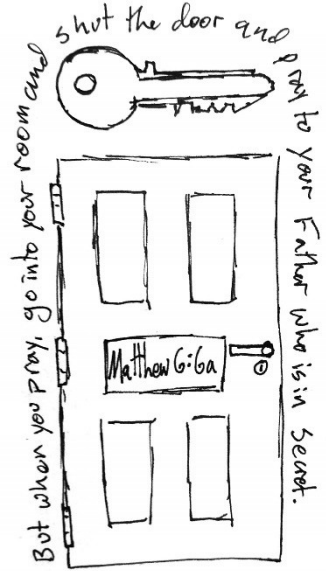
- ✓ Your challenge for next week: Separate five minutes each day for prayer. If you don't know what to pray about, you and the discipler can make a list of prayer requests together. Focus not just on physical needs but spiritual needs as well. And just talking with God!

### **Some quotes about prayer:**

*"I pray because I can't help myself. I pray because I'm helpless. I pray because the need flows out of me all the time, waking and sleeping. It doesn't change God. It changes me."* – C.S. Lewis

*"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."* — Martin Luther

[*Close meeting with prayer*]



# Lesson 6

## Introduction to Discipleship

**Text:** Psalm 1

**Key Verse:** Psalm 1:2

*“but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.”*

[**Review:** *In the last lesson we learned about prayer, what it is, and how we should pray. What is an example of "empty phrases"? How can we avoid those? Do you remember the verse we learned? How did the challenge of daily prayer go? Were you able to do it? Is there something you want to share that happened during the week?]*

### **Introduction:**

Today we will look at how to grow in our faith and how to walk in the paths of the Lord. We call this the process of discipleship. As Jesus discipled, we are also called to disciple others. In fact, these little booklets have been designed to help with that process, encouraging your growth in Christ, and eventually leading you to help others in that same growth.

Today's text comes from the Old Testament, in the book of Psalms. The book of Psalms is part of the “Wisdom Literature,” a section of the Bible comprised of five books of poetry. These are found in the middle of the Bible, and are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. Our church uses Psalm 1 as the basis of our discipleship books, especially verse 3: *“He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.”*



First Steps  
In Christianity



Growing  
in Christ!



Our History  
and Beliefs



Mission:  
Multiplication



What will be  
My Ministry?

You can see the images of a tree being planted, and how it grows. Using this as an example, we will also mention an important characteristic from the poetry in the Bible. In the poetic books, and especially the books of Psalms and Proverbs, the Spirit uses comparisons to communicate. Some of the comparisons deal with the *similarities* between things. We see this in Psalm 1:3, where the righteous person is compared to a tree, "He is *like* a tree planted by streams of water..."

Also, in Psalm 1 we can see another kind of comparison—*contrast*. Throughout the whole psalm we see the contrast and differences between the righteous and the wicked.

It's always important to pay attention to the images being used in the psalms! Let's get started!

[*Read Psalm 1 before continuing with the questions*]

### **Conversation Questions:**

[*It is not necessary to use every question. Make sure to use them according to how much time you have. You also can create your own questions*]

- *Have you ever seen people trying to pursue their own happiness, and then fail?*
- *Where do you find "delight"?*
- *What does it mean to be blessed?*
- *What do you think the text means when you say that the righteous meditates "day and night"?*
- *How can we meditate on the law of the Lord?*
- *What has your devotional life been like?*
- *What books have you read from your Bible? Do you read your Bible often?*

- *What is your favorite book/verse/story of the Bible, and why?*

### **Discussion Questions:**

*[Make sure the disciple understands any difficult words that come up in reading the passages]*

#### **What shouldn't we do? Why not? (vs. 1)**

*[We should not walk in the counsel of the wicked, stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of scoffers; doing those things would put us on the path of the wicked, the opposite of the path we want to walk. If you look carefully, you can see a gradual sequence in the verse—it starts by wandering in the wrong direction, then stopping and staying with this group of sinners, then you put yourself firmly in their way of life by sitting down with them.]*

#### **Where is the delight of the righteous person? When and how does he meditate on the law of the Lord'? (vs. 2)**

*[His delight is in the law of the Lord, day and night—so he is constantly in communion with God through bible reading ("the law") and through prayer.]*

#### **How is the righteous like a tree? What are the qualities listed? (vs. 3)**

*[He is like a tree by streams of water, he has fruit, he is always green without dying, and his way prospers. His roots are firm. He is also "planted"—the tree is not there by chance. "Water," often equated with the word of Jesus, brings life. Fruit is what every Christian needs to produce—it is the characteristics of a life lived following the Lord. He does not 'wither'—not only does the tree have firmness and roots, but it is renewed and remains alive and healthy. If the righteous follows the Lord's will, he will prosper—maybe not the traditional, material sense, but he will live well, a good life.]*



*in*

**What are the wicked like? What are the differences—the contrasts—between the righteous and the wicked? (vs. 4)**

*[They are like chaff scattered in the wind. Where the righteous have roots and are not easily shaken, the wicked are carried away easily. Where the righteous are alive, the wicked are dry and lifeless.]*

**The text says "therefore." What will happen as a result of these differences? (vs. 5)**

*[Because the wicked have no firmness, because they have no life, because they find no pleasure in the law of the Lord, they shall have no place with the righteous. ]*

**What are the two paths, and what is the difference between them? (vs. 6)**

*[The way of the righteous and the way of the wicked. The Lord watches over one, but not the other. The Lord is close to one, always takes care of those on it, always keeps his eye on it, but not the other]*

This psalm teaches us about the effect that the Bible has on us. When we listen to God's teaching, it will help us to be "like a tree planted by streams of water that yields fruit," and so much more. A contrast is also placed firmly between the sinner and the righteous—one is "blessed," the other is forsaken. The path of the wicked is fleeting, and what he does won't last. The path that the Lord offers provides continuous growth, giving us strength each day to overcome the difficulties of life. He offers us life, and life in abundance. (John 10:10)

Something that can be difficult as a new convert is to leave the familiar places of the past, like those we saw in verse 1—the counsel of the wicked, the way of sinners, and the seat of mockers. The new convert will remember places and friends of the past that were not good, but are familiar and even comfortable. Are there places like this that you should avoid? Are there places that tempt you, or that you still like to go, but aren't appropriate for you now that you're a Christian? What about friends who want you to continue in your old ways?

Let's consider how to walk in the way of the Lord. First, there are places that are healthy, uplifting, and beneficial for a righteous person. What

would these places be? Do you have any doubts about certain places or situations, or do you need advice on how to deal with these?

*[After dealing with the disciples' answers or questions, share a personal testimony how the Lord helped you with an issue early on, or helped you to stop going to places that were not helpful to your growth, or how He helped you deal wisely and lovingly with people who weren't a good influence on for your spiritual life.]*

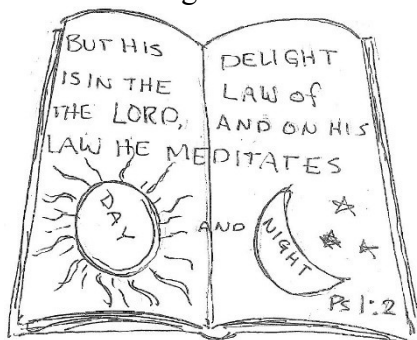
How do we walk in the way of the Lord? The answer can be found in verse 2, which says that "on His law he meditates day and night." Does this mean that we should always be reading the Bible, every hour of every day? No—that would make it almost impossible to do anything else. But meditating on the Word is different. When we say "meditate," we're not talking about the common idea of meditating, which says to sit with your legs crossed, take a deep breath, clear your mind, that kind of thing. Rather the idea is more to "contemplate" the Word, because instead of *clearing* our minds we are *filling* them with the Word of God. The Word of God must always feed our minds, enriching our thoughts and changing our attitudes. In later lessons, we will devote more time to discovering new ways to delve into the scriptures and learn to understand and practice it, but for now, the most important part is getting to know the Word. One way to do this is through memorizing verses.

Today we will memorize Psalm 1:2, but here is a challenge: to memorize Psalm 1 in its entirety before the end of this booklet. This will be worth a prize at the end of the book!

**Key Verse:** "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night." — Psalm 1:2

### Weekly Challenge:

- ✓ Read one chapter of the Bible a day and ask a few questions about the text, then answer them afterwards. You can write the questions and answers in your devotional notebook, or do them mentally if you prefer! These can be simple, based on questions



like: Who? What? Where? When? How? and Why? You don't have to have all the answers, either! You can bring them to the discipler or your pastor for more input.

*[Discipler, if they aren't sure where to start, you can make your own suggestions. Often a good place to begin is in the gospels, such as Matthew or Mark]*

**Activity**: Make an acrostic with the word "tree," placing a word or idea for each letter that begins with that same letter, something that reveals a quality of the righteous, or of walking with God. For example:

**T**wo ways

**R**ejects the counsel of the wicked

**E**ternal

**E**njoys the Word of the Lord

*[End with prayer]*

# Lesson 7

## Temptation

**Main Text:** James 1:12-15

**Key Verse:** James 1:12a

*[Review: Last week we talked about the importance of reading the Bible and meditating on it. What was the verse you memorized? You were also given the challenge of reading one chapter of the Bible a day and asking a few questions about the text. What chapters have you read? Do you want to share about something you've learned, something you found interesting, or something you have questions about? How has your prayer life been? Can you name a characteristic of a 'righteous man'?*

### **Introduction:**

Today we will learn about temptation, what it is, the danger it presents, and how to resist it. Temptation comes in many forms, but one of the most dangerous aspects of temptation is that it comes from our desires. Since it is something that we want, it makes it harder for us to resist it. To learn more about this topic, let's open the Bible to James 1:12-15.

### **Conversation Questions:**

- *What do you think is temptation?*
- *What do you know about perseverance?*
- *What is sin?*
- *Why do we sometimes want to do what we know is wrong?*
- *Try to remember a time when you were tempted. Were you able to resist it? Do you know why or why not?*
- *Are you currently facing temptation?*
- *What do you consider to be your most vulnerable area, as far as desire/temptation is concerned?*
- *Have you ever seen people blaming God for their difficulties? Why do you think they acted like that? Do you think they were right?*

## **Discussion Questions:**

**Why is the man mentioned here considered to be blessed? We are called to “remain steadfast” against what? (vs. 12)**

*[Because he stood the test and received the crown of life.*

*[We are called to remain steadfast, or persevere, against trials. ‘Trials’ could mean a variety of things, but considering the context and verses that follow, one can see that it is specifically referring to the trial of temptation. A simple description of what this trial/temptation entails is that it is “something we desire that leads to sin.”]*

**To whom will the crown of life be given? (vs. 12)**

*[Those who stand the test (or persevere, or stay steadfast), and who love the Lord]*

**What are we *not* to say when we are being tempted? Why is that? (vs. 13)**

*[We are not to say that it is the Lord who is tempting us.*

*[It is because He is entirely good—He is not tempted by evil, nor does he use evil to tempt His children. It would be contrary to His nature.]*

**Everyone is tempted by what? When does it happen? (vs. 14)**

*[Everyone is tempted by their own desires, especially bad desires, or desires that are out of control (desires on their own are not sins).*

*[It happens when you are not only attracted by what you want, but also “enticed” (convinced) to follow those desires. Some Bible translations say “seduced.” One possible illustration can be found in fishing. Seeing the bait is not dangerous or evil for the fish—but if the fish ignores the danger and goes after the bait anyway, it leads to pain and possibly death.]*

**How does ‘desire’ develop? What does following these desires lead us to? (vs. 15)**

*[After being “lured and enticed,” desire leads us to sin, and that sin results in death. First, it's just desire toward something, either bad or in excess or in the*



*wrong circumstance. But when you pay attention to those desires, giving space for them in your mind and thoughts, when you nurse and seek to satisfy these desires, it goes beyond thoughts and ends in action.*

*[Temptation in and of itself is not a sin, but if we pay too much attention to it, there is a high probability that we will be led to sin.*

*[Imagine that you are in a small shop. You see something you really like [wait for the disciple give an idea of something they like], and you think "wow, I wish I could have that"—but you have no money. You keep coming back to this thing, looking, wondering what it would be like to own it. You look all around and notice that no one is even watching this part of the store and you can fit it in your pocket. Eventually you can't resist anymore. You put it in your pocket and leave the store without paying.*

*[If you had stopped yourself after seeing it and wanting it, it wouldn't have been a problem. Even noticing that no one was watching wasn't wrong on its own, even if it was a step further; a dangerous enticement. However, since you kept coming back and thinking about it and watching and observing, and then put those thoughts and observations into action, it became sin.]*

It sounds very simple, right? But what *is* temptation? Something you want? Yes, but is there anything else? The answer to this question can be complicated because it has many ways of showing itself, depending on the person. To get a more solid idea of what temptations can look like, let's examine a few types of temptation.

### **Activity:**

*[For this game, the discipler needs to describe words and try and get the disciple to guess what they are. The words will represent possible types of temptations, and they have to be described without using that word (or a synonym for that word). The goal is to make the disciple guess the correct word through the descriptions. To use an example (not associated with the lesson): if the word is "car"—you can't say "vehicle," or a brand like "Fiat;" it needs to be something more like "this object is something that is driven on the street and has four tires."*

*The words for this game are:*

*Pleasure / pride / goods (material wealth) / steal / applause]*



Basically, there are three types of temptation: materialism, hedonism and egotism. Materialism deals with desire for material things, like a new car; hedonism is about the desire to have pleasures of different kinds, including sexual pleasure; egotism deals with pride and our desire to be praised, or to be better than others.

Most of these things are not bad in and of themselves, but there is right time for everything. Moderation is also important, as well as how you try to get these things. Having a good car is not bad—stealing money to buy the car is bad, or wanting to have five cars simply to show everyone that you're rich, or if the car becomes the most important thing in your life to you.

This lesson is to teach about what temptation is, but also about how to resist it. The key to doing so is in verse 12, and it is something simple (but very difficult to practice): we must endure with perseverance. We can pray and ask for God's help (and He will help us!), but in the end, it is us who will decide whether or not we will do or pursue something sinful.

Some tips to do help us remain steadfast:

First, take care to avoid temptation. If you know you will be put in a situation where you will be vulnerable to temptation, flee! If you are trying to avoid drinking alcohol, do not enter a place where they serve drinks, such as a bar. It is wise to avoid even going near such places, if possible, since even just looking can tempt you.

Second, don't give a lot of time or thought to the temptations that appear. Temptations come up. Desires appear, sometimes strongly and suddenly. But we can decide whether or not we're going to



spend a lot of time contemplating them or not. The more time we spend thinking about it, the more likely we are to act according to this temptation.

Third, try to find something to occupy your mind in the place of the temptation. If you're thinking too much about something you shouldn't, seek out something else that will occupy your mind and take focus off that desire. Reading the Bible and praying is always a good idea, however it can also be something like a hobby you enjoy (drawing, sewing, gardening, etc).

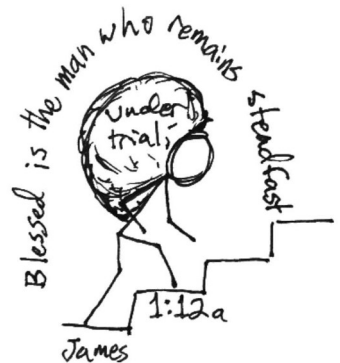
Fourth, find someone that you trust to keep you accountable, to ask you questions about what is going on, and to pray with you and for you.

Fifth, remain steadfast. Don't stop resisting. Sometimes it seems like a temptation will never go away, that we will always be suffering from it and fighting against it—but that is neither a reason nor a justification to give up. Endure and persevere until the Lord frees us. Perseverance is also important for something else: for when we fail. Building new habits will take time, and is difficult. We would rather be cured all at once, but most of the time, healing is a long process. We will always hope that we can easily resist temptation, but the truth is, we are going to fail sometimes.

Perseverance is an important quality that will help you continue despite the failures. Perseverance will help you stand up time and time again, even when it would be easier to give up. But the Lord has grace to cover our faults! There is nothing that we can do to make the Lord to refuse to forgive us.

*[Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 with the disciple, and, if necessary or if there is time, discuss the Lord's faithfulness and how He can help us in times of temptation and trial]*

**Key Verse:** "Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial." — James 1:12a



***This week:***

- ✓ Make a list of your strongest temptations right now, and start creating a plan for how to avoid falling to them. Remember, it doesn't have to be a huge change, or something that takes place all at once! If you can do that, great, but if you can't, it's okay. It is fine (and normal, even) to take this journey one step at a time. The Lord has all the patience necessary to help us, and He Himself walks with us.
- ✓ Also, work on the verses and make sure you have them well memorized. And don't forget the challenge of memorizing Psalm 1!
- ✓ Continue reading a chapter of the Bible and praying every day.

*[Close meeting not in prayer but by singing the Doxology (next page)]*

## **A Time and a Reason to Sing – “The Doxology”**

For Christians, there is a rich heritage of music since the very beginning. God’s people sing! For this reason we have the book of Psalms in the Bible, which is a collection of songs and poetry. They serve to encourage and focus our faith on the eternal truths of Scripture. They unify God’s people around the world since the doxology and many other hymns have been translated into almost every language that exists. The hymns are considered an essential element in the worship and fellowship of the church.

The Doxology is one of the most widely known hymns of all time. Written in 1674 by Thomas Ken, it is often sung as a call to worship and it celebrated across almost all denominations. Some use it as a prayer.

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;*

*Praise Him, all creatures here below;*

*Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;*

*Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

*Amen.*



# GROWING IN CHRIST!



Discipler



*He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. Psalm 1:3*

# **Book 2 – Growing in Christ**

## ***Growth Through the Means of Grace***

- 1. How to Study the Bible** p. 2
- 2. How to Pray** p. 10
- 3. Fellowship** p. 18
- 4. How to Be a Good Steward** p. 24
- 5. Holy Communion – The New Covenant** p. 29

## ***Growth in Your Understanding - Theology***

- 6. Who is The Lord, Our Father?** p. 39
- 7. Who is Jesus, Our Savior?** p. 48
- 8. Who is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter?** p. 53

## ***How to Grow Spiritually - Sanctification***

- 9. Overcoming Sin** p. 58
- 10. Repentance and Forgiveness** p. 64
- 11. Overcoming Suffering and Difficulties** p. 70

## ***Growth through the Mission of the Church***

- 12. Evangelism** p. 76
- 13. Discipleship and Missions** p. 81

# Lesson 1

## How to Study the Bible

**Text:** Deuteronomy 6:4-9

**Key Verse:** Deuteronomy 6:5

**[Review:** *Ask the disciple how they are doing spiritually since the last time you met. Ask them to recite Psalm 1. Ask how praying and reading the Bible has been going.]*

### **Introduction:**

Today we are going to study a few verses found in the Old Testament, in Deuteronomy (the fifth book); with these verses we will discover why studying the Bible is so important for the believer. Studying God's Word is a skill that will help you discover spiritual riches. There are so many false teachings that distort the Word of God, so it is important that we study the Bible for ourselves to know what it really says. Studying the Word is different from simply reading. In this lesson we will learn how to study in five simple steps.

### **Conversation Questions:**

- *What spiritual practices or disciplines do you most enjoy in your walk with God?*
- *What time of the day do you like to read the Bible?*
- *What biblical principles do you apply to your life each day?*
- *How do you seek to understand what the Bible says?*

### **Bible Study:**

Pray and read the scripture together.




Let's read Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

What does this say is the basis for all that we do for God? *[Love.]* Where should we put the words of God? *[In our hearts.]* What do you think that means?

We engage in Bible study for important reasons. One reason is to know God's Word and discover its message. His words teach us how to live, how to know Him, how to please Him, how to love Him and much more.

The key to studying the Bible is **observation**. This means that we read slowly and carefully, paying attention to what is written. This can involve re-reading a passage a couple of times.



The Bible is not hard to understand, but sometimes we read it quickly without paying attention to clues that can help us understand. Let's study a few verses and discover what these verses are saying.

How do we start? Get a notebook or a sheet of paper to write down your questions and thoughts. Then start following these

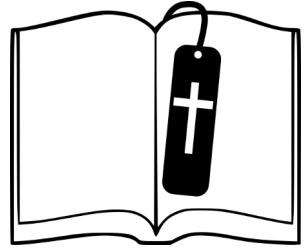
### **Five Steps!**

*[Discipler: a notebook would be a good gift to give your disciple, while you explain how to do Bible study, you should be doing the lesson yourself, in order to be a good example. Your goal is that after engaging in the **Five Steps**, the disciple can say "I understand this passage!"]*

It is always important to Pray before beginning any study of the Bible because the Holy Spirit helps us understand. The Bible is a spiritual book, and we need His help.

In brief these are the **Five Steps**.

- Step 1 - Understand the context of the passage.
- Step 2 - Look for repeated words/things.
- Step 3 - Look for comparisons.
- Step 4 - Ask the inductive questions.
- Step 5 – Write the main message of the passage.



We will use the text, Deuteronomy 6:4-9 for our study.

***Step 1:*** Ask questions about the context. Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**?

This means discovering the situation or circumstances around the passage. Sometimes these clues come before the passage.

Every time you study a passage, look for answers to these questions: **Who? What? Where?**

*For example: **Who** is speaking? **Who** is mentioned? **Who** is participating? **Where** is it taking place? **When** is this happening? **What's** going on here?*

Understanding context helps us from misunderstanding its meaning.

In our passage today you can find the answers to these questions by looking at Deuteronomy 1:1-8

Write the questions and answers on your paper like this: “*Who is speaking? Where is this happening? When is this happening?*”

*[ Moses is speaking. Who is he? He is an important figure in the Bible. He wrote the first five books of the Bible. In Deuteronomy he is teaching and preparing the Israelites to enter the promised land. Forty years before the people of Israel had been rescued out of slavery in Egypt, but they had refused to go into the promised land. They had been afraid. But now a new generation is about to enter the land that God had promised to give them.*

Moses is teaching this new generation, so they understand the law of God.]

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage.**

List in your notebook the words repeated in the passage and include the verses where they can be found. Repetition is important because it often reveals the main message.

*[Discipler: ask if they found any repeated words in the passage. If they didn't, ask them to look in verse 5 because there is a word that is repeated. They should notice that the word "all" is repeated three times in the same verse. "Love" is also repeated]*

Besides repeating words, there can also be repeated phrases, concepts, and ideas. For example, there is a type of word repeated in these verses. *[In Deut. 6:4-9 we can see commands are repeated several times: hear (v. 4), you shall love (v. 5), I command you, these words... shall be" (v. 6), you shall teach (v. 7), you shall talk of them (v. 7), bind (v. 8), they shall be (v. 8), and write (v. 9). Not every passage is this emphatic with its commands. We might then ask, why it is so emphasized here?]*

**Step 3:** Look for comparisons that explain **important elements in the passage.**

Sometimes an author will make a comparison. In Psalm 1: The righteous man is "like a tree", or "the wicked are like straw."

Key words to help find a positive comparison or similarity are: *as, just as, also, like, similar to, in the same way.*

Words to discover contrast, or negative comparison are: *but, however, otherwise, on the contrary.* There aren't any comparisons here; not all passages have them.

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development.**



Look for answers to three questions to see the subject more fully, and to understand more deeply what the author is trying to say.

Question 1: “**What** is this?” or “**What** does this mean?” This question could be about a broad idea, but often it looks at basic terms in the passage, to understand what words or concepts mean. For example, “**What** does ‘frontlets’ mean?”

*[Discipler: ask if they understand what this word means. “Frontlet” is term like “thing” to say that you have something in your hand, or on your forehead, or on your body that helps you remember God and His Word. Note: this is not referring to tattoos.]*

Question 2: **How?** Sometimes we read the Word, and it tells us how to do something. An example would be in Deut. 6:7. We can ask, “**How** do we teach the Bible to our children? “

*[Discipler: The text tells us. By talking about the Word while walking, sitting, standing up, in other words, in every circumstance, and by creating visual reminders. One practical way to encourage discussions about Scripture into your life is by the study of the Word, like you are doing now.]*

Question 3: **Why?** This question leads us to contemplate God's motivation or purpose. It encourages us to look for greater understanding. For example, regarding Deut. 6:5 it is good to ask, “**Why** is the word ‘all’ used repeatedly in this verse?” Or “**Why** should we love God with all our heart, all our soul, and all our strength?”

*[Discipler: because serving the Lord is done with **everything** we have. Each relationship we have has a different commitment level. We have friends who sometimes help us. But in a marriage, we experience a fully committed relationship. In that same way, God wants a deeply committed relationship with us. Our whole heart is to be in a close and constant relationship because He loves us.*

**Step 5:** Look for the **main message** of the passage.

After thinking about all the discoveries you made from the previous steps, use your own words to complete this sentence: “the main message of this passage is \_\_\_\_\_”

Avoid using only one word, such as “Love.” Instead, format the main message as a title that gives more information, like “Loving God and His Word” Write your title down in your notebook.

*[Discipler: Try to write the main message in your own words, as well. An example - The main message of this passage is “Love God, Love His Word.”]*

You have finished the Five Steps! These steps can be used with any passage in the Bible. We will use them in the other lessons of this book as well.

After this study we want to look at two statements:

1. The study and understanding of the Bible is a high priority for the believer.

What is the biblical evidence from these verses that supports this statement?

*[Discipler: supporting evidence: 1) the use of many command verbs to emphasize how we should act, 2) the command for consistency and constancy in interacting with the Word of God, throughout the day of the follower—including the command that it should pass on through different generations, 3) The variety of ways to contemplate or interact with the Word—speaking, teaching, visible in the house.]*

2. The motivation to studying and knowing the Bible comes from a deep love for our Heavenly Father! What is the Biblical evidence that supports this statement, taken from the passage?

*[Discipler: through His Word, we can know Him more and learn how to follow Him faithfully (vs. 5-6). Our relationship with God will be stronger when we have the Word in our heart (v. 6). This*

*connects to verse 5, which says that we are to love Him with all our heart.]*

### **Discussion Questions:**

Do you feel like you understand the passage better?

What was easy in these steps?

What was hard?



*[Encourage the disciple that it will become easier, like any new skill.]*

**Activity:** On five note cards or pieces of paper write out the first five books of the Bible. Tell them that these are the first five books of the Bible. Put them in order and have them repeat them. Now, mix them up and ask them to put them in order. Say that the Greek word for “five” is “penta” so the first five books are called the “Pentateuch, meaning “five books.” Keep the note cards for review. You will make cards for the Gospels next week and Minor Prophets in the 4<sup>th</sup> lesson.

**Key Verse:** “*And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.*” — Deuteronomy 6:5

### ***This week:***

- ✓ Write out a Bible verse and place it somewhere where you can see it throughout the day, just like in Deuteronomy 6:8-9. Place it in your car, on your calendar, on a wristband, on the wall, on your mirror, or wherever you will see it.
- ✓ Get a schedule for Daily Scripture Reading from your discipler, for one chapter per day. Since the Bible is essential to connect with God and to learn about God, this is a valuable daily habit. This challenge is just for Bible reading (not study), and it is often recommended to do it first thing in the morning.

- ✓ Study Matthew 6:9-15 for next week. Use the **Five Steps**. Set aside time to study your Bible. Make notes on what you discover. *[Discipler: make sure they know where to find Matthew in the Bible.]*

*[Discipler: when you give the Bible reading bookmark, it would be a good time to share about how uplifting Bible reading has been in your own life and personal walk with God.]*

*[Close your time together in prayer]*

## Lesson 2

# How to Pray

**Main Text:** Matthew 6:9-15

**Key Verse:** Matthew 6:9



**[Review:** Can you recite the key verse from lesson 1? Did you study the passage for today? Were you able to apply the **Five Steps** to the Matthew passage? Were you able to read a chapter of the Bible every day? Do you remember the first five books of the Bible? Use the cards from last week to help. Disciple, encourage the disciple to continue reading the Bible daily. Remind them not to give up. New habits are hard at first, but they get easier.]

### **Introduction:**

Today we are going to study a passage in Matthew, the first book in the New Testament. The first four books we call “the Gospels”. [Show the 4 cards with the name of the Gospels written on them] Each of these four books is written by a person telling the story of Jesus. They contain eyewitness accounts of Jesus—His words and actions. The Gospels show the importance of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Last week we learned to study the Bible and committed to reading it daily. Today's lesson is on how to pray.

### **Conversation Questions:**

- Did you grow up in a religious home?
- Did you learn how to pray as a child, or later in life?
- What is one of the first prayers you can remember?

- Have you kept up the habit of praying since learning about it in the first book?
- Do you think your prayers have changed since you started praying more regularly? How?
- What is the biggest challenge you face when it comes to praying?

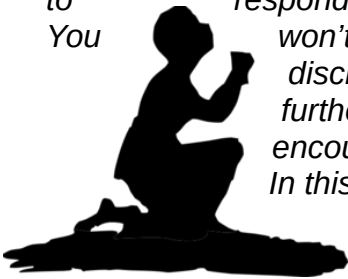
We have learned how important Bible study is and today we will talk about prayer. We refer to these two practices as “means of grace.” That is because, we receive God’s grace and blessing when we do these. God strengthens us spiritually when we study and pray. We don’t gain God’s favor, by doing them. We receive more from Him as we do them.

In book 1, lesson 2, we began the conversation about what prayer is and is not. Today, we are going to learn more about how to pray by looking at an example that Jesus himself taught.

### **Bible Study:**

Now, let’s open the Bible to Matthew 6:9-15. Let’s study together the passage and use the steps we learned of Bible study. Pray before beginning.

**The Five Steps:** *[Ask if the disciple did the study, using the Five Steps. Make sure to engage the disciple. Give time for them to respond. Remember to focus on the main things. You won’t be able to talk about everything. If the disciple wants to discuss the topic and passage further, maybe meet again. Listening to them will encourage them to continue in their Bible study. In this study we will look at steps, 1- 5.]*



**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context:

*[Have the disciple come up with a few questions based on when, where, and who, and see if the answer is already in this book or if you can answer it yourselves. Remember to let the disciple try their hand at responding, first!]*

**Who** is speaking? *[Jesus. Some red letters to show when he's speaking]*  
**When** is it happening? *[Jesus' ministry in Galilee. The reference is Matthew 4:23-25. Jesus went up on a mountain to teach, probably because so many people want to hear him (Matthew 5:1). This well-known passage is called the, "Sermon on the Mount" and spans three chapters, Matthew 5-7.]*



**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage.**

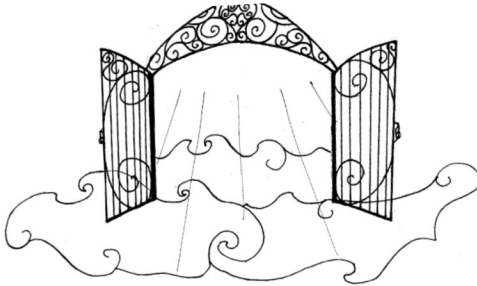
**What** words or ideas did you see repeated? *[Hopefully, they noted the words about "forgiveness" (v 12, 14, 15). Clearly the issue is being emphasized if it is repeated twice in just a short passage.]*

**Why** is this issue being emphasized? *[Forgiveness is a constant need and therefore necessary to maintain our close relationship with God. Forgiving others is essential to receiving forgiveness from God. As we forgive others our relationship with God remains open and clear. If not than our relationship with God suffers.]*  
Other repetitions? *[Ask if they noticed any differences in pronouns repeated in vs 9 and 10, compared to verses 11-13, then again in 14-15. In verse 9-10, the focus is on God. We are praying for God to act and move in this world. The difference is seen in the repetition of the possessives, "**thy/your** name", "**thy/your** kingdom" and "**thy/your** will. Then the pronouns change to "**our**", "**us**". This part deals with our daily and constant needs. We need His provision. Then it returns to "**thy/your**",*

and Father in verses 14-15, although it is not a part of the prayer but Jesus' explanation.]

**Step 3:** Look for comparisons that explain **important elements in the passage.**

**What** comparisons are there? [Ask the disciple if there were any comparisons. Look at verse 10. Have them look for a word that shows comparison: as, like, just as, similar to, but, however, otherwise etc. In verse 10, Jesus asks that God's will be done in what way? "On earth as it is in heaven." So similarly, God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. We can ask the question "How should I obey the will of God?" Just as it is obeyed in heaven, completely. Also, in verse 12 Jesus teaches that our forgiveness is linked with our practice of forgiving others. It says, "forgive us...as we have forgiven others." This means that forgiveness by God will be similar or equal to our forgiveness of others. This



comparison informs us how we are to be forgiven. The comparison shows its importance and also that Jesus repeats it in verses 14 & 15.]

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development.**

There are a lot of questions that could be asked here. But in this lesson, we want to focus on the central "how" question of the passage: "How are we to pray?"

Right before this passage, Jesus teaches that prayer is not about vain repetition. It is unlikely that when He gave us this prayer that

He meant us to continuously repeat it exactly like He gave it to us. Instead, He was teaching us how to approach prayer, and what are important things to pray about—giving us a model. *[It should also be noted that this doesn't cover every single area of prayer (for example, it doesn't mention intercession), but these are vital topics to pray about regularly.]*

**How** should we pray? Look at verse 9. *[Jesus shows his disciples and us. He provides a model how to pray and what to include.]*

Jesus' prayer gives for us 7 different areas of focus. Did you find them?

1 – Our Father in heaven - Address God directly and personally.

2 –Hallowed be thy name - Praise Him and worship Him

3 – Your kingdom come – Pray for His kingdom to spread on earth. for people to be transformed by the love of Christ, for His church to grow and to reach people who have never heard of Him .

4- Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. - A desire for His will to always be our will, humbling ourselves before Him.

5- Give us this day our daily bread. - Seek His help and provision with our daily needs. *[What is our daily bread? Bread can mean the common, daily, physical necessities of life. We are encouraged to ask for God's help in regular, normal, small ways, as well as the big ones.]*

6 - Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. - Seek forgiveness, and give forgiveness freely.

7 – Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. -We know that God wants to deliver us from all sin, so we pray for His power in our lives over evil.

Here are a few others:

**What** does “hallowed” mean? *[It comes from the word “sanctified” which means “set apart,” It means we pray with reverence, and awe at who He is.]*

**What** does this prayer show about who God is? *[He is holy, yet personal. He is sovereign. He cares about our daily lives. He forgives graciously, so we should as well. And He wants to give us victory over temptation and sin. ]*

The last two verses repeat what was said in verse 12, as noted in Step 3.

**Step 5:** Look for the **main message** of the passage.

Complete this sentence by putting your title—the main message of this passage is \_\_\_\_\_  
*[An example - "The main message of this passage is "How to talk to our Father."]*

**What is the point of this passage and what now?"**

How do we apply this message in our lives? *[ God wants us to pray often! He cares about our spiritual and physical needs. He wants us to bring every need to Him. By praying we are talking to God as our Father. This is the model that Jesus provided. We don't have to recite this prayer daily, but it can guide us. ]*

**Activity:**

The essence of prayer is to communicate with God, talking to Him, our heavenly Father, asking for guidance and help. God wants us to come to him and talk with Him about everything in our lives. Prayer strengthens our relationship with Him. Here is a simple game.

*[Discipler: Give the disciple a pencil and a sheet of paper. Blindfold them. Ask them to draw something simple like a house or flower. Because the disciple is blindfolded, they will need your help. Don't help until the disciple asks—and the disciple must be very specific with the questions. The disciple cannot use touch to feel the edge of the page. When done say that there are similarities between this activity and prayer. When we need help, we can ask.]*

**Key Verse:** *“Pray then like this: Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name.” — Matthew 6:9*

*To help with memorizing this verse with gestures.*

- 1) Pray then like this: (hands together in prayer gesture).*
- 2) Our Father (hands move to point upwards, still in prayer gesture)*
- 3) in Heaven, (hands split and gesture ‘heavenward’)*
- 4) hallowed be your name. (bowing head)]*

***This week:***

- ✓ First, memorize this prayer Matthew 6: 9-13, ‘The Lord’s Prayer.’ If you already have it memorized, rewrite the prayer in your own words, including specific needs in your life (e.g., “I pray that the Lord will provide a job that I need. I pray that the Lord will help me to obey His will daily.)
- ✓ Second, begin to pray each day. If already doing so, take it a step further by using Jesus’ prayer model. *[Discipler, ask how long the person thinks they should pray. It doesn’t matter the answer, accept it, whether it’s a minute or an hour. You should also determine the time you want to pray each day and say to him, “I want to pray \_\_\_\_ minutes. Let’s remind each other of our commitment to pray.”]*
- ✓ Use the Five Steps for Bible study for the next lesson. That lesson will be from Acts 2:42-47. *[Make sure the disciple can find this in their Bibles.]*

*[Close meeting with prayer]*

OUR FATHER,  
*who art, in  
heaven*

# Lesson 3

## Fellowship

**Main Text:** Acts 2:42-47

**Key Verse:** Acts 2:42

**[Review:** Review saying the Lord's Prayer. Ask how their prayer time and Bible reading is going. Were they able to pray for the time they set as their goal? Did they read a chapter each day? How many days did they read a chapter? Did they do the Five Steps of Bible study for today's passage? Also, review the first five books of the Bible. Then the Gospels. Now you will add Acts.]

**Introduction:** In the previous lesson we talked about prayer and studied the model that Jesus showed his disciples. Prayer is necessary to maintain our relationship with God, but there are also other ways that our relationship with God can be strengthened. Do you remember the phrase, "means of grace?" Do you remember what it means? *[Practices we do that allow God's grace to flow through our lives and bless us.]*

Today we are going to look at another means of grace. We will look at how God brings blessing to us through the life of the church.

### **Conversation Questions:**

- What is your favorite part of going to church? (Singing, meals together, Sunday school, conversations with others, the sermon, the feeling of being loved, God's presence, etc.)



- How did you feel when you received forgiveness of your sins and asked Jesus into your life?

## **Bible Study:**



Now, let's open the Bible to Acts 2:42-47. Let's study the passage together and use the steps we learned. Read the passage together and pray.

## **The Five Steps**

*[ In this study we will look at steps, 1,2,4, 5.]*

**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context.

**When** did this take place? [Acts 2:1 tells us that it is Day of Pentecost.] **Who** is this about? [Acts 2:14, 38, 41] **Where** did this happen? [Jerusalem.]

These verses describe the very beginning of the church. Peter preached and 3000 began to follow Christ. They have just repented of their sins and been baptized (v. 38). Their lives had been changed by the power of the Lord. When we repent of our sins and Jesus saves us, it is a special day.

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage.**

*[If the disciple didn't study this during the week, then stop here and have them read this passage at least three times, looking for words that repeat and list the words here along with how many times it was repeated. If they did the work, ask them what they found.]*

*Repeated words: Together – 2, All – 4, Apostles – 2, Breaking bread -2, and food – 3, day by day – 2, things, possessions, and belongings - 2.]*

Let's look at three repeated words: **Together, all** and the **breaking of bread**. How are these words related?

*[These reveal the fellowship that was taking place. We see that the term means being together, hearing the word and breaking bread in each other's homes. Because these are repeated and emphasized*



*the message is important.] **What** is that message? Let's look at the 3 inductive questions to find the message and what we can learn about the importance of this kind of fellowship.*

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development** .

**What** were the “apostles’ teachings”? *[The apostles were Jesus’ disciples and had been with him for 3 years. They could teach from first-hand knowledge all that Jesus taught and did. Looking back earlier in this chapter, Peter, one of the apostles, explains what Jesus had come to do.]*

**How** did they respond to the apostles’ teaching?*[ It says that they devoted themselves.]*

**Why** did they devote themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship? *[They were new to understanding what Jesus had come to do for us. They wanted to learn and to be with other believers. Acts 2:40 says, to be saved from this “perverse/crooked generation.” They needed to recognize the influences that were against the teachings of Christ.]*

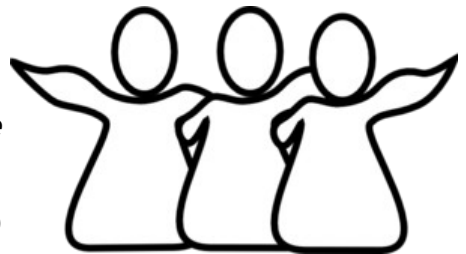
**How** did these new believers respond? *[It says in v. 44 they had all in common, or the distributed things amongst themselves so that no one was in need. They sold their possessions. They ate together in one another's homes (v. 45). Their hearts were full of the grace of God and wanted to extend it to others. They were unselfish and generous. Verse 46 says that they received their food with glad hearts, praising God. In the last verse it says that the Lord added to their numbers daily new believers. We can say that they learned and grew in faith because of the teaching fellowship and prayer (v. 42) ]*

**Step 5:** “The **main message** of this passage is \_\_\_\_\_.” *[Some ideas, “The church is born” or “The blessings of fellowship.”]*

### **Discussion questions**

Why do you think it is important to come together as a group of believers? *[We need one another if we are to stand firm in our faith.]* Can we enjoy some of the same blessings as the early believers? In what ways? *[We will hear God's Word, be encouraged by others. We will sense that we are a part of a community of believers. We can worship together and sense God's presence and see Him work in wonderful ways.]*

John Wesley says that Christianity is essentially a social religion. What do you think he meant by that? *[We need others to keep us accountable, encourage us, exhort us. But also, we can help others. We have been saved so that Christ can become known in the world. Isn't it wonderful that we have the church? Not only can we help one another to remain faithful to Christ, but it is reassuring that we are not on our journey alone.]*



**Activity:** Here are two activities to choose from.

1) Make an acrostic with the letters of "Church". Use a word or phrase for each letter that says something about the church. For example, C-Community, H- Helpful , U- United , R-Restored people, C- Christ our head, and H- Holy

2) If you have the game Jenga play it. In 1 Peter 2:5 it says that we are "like living stones, you are being built up as a spiritual house." We need each other.

**Key Verse:** *"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." — Acts 2:42*

*[Discipler: Help the disciple memorize this with hand motions.*

- 1) "They devoted themselves" ( Hands come together in prayer).*
- 2) "to the apostles' teaching " (hands together as reading the Bible).*
- 3) "and to the fellowship"( clasp hands together),*
- 4)"to the breaking of bread" (pretend to break a loaf of bread).*
- 5) "and to prayer" (fold hands in praying).]*

### **This week:**

- ✓ As a new believer you are a part of the church. You are not alone. Going to church will strengthen you in many ways. Our church manual says: *"Strive together for the advancement of the kingdom of God, and for the mutual edification of fellow believers, in holiness, knowledge, and love; walk together in Christian fellowship, in care, giving and receiving admonition with mildness and affection; pray for each other; assist one another in sickness and need; cultivate Christian sympathy, and show purity, charity, and courtesy in all the dealings of life. (265, 7 and 8)."*
- ✓ Although you are new to the faith, try this week to encourage a fellow believer. Notice when you see someone helping another, or mention something you appreciate about them. Also, you can ask someone how you can pray for them this week. And then remember to keep praying for that during the week. If you know

about some difficulty that someone is going through, look for a way to help them. Let us encourage our family in Christ!

Next week we will study Malachi 3:6-12.  
Read it and use the Five Step Bible study  
method.

*[Close the meeting in prayer]*



# Lesson 4

## Giving Back to God

**Main Text:** Malachi 3:6-12

**Key Verse:** Mal. 3:10<sup>a</sup>

**[Review:** Ask if they were able to study today's passage in Malachi, using the **Five Steps**. Ask how their Bible reading is going. Are they keeping up with the readings? Were they able to pray every day? Ask them to recite Acts 2:42. Were they able to go to church this week? Last week's challenge was to encourage a few people at church. How did that go? If you have time, review the books of the Pentateuch and the Gospels, plus Acts, with the note cards. Today will be a bit harder but you will present the Minor prophets.]

**Introduction:** Today we will be look at the last book in the Old Testament, the book of Malachi. This book is a part of the section called the Minor Prophets, which has twelve books in it. (Locate this section in the table of contents) Then put out 12 cards with the Minor Prophet names, with the Gospels coming after so that when you talk about this next part you can point this out.

Malachi is the last prophet in the Old Testament. His book and message make a bridge for us to the New Testament. In the Old Testament we read of God's covenant with Abraham. God planned to use this family, who later became the Israelites, to reveal Himself to the world and His plan to save humanity. In the New Testament we find a new covenant made through Jesus.



The message in Malachi is pointing out the unfaithfulness of God's people. Although they are the people of God, they are not acting in love or obedience to God. Let's learn how we can be faithful and express our love to God by our giving.

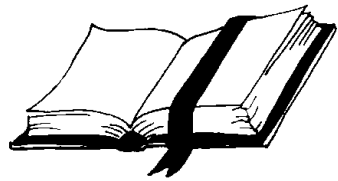
### **Conversation Questions:**

- What does "the house of the Lord" mean today?
- What would be the needs of the "house of the Lord" today?
- What is God's Plan to provide for these needs?
- What do you think of this plan?

### **Bible Study:**

Read the passage together and pray.

### **The Five Steps:**



*[ In this study we will look at steps, 1,2,4, 5.]*

**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context – **Who** is Speaking?

*[The Lord is speaking. God is speaking! God is using the prophet Malachi to bring a message.]*

**Who** else is mentioned? *[Verse 6 says that God is talking to the "children of Jacob," which means the people of Israel. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. His descendants are called Israelites.]*

**Where** is it? *[in verse 10, "the storehouse" and "my house," which would be the temple in Jerusalem. ]*

**When** is it happening? *[ Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. Throughout the Old Testament Israel had gone through many periods of unfaithfulness. God warned them and brought judgment on them. They were taken into exile for 70 years. Jerusalem and the temple had been destroyed. But God*

*promised to bring His people back because Jesus, the Messiah, would come here. Malachi is written after the return and the temple and Jerusalem have been rebuilt. After this book there will be 400 years of silence, with no message from the Lord, until Jesus comes in the gospels.]*

**What is happening?** *[God confronts his people with their negligence and disobedience. They fail to see the connection between their problems and their unfaithfulness to God. One of the ways they have been unfaithful has to do with tithing.]*

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage** [Repeated words: return -3 , rob, robbing, robbed – 4, tithe -2]

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development**.



**What** does the text mean by “robbing” God? *[The people didn’t tithe or give offerings to the Lord’s house. Since God in His Word speaks about how the people should give tithes and offerings, the lack of that means that stealing]*

**What** are tithes and offerings? *[In Numbers 18:21-24 God explains how His servants will be provided for, with the tithe.]*

**How** do tithes and offerings work? *[The people regularly give their tithes and offerings to the house of the Lord.]*

**Why** should we bring tithes and offerings to the house of the Lord? *[Malachi 3:10, “ that there may be food in my house. The first reason is that it will sustain the house of the Lord, the work of the Lord, the servant or pastor of the Lord. This conjunction, “that,” points the way to the reason, or the purpose. The second reason to tithe comes from God’s promise, “and thereby put me to the test.” When we tithe, we can know the faithfulness and love of God through His care and protection. He Himself tells us*

to “test” the Lord in this way. Here it is phrased as an imperative command, not a suggestion.]

**Step 5:** Look for the **main message** of the passage.

“The main message of this passage is: \_\_\_\_\_.” Write it down in your notebook.  
[Discipler, share your ideas. Here is a suggestion, Are We Robbing or Tithing?]

**Discussion Questions:** “What are the implications of this for the life of Christians today? Where does this truth lead us?”

How did the people of Malachi’s time rob God?

What was the result of it?

How did God challenge the people (verses 10-12)?

What is the Lord’s promise for those who obey and bring tithes and offerings to the house of the Lord?

God has given us everything we have. Now that we are His children, what is our response?

A. The Principle of Biblical Stewardship

God provides all that we have so we become stewards of what we receive from Him and recognize that all we have truly belongs to Him. Our duty is to use what He gives us in the way He wants us. What does that mean?



We use money in three areas: 1) Our living – we receive so that we can take care of ourselves and our families. 2) Offerings – we receive so we can help other people. 3) Tithe – what we regularly give to the church.

People, especially those who don't know God, think that everything they have belongs to them. Christians don't think that way. Our heavenly Father, who provides our daily bread, takes care of us, and wants us to be good stewards of all he gives us.

What is your view of money? Is it yours? Have you had a need, but someone helped you or your family? Have you helped others? If so, how did you feel? Have you sensed that helping others was God's will and that He has led people to you? What do you think of being a steward of God's money?

### B. The Marvelous Plan of God for the Expansion of the Kingdom —Tithing (verses 9-10).

All through the Bible there exist the idea that God's people participate in His work. What began in the Old Testament still works today.

In the Old Testament, God provided for the needs of the priests by the gifts given by His people. This meant that the Levites were free to care for the spiritual needs of the people. Today our tithe helps maintain the pastor and the church. We can participate in the mission of the church, by our giving. It is such a simple principle.

### C. The Principle of the Father Who Blesses (v. 10b).

When we trust and obey our Father with all that we have, He guarantees that He will take care of us. Simple. He invites us to test Him. Logically we think that if keep all our money and use it for ourselves , we would be better off. But God says differently. If you give me a part for my work, and bless those around you, I will take care of you!"

This requires faith, even when it doesn't sound logical. But God will bless you so much that you and others in the church will,



in turn, bless the community and even the nation, to the point where “all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight.” (verse 12).

This isn't a promise of financial wealth, but of God's grace and personal care beyond what we can imagine. Put God to the test! The more you trust God, the more you will bless others, and in return God will bless you. His blessing isn't always financial. He will bless you with things that money can't buy like joy, peace, friendships, and building community. In however the Lord leads you to give, “Put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts!” (v.10) *[Discipler: Share a personal testimony how the Lord has done this in your own life]*

John Wesley had a good phrase to capture the principle of stewardship:

“Earn all you can” which means don't be lazy.

“Save all you can” which means don't waste money.

“Give all you can” so you can bless others as much as possible.

Our church manual says, “Exercise faithful stewardship through the wise use of their time and material resources, practicing careful self-discipline in order to further the mission of Christ's church (remembering the principle of tithing which is basic to the New Testament standard of stewardship) and demonstrate compassion to those in need.

**Activity:** Work on the Minor Prophet cards and memorizing their order. For example, work on the first four, then add the next 4, then the last 4. It is a lot of information, to help them to feel encouraged.

**Key Verse:** *“Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts.” — Malachi 3:10<sup>a</sup>*

This week:

- ✓ If you haven't already been doing this, start tithing this week. Also ask the Lord to help you see those who need your help. Are there ministries that move your heart? If God points someone or something out, give with joy. Test God! When God asks, He is faithful to fulfil and provide.
- ✓ Do Bible reading and a study during the week of the Bible passage for the next lesson, Luke 22:7-20, using the **Five Steps**
- ✓ Continue praying and reading the Bible every day. Participate in your local church.

*[Close meeting with prayer]*

## Lesson 5

# Holy Communion: A Covenant with God

**Main Text:** Luke 22:7-20

**Key Verse:** : Luke 22:19b



**[Review:** Ask how Bible reading and prayer is going? Last week we worked on memorizing Malachi, and the books in the Minor Prophets. Ask if they can recite them? (You can have the cards

ready if that will help). Ask about church attendance. Were they able to go this week? Malachi and the lesson last week were about a specific subject. Ask if they remember what it was? Ask if they have started tithing yet. How did it go? In this lesson you will be looking at another “means of grace”. Ask if they remember what the phrase, the “means of grace” means. (They are biblical practices that not only help us grow but bring spiritual blessings into our lives. They help us draw closer to God.) In today’s lesson we will be talking about Holy Communion, also known as the Lord’s Supper.

Remember to encourage the disciple. They are growing so much. Learning how to walk with Christ, overcoming difficulties, growing in intimate relationship with God, comes through perseverance. Unlearning old unhealthy habits and developing new ones can only be done intentionally. It requires effort. But the Holy Spirit helps us!

*For example, maybe the disciple is not able to read daily. It is a new habit. They will have to unlearn other habits like watching a lot of TV or spending too much time on their phones. To learn and grow, they will have to choose different habits. Also, there may be some helpful options like listening to the Bible if reading is difficult.*

*Encourage your disciple to be patient. Share how God has spoken to you through prayer or the Word. Testify to them how your life has been changed by God and is still changing! Our only goal in all of this is to create a close relationship with God. He will change us as we allow Him. We work together with Him. Let us press on with joy, trusting our Father to sustain us and bless our efforts.]*

**Introduction:** Today we are going to study some verses in the book of Luke, one of the four Gospels. *[Ask them if they can recite those.]* All four gospels relate the story of Jesus. Luke is the only author of the Gospels who was not a Jew. We find his purpose for writing in Luke 1:3: “Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus.”

Since Luke is not a Jew, he will have a valuable perspective from outside of the Jewish culture. As an “outsider” his account lends more credibility and authenticity to the story of Jesus.

### **Conversation Questions:**

- Before knowing Jesus as your Savior, what did you understand or know about communion?
- Did you know what it meant?
- Do you have any strong memories connected to communion? If so, what are they?

### **Bible Study :**

Read the passage and pray together.

**The Five Steps:** [*In this study we will look at steps, 1,2,4, 5.*]

**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context.

**Who** do we encounter in this text? **Who** is talking? [*Jesus*]

**Who** else is mentioned? [*Peter and John and the other disciples, the master of the house, the man with the clay jar*]

**Where?** [*Jerusalem is “the city.” The upper room of a house in the city*]

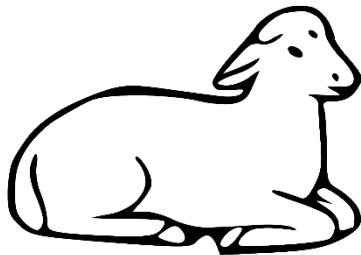
**When** is this happening? [*“Passover,” “Day of Unleavened bread”, one of the biggest Jewish feasts/holidays. “Before I suffer” vs. 15*]

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage**.

[*Passover - 5. One of the key questions is what is “Passover” and what does it reveal about Jesus? Explain about this important feast.*

1) We first read about Passover in the Old Testament, in Exodus

chapter 12. It was one of the most important Jewish celebrations. It was like a New Year’s celebration. They were to celebrate it in the first month on the 14<sup>th</sup>. The feast involved each family sacrificing a lamb, then putting the blood on the doorposts. They would eat the roasted lamb at the Passover meal. Also, they would eat unleavened bread, flat bread that had no yeast. Why the blood on the doorpost? At that time, the people of Israel were slaves in Egypt and God was getting ready to free them and fulfill His promise to give them the land that would later be called Israel. (Remember in our first lesson in Deuteronomy, we talked



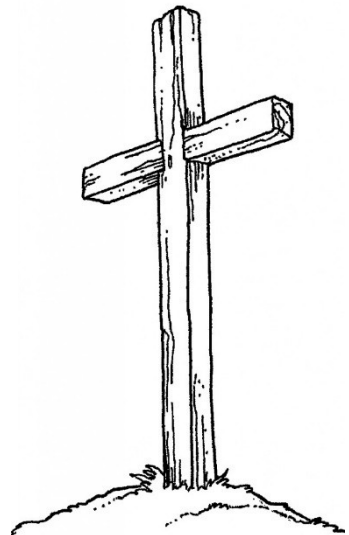
a bit about the Children of Israel getting ready to move into the land that God had promised them. ) If anyone put the blood on their door post, the angel of death would “pass over” them. If not, the first born of that family would die. The Pharaoh’s son died and then Pharaoh let God’s people go. The feast of Passover was then to be celebrated each year, for a very important reason. (2) Passover had a deeper message as well. The people of Israel needed to be liberated from physical slavery, but all people need to be freed from the slavery to sin. This feast was necessary for God’s people to remember God’s great salvation from slavery, and to be prepared for a greater salvation in the future. God’s people were prepared to understand and embrace the Savior, Jesus, the lamb of God, when Jesus came. John calls Jesus the Lamb of God (John 1:29).

Other words? [kingdom of God – 2, prepare - 4, cup - 3, bread - 2]

**Step 3:** Look for comparisons that explain **important elements in the passage.**

[Jesus makes two comparisons here. With the bread he said, “This is my body.” With the wine he said, “This cup poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.” The bread and wine represent Jesus’ body and blood. Here Jesus is making a clear connection to the Passover, where Jesus will represent the sacrificed lamb. These are symbols, nothing more.]

**Why** does Jesus use bread and wine to represent his body and his blood? [For us to understand and remember. He says, “Do this in remembrance of me.” Every time we celebrate what



*Jesus did for us, the new covenant that he made, we remember. This giving of himself reminds us of God's deep love for us. Also, it reminds us to look to his return.]*

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development**.

**What** is taking place at this Passover Meal? *[Jesus refers to a few things. Jesus wants to eat this Passover before **he suffers**. What is going to happen, we may wonder. Earlier in this chapter, in verse 2, the religious leaders plan to kill Jesus. In verses 3-6, Judas Iscariot (one of the twelve disciples) goes and offers to help betray him. This dinner is often referred to as the last supper, for Jesus is preparing to go to the cross.]*

**How** will Jesus make this new covenant? *[By giving himself for us, just as the lamb was sacrificed at the Passover meal, this new covenant would be made at the sacrifice was the "Lamb of God." Through his death we would be freed from the slavery of sin. We remember this by the bread and wine. (We use grape juice today.) ]*

**What** is the new covenant? *[The old covenant was a special relationship with the Jewish people. But when Jesus came, he wanted to make a way for all people to know and love God. So, Jesus gave his life in our place, freeing all of us from slavery to sin, and enabling those who take part in the new covenant with God so that we could receive eternal life.]*

**What** does "the kingdom of God" mean here? *[the "kingdom of God" means wherever the presence of God is and where he reigns. It is not a physical kingdom. It is wherever His people are, those who embrace the new covenant in spirit and in truth. Those who follow Him and are under His authority.]*

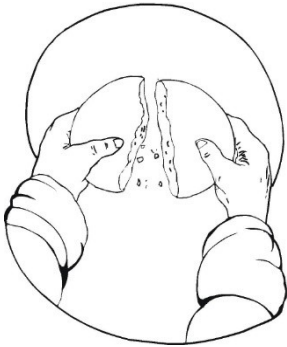
**Why** was there this special attention given to this preparation for Passover (vs. 7-13)? *[It shows the importance of this event. It*

would leave a strong impression on the disciples that something significant was happening.]

**Why** did Jesus say that it was his last time to participate in Passover? [It shows again the importance of this event, the Last Supper. It was his way of reminding them of what had been prophesied over the many years and what this feast had pointed to was about to be fulfilled. He had told them plainly that his reason for coming to the earth was to die for the salvation of all people.

He would no longer be participating in it because he would be going back to Heaven].

**Why** does Jesus prophesy about his suffering? [It was for his disciples, and for us, to clearly understand that the culmination of Jesus' ministry, and the salvation of the world, would happen on the cross. And to clarify also that he willingly gives himself. No one took his life. This is the sacrifice that seals the new covenant. It has always been God's plan. Verse 22 says "For the Son of man goes as it has been determined.]



**Step 5:** Look for the **main message** of the passage. Write in your notebook the title you chose. [The Supper of the New Covenant.]

### **Discussion Questions:**

Remember at the beginning of the lesson we talked about the means of grace? How can this simple act of communion be a means of grace? [There are several ways. Taking communion helps us to remember what Jesus has done for us. We examine our own hearts, seek reconciliation and practice forgiveness. But we also refer to communion as a "sacrament." That means that it is a holy act when we receive divine grace and spiritual nourishment, which strengthens our faith. An integral part of the

communion service is that not only do we look back at what Christ did for us, but we also look ahead. The ceremony says that we will take communion until He returns. We remember that he is coming back one day. Finally, it unites the community of believers. As we partake together, side by side with our brothers and sisters in Christ we are drawn together by unifying truths. That Jesus died for each of us. By partaking in communion, Christians affirm their faith, share in the body of Christ, and deepen their relationship with God and fellow believers. Typically, in the Wesleyan Church, the practice is to have communion once every month.]



The Last Supper is the final meal before Jesus went to the cross. The crucifixion is the moment that changed the world and brought salvation to all humanity. We celebrate and remember it through Holy communion.

**Activity:** What is your response to what Jesus has done for you? Write out a covenant between you and Jesus, your Savior, in your own words, showing your love and dedication. [this can be done now, or it can be brought the next week]

**Key Verse:** "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." — Luke 22:19b

Begin to write the verses that you've been memorizing in your notebook, so you have them in a list for easy access to refresh your memory.

**This week:**

- ✓ Ask your pastor "what does communion mean? Why do we do it? Who can take communion?"

- ✓ Start regularly taking part in communion. Remembering what Jesus did for you at so high a cost, and so receive the grace of the Lord.
- ✓ Read the next lesson and study the next passage Genesis 1, using the **Five Steps**.
- ✓ Keep praying and reading the Word every day.

*[Close meeting with prayer]*

## Lesson 6

# God, the Father, Our Creator

**Main Text:** Genesis 1 – 2:3

**Key Verse:** Genesis 1:27

**[Review:** *Ask if the disciple was able to talk to the pastor about their thoughts on communion. Ask if they started to make a list of the verses memorized? Ask if they read anything in the Bible this week that encouraged them.]*



### **Introduction:**

In this Bible study, we will learn more about who God is. This is an inexhaustible subject. But looking at the very first chapter in the Bible we will see how God acts, how He creates and how He speaks. We have already talked about God as the creator in the first lesson of the first book. He has always existed (not been created).

We are going to go a bit deeper. There are three big words that we are going to look at that help us understand more about who God is and what He is like. Have you heard of these? Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent. These are important words. The first means that God is all-powerful, "*Omni*" means all. And "*potent*" means something that is strong and powerful. A potent mixture or drink, is strong.] The second word, "Omniscient" means all-knowing. [We get the word science from the second part. That means knowledge.] The third word means God is present everywhere. [Omnipresent, is easy to pick out the two root words, 'all' and 'present'.] We discover these truths throughout the whole Bible but especially in the first chapter of the Bible. Let's study!



### **Conversation Questions:**

- What part of creation do you enjoy the most?
- Where do you feel closest to God?
- What in creation makes you stop in awe?

### **Bible Study:**

Pray and read the scripture together.

**The Five Steps:** [In this study we will look at steps, 1- 5.]

**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context. Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion?** [This is the first time we see this appear in the passage. It is a part of step 1.]

**Who** is mentioned? [God, the word used here in Hebrew is Elohim. It means the God above all gods. It speaks of his majesty

and sovereignty. Also mentioned is the Spirit of God, man, and woman, and “us”].

**When** did all this happen? *[In the beginning of it all! In seven days. God reveals how he created the world and the universe! This account is so important and different from any other human concept of the beginning or creation of all things.]*

*[We can also ask **who** wrote this and **who** is this written to and **when** was it written. Sometimes we can tell from the book or the verses themselves but in this case it doesn't say. The Bible recognizes that these first five books of the Bible, called the Law or the Pentateuch, were written by Moses. We also know that the Bible is written for us as well, because we need to know and understand what is written here. But initially, thousands of years ago, Genesis was first written so that the Children of Israel could know and understand who God was. So that they could know the origin of all things. There were many creation stories but none like this one!]*

Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**? Look to see if there are some verses, either at the beginning or the end of the passage, which give a general statement about what is to come in the rest of the passage or verses summarizing what just happened. There can be just one or the other, or both. *[In this case we have an introduction: Chapter 1:1- 2 prepares us for what happens in this chapter. God is the one who created all things. And then we see a conclusion also. Genesis 2:3b says that all the work had been done.]*

**Step 2** - Look for repeated words/things that reveal **an emphasized and important element in** the message. *[There are many repeated words in the chapter. It is okay if the disciple didn't catch them all.]*

[God – 35, man – 3, image – 2, "And God said... and it was so," -10, "And God saw that it was good," -6, very good -1, "evening and there was morning"- 6. The idea of dominion (over -10, subdue -1), every – 9, all – 2, everything - 4]



**What** is the message that we see from these repetitions? *[God creates without an opposition. There is only one God. God is good and creative.]* **What** do they reveal about God's omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence? *[God spoke and it was so. This displays His omnipotence. His omniscience is revealed when he says that **all** was "good", only He could know that. God's omnipresence shows that he was everywhere in creation.]*

**Step 3** - Look for **comparisons** that reveal and explain important elements in the message.

*[If they need help, ask, "Who was man created to be like, in verse 27?" God created man in His own image. As we reflect on being made in the image of God, in His likeness, what does that mean? Look at verses 26 and 28. What do you notice? 1) We see clearly that God puts man over creation. In that way we are in his **likeness**. God has dominion over the universe and puts man in dominion over the earth. 2) God speaks **to** man. Before verse 28 we read, "God said", but now we read, "God said to them..." We have a unique difference between humans and animals, which is language. 3) We are also relational. He makes man and women. Just as God is relational. 4) We are creative. Not in the same way but God has given us an ability to take something and change it.]*

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development**. *[Answers are in italics, but let students respond. Give them the verse to see if they can find the answer.]*

**Why does** the Bible begin with this passage about creation? **What** is the importance of this passage? *[To establish God as the supreme and sovereign Creator, demonstrating His authority over all existence. This is crucial to grounding an understanding of the relationship between God and humanity and to establishing God's purpose for creation. Genesis 1:1 ]*

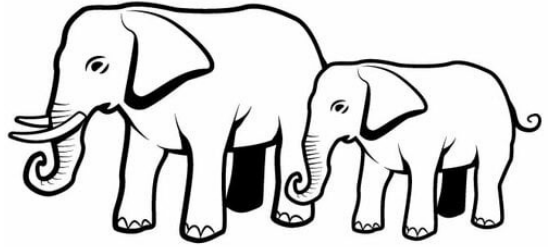
**How** did God create the world? *[God spoke. This demonstrated His creative power. He spoke, and creation took place, showing His omnipotence. Genesis 1:3 ]*

**How** does the way that God's created reveal about His wisdom and power? *[God's creative method reveals His wisdom in creating with order and purpose, and His power in bringing something into existence out of nothing, showing His omniscience and omnipotence. Gen 1:6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24. This is revealed through the repetitions. He brought forth everything in an important order. One day providing what the next day would need.]*

**Why** did God think it was important to evaluate His creation as "good"? **What** does this reveal about His character? *[God evaluated His creation as "good" to indicate that it conformed to His perfect plan and reflected His good nature. This reveals God's moral standard and loving-kindness. Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25 – "And God saw that it was good.]*

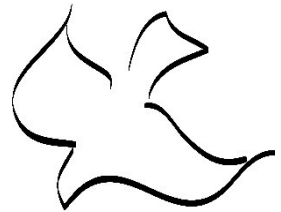
**What** does it mean to be created in God's image? **How** is this image reflected in humanity? *[We mentioned a few ways, but let's look at some other implications. Being created in the image of God means that human beings have dignity, morality, and the ability to relate to God. This image is reflected in humanity through characteristics such as reason, creativity, and moral skills. God created man in his own image. We should note that the image of God is not just in a man or a woman, but in each.]*

**Why** did God choose to create human beings in His image? **What** is the purpose behind this choice? [God created human beings in His image to establish a personal and intimate



relationship with them, allowing them to share His nature and participate in His divine plan. Genesis 1:27]

**What** does it mean for the **Spirit of God** to hover over the waters? Why is this important? [The Spirit of God hovering over the waters represents God's creative and life-giving work, indicating His omnipresence and vitality. This prepares us to understand the truth of the Trinity. The Spirit's presence is crucial to the origin of life and the world.]



Why is there plural language when God says, "Let **us** make man in our **image, after our likeness**"? [The plural language can be interpreted as an expression of the divine communion between the three persons of the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The implication of the Trinity in creation is understood in the light of theological development throughout Scripture. In John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John is referring to Jesus. All of this teaches us that God's nature is complex and united, made up of three coexisting persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) who are actively involved in creative work and relationship with humanity and are together the one God. It is especially clear in the New Testament. (Matt 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14)]

**Step 5:** Look for the **main message** of the passage.

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*creates all things.]*

In this lesson, we studied the very first chapter of the Bible, exploring not only God's majestic creation of the world, but also the revelation of the divine Trinity. This chapter reminds us of the greatness of our God, while also highlighting His intimate relationship with us, His creating us in His own image. We have seen how God is Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent, creating everything with purpose, wisdom, and love.

### **Activity:**

Prepare 7 cards OMNIPOTENCE, OMNIPRESENCE, OMNISCIENCE, GOD THE FATHER, JESUS CHRIST, HOLY SPIRIT. Mix the cards to ensure randomness and place them in a pile in the center of the table. Take turns choosing a card. If the card is one of the 3 attributes of God, share briefly how this is either evident in creation or in their own experience. If the card is a Trinity card, share briefly about the importance of their work in your life.

**Key Verse:** *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” — Gen 1:27*

Help your student memorize the verse. If possible, print out the verse in short segments and cut them up. Divide them up in 7 parts, like this: “So God created man”, “in his own image”, “in the image of God”, “ he created him;”, “male and female,” “he created them.” “Genesis 1:27” Begin in order, then take one away at a time.]

### **This week:**

- ✓ Set aside at least 10 to 15 minutes each morning or evening to sit in a quiet spot, if



possible, outside in creation, and take time to thank God for His creation. Use this time to pray.

- ✓ You can also read Genesis chapter 1 again and thank God for all creation. As you think about the great way God created you, ponder: How does this influence your life? How does this influence your worship? How does this influence how you serve him?
- ✓ Share your reflections with a friend or family member, encouraging them to also explore the wonder of the God in creation and in our lives.

*[Conclude the meeting singing the hymn, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God” by Martin Luther]*

## **A Time and a Reason to Sing – “A Mighty Fortress”**

A Mighty Fortress is Our God, was written by Martin Luther in the 1500's. It is well know, even though it is 500 years old. First written in German, It has been a source of strength and encouragement to the people of God for centuries. Here is a quote from a historian, “It was sung in the streets...



It was sung by poor Protestant emigrants on their way to exile, and by martyrs at their death...Gustavus Adolphus ordered it sung by his army before the battle of Leipzig in 1631” Let’s sing!

*1 A mighty fortress is our God,  
a bulwark never failing;  
our helper he, amid the flood  
of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe  
does seek to work us woe;*

*his craft and power are great,  
and armed with cruel hate,  
on earth is not his equal.*

*2 Did we in our own strength  
confide,*

*our striving would be losing,  
were not the right Man on our side,  
the Man of God's own choosing.  
You ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is he;  
Lord Sabaoth his name,  
from age to age the same;  
and he must win the battle.*

*3 And though this world, with  
devils filled,  
should threaten to undo us,  
we will not fear, for God has willed  
his truth to triumph through us.  
The prince of darkness grim,*

*we tremble not for him;  
his rage we can endure,  
for lo! his doom is sure;  
one little word shall fell him.*

*4 That Word above all earthly  
powers  
no thanks to them abideth;  
the Spirit and the gifts are ours  
through him who with us sideth.  
Let goods and kindred go,  
this mortal life also;  
the body they may kill:  
God's truth abideth still;  
his kingdom is forever!*

# Lesson 7

## Jesus Christ, the Son, Our Redeemer

**Main Text:** Philippians 2:5-11

**Key Verse:** Philippians 2:8

*[Review: Ask if the disciple was able to spend time in God's creation, thanking Him for all that he has made? How was that experience? Also ask how their week went. Where they able to pray, read their Bible and study?]*

### **Conversation Questions:**

- Who do you think Jesus is?
- What have you heard about Jesus?
- What does the word redeemer mean?
- How is Christ our Redeemer?

### **Introduction:**



In lesson 6 we learn about God, our Father. Today we will learn about Jesus, the Son, our Redeemer. As we have talked about, the Gospels are accounts written to tell us about Jesus, from his conception to his resurrection. The entire Old Testament points to the arrival of the Messiah, and the entire New Testament is an account of the life and work of Jesus and the beginning of the church. But in Philippians

2:5-11, we can gain deeper insight into the nature and mission of

Jesus Christ, highlighting his divinity, his humility, his obedience, and his exaltation. Let's see what we can discover about Jesus.

## **Bible Study:**

**The Five Steps:** [*In this study we will look at steps, 1- 5.*]

Pray and read the scripture together.

**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context. Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**?

**Who** wrote this letter? [*The apostle Paul.*] **Who** is mentioned in this passage? [*yourselves, Christ Jesus/Jesus/Lord, God, men*]

**Who** is this being written to? [*“Yourselves”, The Christians of the Philippian church.*]

**When** was this letter written? [*Philippians 1:7 while Paul is in prison. The probable date is A.D. 60, ten years after the formation of the Philippian church, which happened around A.D. 50 during Paul's second missionary journey. (Acts 16:11, 12) ]*

**Where?** [*Wrote to the Philippians while he was in prison. And Paul mentioned “ in heaven and on earth.”*]

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage.**

[*Ideas of humbling/servant- 2, form – 3, Jesus – 3, name referring to Jesus – 3, God – 3, Lord- 2.*]

**Step 3:** Look for comparisons that explain **important elements in the passage.**

What comparisons? [*Jesus became like a man, like a servant.*]

What contrasts? [*Although Jesus became like a servant and in the likeness of man, it also highlights the contrast to what he*



was in heaven. He emptied himself. He left behind his glory to become God incarnate. But that is not all. We see the contrast in how God the father acted towards Jesus. Jesus emptied himself, became like a servant but that is contrasted with the fact that Christ was highly exalted and bestowed upon him the name that is above every name.]

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development.**

**What** kind of mind are the Philippians to have and how does it become theirs? *[The mind of Christ belongs to them when they belong to Christ. Having the mind of Christ means that we become like him. This means that we will willingly submit to the Father, to His will and way.]*

**What** did Jesus do for us? **What** are the actions listed in the passage? *[He did not grasp equality with God. He was born in the likeness of man. Being found in human form, he humbled himself. He was obedient until death. He died on the cross.]*

**Why** did Jesus do this? *[Jesus willingly chose to do this to save us. He came to earth so that God could redeem us from our sinful condition.]*

**What** does it mean to be equal to God? *[The text reveals that Jesus is divine.]*

**How** did Jesus "empty himself" to become like men? *[Jesus emptied himself by renouncing the full manifestation of his divinity and by assuming a human form, becoming like a human being in his humanity.]*



**What** is the result of what Jesus did? *[Jesus has been exalted and given authority over everything. And all will bow to him, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. None other can save us, only Jesus. God made Jesus Lord of all and gave Him all authority. That is why “name” is repeated 3 times.]*

**Why** was this message important to the Philippians at this time? *[The immediate context of the letter to the Philippians suggests that there was some form of opposition or persecution that Christians in Philippi were facing, but it does not go into specific detail about the nature of these challenges. (1:27-30) There seemed to be some division among the brethren, for Paul calls the believers in Philippi to live in unity, unselfishly and humbly, with Jesus, the Son of God, and our Savior, as the main model. (2:2-5)]*

**Step 5:** Look for the **main message** of the passage.  

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*[Something like, Jesus became man to die and redeem us.]*

The text we have studied in this lesson highlights the characteristics of our Savior that made it possible for Him to become the sacrificial lamb who would die for us. This text reminds us of the wonderful work of redemption accomplished by Christ for the salvation for all people. Christ died for you and me! He paid the price that we could never pay. Yet, there is more. As we are to have this mind in us. That we, like Jesus, should unreservedly give ourselves to God. And that we can share with others what Christ has done for each of us.

**Activity:** To wrap up the meeting, Have the disciple build a timeline by locating key events about Jesus.

Have your disciple put these in order: This is the correct order.  
Jesus was in the beginning with the Father.  
Jesus becomes a man.

Jesus walks on the earth and is obedient to His Father.  
Jesus died on the cross.  
Jesus paid the price for our sins, giving us salvation.  
Jesus is exalted.  
All will confess Jesus as Lord.

**Key Verse:** *"He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even death on a cross."* — Philippians 2:8

*[Have your student write the verse and add an illustration to the verse. It could be a cross, a crown of thorns, a basin and towel to represent a servant, or something else.]*

***This week:***

- ✓ Ask God to give you the "mind of Christ". As you reflect on Jesus' obedience and his humility, ask God to give you that same attitude.
- ✓ Pray and ask God for opportunities for you to tell your friends and family about this wonderful Jesus. God will help you to do it, through the help of the Holy Spirit, who now dwells in you, as we will see in the next lesson!
- ✓ Next week we will be studying John 16:4-15. Take time to read it and if possible, do the simple **Five Steps**.

*[Conclude meeting with prayer]*

## Lesson 8

# The Holy Spirit and Holiness

**Main text:** John 16:4-15

**Key Verse:** John 16:7



**[Review:** Ask the disciple if there were key moments when they sensed they acted with the “mind of Christ”, by being humble and by being obedient to God’s will. If there are areas of struggle here, take time to pray together. Also ask how daily disciplines are going. Were they able to spend time daily with the Lord this past week? ]

**Introduction:** In John 16, Jesus speaks about the coming of the Holy Spirit and the impact he will have on the lives of believers. Our passage today offers a clear picture of the vital role of the Holy Spirit in our spiritual journey. Let's explore this text together to understand how the Holy Spirit desires to work in our lives.

### **Conversation Questions:**

- Who has been someone who has given you good advice, or counseled you? Share an example.
- Why do you think it is important to seek counsel and advice for the important questions in our lives?
- How do you feel about goodbyes?

Jesus knows how much we need help and guidance in our lives. We often need to understand what is right and what is wrong. We need guidance in how to live each moment so that we live according to God’s will. God has made it possible for us to remain in constant communion with Him by presence of the Holy Spirit.

## **Bible Study**

### **THE FIVE STEPS** [*In this study we will use steps, 1, 2, 4, 5.*]

Pray and read the scripture together.

**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context.

**Who** is talking and **to whom**? Look at John 13:1-2. [*Jesus is talking to his close friends, his disciples.*]

**When** is this happening? [*It was during the Passover feast, when Jesus was eating with his disciples. We also learn that it is right before Judas betrayed him and Jesus would soon go to the cross.*]

**Where** is this happening? [*John doesn't tell us, but we know from the other Gospels, they are in the upper room.*]

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage**.

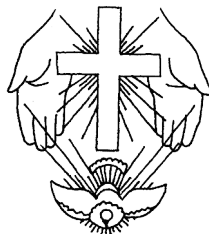
[*Different names for the Holy Spirit – Helper, the Holy Spirit, Spirit of Truth – 3, Father -2*]

*In this passage Jesus is talking about God, the Father, and The Holy Spirit. This is one of the strongest passages for understanding the Trinity.*

Other words: concerning - 4 , sin -2, righteousness -2 , judgment -2]

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development**.

**Where** does Jesus say he is going? [*He is going to His Father; he is going back to heaven. If Jesus is getting ready to leave his disciples, there is an important farewell message. Read John*



16:5. *Saying goodbye is always hard. Jesus wants to reassure his friends.]*

**What** is the disciples' reaction to the news that Jesus is going away (v. 6)? *[One of grief and sadness. But Jesus reassures them that they will not be alone. The Holy Spirit will be always with them.]*

**What** is the Spirit's role? *[1) He will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment. Discuss each of these. Why do we need conviction of sin? Because often we sin too easily. The Holy Spirit wants to warn us. John 16:9 says, "concerning sin, because they do not believe in me." This clearly teaches us that there is the sin of unbelief. Unbelief keeps us from knowing God and living as He has planned for us. Many did not believe who Jesus said he was, and many still do not believe. Next, we see conviction concerning righteousness. Jesus is the living example of righteousness. The disciples saw that lived out, but they would need a reminder of what that looked like when Jesus left them.*

*They would see righteousness now in a fresh way, through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will continue to teach them what true holiness was. The Holy*



*Spirit actively worked in the lives of the disciples, and he also wants to work in our lives. He desires to reveal how we should live, helping us to grow in righteousness, and become more like Jesus. Last it says, he will convict us concerning judgment. In verse 11, it says that the ruler of this world is judged. He will receive punishment for deceiving the world. We too will be judged. But if we follow the Holy Spirit and listen to him, we will be found righteous.*

*2)The Spirit will guide you into all truth. (v. 13) He will speak for the Father (vs. 13 & 14). He will faithfully reveal all that the*

*Father wants us to know as His children. All that He shows us will be true and good. This is unlike the devil, who is called the father of lies. (John 8:44)*

*3) He will declare things that will happen in the future (v. 13). This would refer particularly to the disciples. There would be times when they would know future events. Peter in Acts 10 was told about the three men sent from Cornelius. This especially applies to John who wrote the book of Revelation.*

*4)The Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus. (v. 15) The Holy Spirit, who is to come after Jesus, will reinforce all the Jesus said and did. Nothing that the Holy Spirit tells us or leads us to do will be contrary to what Jesus has said or done. (vs. 14 &15 ) The Holy Spirit points us to Jesus and reveals that he is the Christ, the Holy Son of God. He reminds us of his work on the cross, His words and teaching.]*

**What** did the Father do? *[The Father sent Jesus the Son (v. 5)]*

*[It is important to see here some realities about the Trinity. They are distinct and yet, they are one. They exalt and glorify each other, not themselves. The common purpose of the Triune God was to save the world.]*

**What** does it mean that the Holy Spirit is the Helper? *[He will guide us in the truth, help us, teach us, and comfort us. ]*

**Why** is it important that Jesus goes away? *[Jesus' physical was limited to wherever he was. He came to save us and show us the way to heaven. He finished that work on the cross. Now that was accomplished, it was the time for the Holy Spirit to come and apply these truths to the lives of all believers.]*



**What** are the implications of the Holy Spirit being with us all the time? *[He will*

*guide us in all truth, convict us of sin, and lead us as we walk with God. It reveals God's desire to have a personal relationship with us. He created us to be holy, which the Holy Spirit will enable us to be. With the Holy Spirit's presence, we have power to overcome temptation and sin. Our desire will grow to be nearer to God and know Him more.]*

**Step 5** – Based on the first 4 steps, fill in the blank “The **main message** of this passage is

\_\_\_\_\_.” [*The Holy Spirit will show us how to live.*]

The Holy Spirit's work is to sanctify believers. He enables us to live holy lives, to be obedient to God, and fills us with the love and grace of Christ. He transforms hearts, renews minds, and empowers believers to live in conformity to God's holy standards.

**Activity:** Game – The Holy Spirit is symbolized in the Bible. Draw a few of these and have your student guess them. 1) As a dove (In Matthew 3:16 when Jesus was baptized). 2) As wind (Acts 2:2). 3) As a flame (Acts 2:3). 4) As rivers of living water (John 7:37-38).

**Key verse:** *“It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away the Helper will not come to you.” — John 16:7*

**This week:**

- ✓ In your daily Bible reading and prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to increase awareness of God's presence in your daily life. This will lead to a greater dependence on God, and over time, contribute significantly to the process of sanctification, transforming your character into the likeness of Christ.
- ✓ Ask the Holy Spirit to convict you of sin so that you can be aware of it. Repent and ask His continued help to live a life pleasing to God.
- ✓ Take time this week to read and study Galatians 5:1, 13-26 in preparation for next week. Use the simple **Five Steps**.

*[Conclude the meeting in prayer]*

# Lesson 9

## Overcoming Sin

**Main Text:** Galatians 5:1, 13-26

**Key Verse:** Galatians 5:16

**[Review:** Last week, we studied about the Holy Spirit. What was a name that Jesus used to describe the Holy Spirit? (Comforter, Helper, Counselor). Did you sense the Holy Spirit's help this past week? Did you sense his conviction of any sin? Also ask the disciple how daily disciplines are going: prayer, Bible reading and study.]

**Introduction:** In the previous lesson we talked about the Holy Spirit and His role in helping us. One way is to convict us of sin. This conviction is truly a sign of His love for us because sin always has consequences. Sin always hurts us and others. And it draws us away from God and eventually, if not repented of, will bring spiritual death. But the good news is that the Holy Spirit wants to not just convict of sin, but to also help us to live free from sin. Let's see how He does that.

### **Conversation Questions:**

- Have you ever tried to earn God's favor?
- Do you think that there are worse sins than others?
- What are some sins that sometimes people justify?

### **Bible Study:**

**The Five Steps:** [ In this study we will look at steps, 1- 5.]

Pray and read the scripture together.

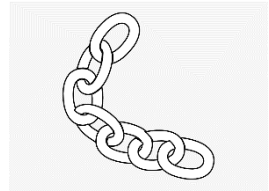
**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context. Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**?

**Who** is writing this letter and to whom? Look at Galatians 1:1- 2. [Paul is writing to the Galatians.]

Some of the necessary context is not in our passage. Let's look at a couple of verses to give us important information. Something happened after Paul had visited the Galatians. Read Galatians 1:6 What has happened? [They are following a different gospel than what Paul preached.]

What kind of gospel were they following? Read Galatians 3:2-3. [They were returning to the Mosaic law, or Jewish customs.

They thought that if they did the right things, they could be righteous. The term here is "the flesh", trying to be righteous by human means. The problem is that we can never be righteous by human means. The only way is through the Spirit in our lives. Only He can give us the power over sin and unrighteousness. But this relationship is based on faith and trust in Him, not on anything we can do. We are powerless, by ourselves, to be holy or righteous.]



Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**?

[Galatians 5:1 prepares us for the message of the chapter. We see that Christ has set us free. In this chapter Paul tells us what true freedom is.]

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage**. [freedom, free- 4, law - 3, Spirit - 7, flesh - 6, opposed/against - 3, desires - 4, walk/step/led -3]

[Ask your disciple what they notice from these words? These few words give us an overview of the whole



message of chapter 5. Let's look further to discover how these repetitions reveal the message of this chapter.]

**Step 3:** Look for comparisons that explain **important elements in the passage**. [This chapter has several contrasts. These are central to the message of this chapter. Ask your disciple if they found any contrasts. There are three contrasts.

First, in verse 1 there is the contrast between “freedom” that Christ brought and the “yoke of slavery”. Ask the disciple what freedom Christ brought us? [Salvation]. We experience salvation only by faith. This is contrasted by the “yoke of slavery”. The Galatians began by salvation by faith, but they are now seeking a righteousness by works.(Gal 3:3)

The second contrast is “law” and “freedom”. The Galatians needed to understand that they were freed from the requirements of the law. Jesus' work on the cross changed that. But just because they were freed from the demands of the law they couldn't ignore the essence of the law that says, we are to love our neighbor as ourself. (v. 14). Real freedom is that now they can do what is right. They can serve and love one another.

The “law” also appears in verse 23. It brings up an interesting understanding of the law. When you look at the fruit of the Spirit, there is no law against any of them. It is never illegal to be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled. But the laws are made to keep people from doing wrong.

The third contrast is between the two types of desires, of the flesh, and of the Spirit. These are against or opposed to one another. (v. 17) By their very nature they are contradictory. For example, sexual immorality is in conflict with love and self-control. Jealousy, envy and rage are opposed to kindness and gentleness. Divisiveness is against peace. These desires are opposed and battling against one another in our hearts.

Without the Holy Spirit, we will gratify the desires of the flesh. (v. 16) Only as we walk with the Spirit can we stand firm in this

battle. (5:1)]

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development.**

**What** is the yoke of slavery? *[Trying to be righteousness by ourselves, by human means]*

**How** were the Galatians using their freedom? *[They were using it as an opportunity of the flesh. Look at verses 15 & 26. They were attacking one another, they were conceited, provoking one another, and envying each other.]*

**How** does freedom in Christ act? *[Loving and serving one another. Those two characteristics only come from the Spirit's transforming presence.]*

**What** are the desires of the flesh? *[They are sinful desires that are based on our selfishness. These are listed in verses 19-21]*

**What** are the desires of the Spirit? *[The fruit that he wants to produce in our lives in verses 22-23.]*

**How** can we be freed from the desires of the flesh? *[The Spirit can free us from this control by His transformation. Nothing we can do will ever free us, only the Holy Spirit can make it possible. But we do have a part in this. Verse 24 says that we belong to Christ, so we crucify, put to death ourselves. This means that we willingly give all of who we are to God. Galatians 2:20-21 shares how Paul did this. The Holy Spirit made it possible for Paul and He can make it possible for us! The Holy Spirit give helps us overcome the desires of the flesh.]*

of

by



**How** are we to keep from being overcome sin? *[When we crucify our desires and surrender them to God, we walk with the Spirit and no longer gratify the desires of the flesh, He will help us to overcome sin. ( v. 16)]*

**Why** do we need to walk by the Spirit? [ *In order to have the ongoing power to overcome sin. (v.16) If not, we are walking by our own strength, and we will continue to be controlled by sin.*]

**What** happens when we walk in the Spirit? [ *We are **led**. (v.18). As He leads us, we are no longer under the curse and bondage of the law, nor under the guilt or the power of sin. Instead of being led by desires of the flesh we are led by the Holy Spirit.*]

**What** does this mean? [ *With the Holy Spirit living in us we have power to overcome sin and temptation. When we walk with Him, completely dependent on Him, listening, keeping step with Him we can experience true holiness, in all our desires, thoughts, words, and actions.*]

**Step 5:** Look for the **main message** of the passage.

---

*[Walking with the Spirit gives us freedom, or something similar.]*

Jesus not only forgave the guilt of sins on the cross, but also has provided a way for us to live free from the bondage of sin. He broke the power of sin. When his work on earth was done, He returned to heaven so that the Holy Spirit could come and live in us. When we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us with himself and walk with him, he will give us victory over sin and temptation.

Our passage shows us four ways to overcome sin. (vs. 16, 18 & 25):

1. To walk by the Spirit
2. To be led by the Spirit,
3. To live by the Spirit and
4. To keep step with the Spirit

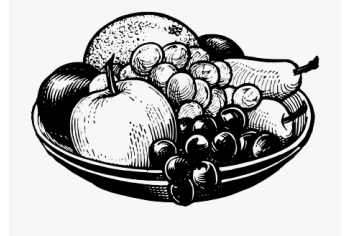
*[Pray together, offering your hearts and lives to the full leadership of the Holy Spirit. Below is a prayer of consecration by John Wesley ]*

O Lord, may nothing dwell in my soul  
But your pure love alone.

Till my every thought, word, and act be love.  
Yes Lord, may your love posses me whole;  
You're my joy, my treasure, my crown! Amen.

**Activity:** Unscramble these words: YOHL, VOLE, OYJ, CAPEE, SNEGOONDES, TRUIF

*Answers: Holy, love, joy, peace, goodness, and fruit.*



**Key Verse:** *“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” — Galatians 5:16*

**This week:**

- ✓ Reflect on the study from this week. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? About your thought life and/or the sexual temptations that tempt you? About habits you need to change to live a pure life? Ask the Holy Spirit's help. If unwilling, ask him to make you willing to change.
- ✓ Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with his presence so that you can display love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- ✓ Take time to study the next passage, Matthew 18:21-35, using the **Five Steps**.

*[Close the meeting in prayer]*

# Lesson 10

## Forgiveness and Repentance

**Main Text:** Matthew 18:21-35

**Key Verse:** Matthew 18:33

**Key Verse:** Matthew 18:33

**[Review:** *In the last lesson we studied the role of the Holy Spirit's work in us, as we walk with Him. We can know the Spirit's presence as we face every situation. Ask your disciple how their week went. Did they experience victory over sin and sinful desires? If they did, then praise the Lord together. If they continue to battle, take time to pray together.]*

### Introduction:



We live in a fallen world. We have been hurt by people and, if we are honest, we know that we have also hurt others. To walk in the ways of the Lord, and grow in our relationship with Him, we must recognize the need to ask for forgiveness of others and to also give forgiveness freely to others. There is no exception to this. Scripture is very clear on the necessity of forgiveness. If we don't forgive, God can't do His work in us. If we do not forgive, we are in great spiritual danger. We become imprisoned in bitterness and anger, and we can lose our fellowship with the Lord.

### Conversation Questions:

- Why do we need mirrors? (Let them respond) Can you tell me if my hair is messed up? *[We need mirrors because we cannot*

*see how we look, or if there is a smudge on my face or something in my teeth.]*

- Why is it easier to see other people's faults and not our own?
- Do you have an easy time forgiving others, or a hard time. Explain.

### **Bible Study:**

Let's read Matthew 18:21-35.

This is a powerful story. Can you tell it briefly in your own words?

**The Five Steps** [*In this study we will look at steps, 1,3,4 & 5.*]

Pray together.

**Step 1:** *Ask questions about the context.* Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**?

**Who** is telling this story? [*Jesus*] To **Whom** is he speaking? [*His disciples*]

**What** comes before this parable? [*Immediately before this story, Jesus teaches about what to do if someone sins against you. So, the message of the parable of the unforgiving servant does not mean it is okay for someone to sin against us, that we ignore the sin, when we forgive. Jesus teaches us how to deal with that in a clear objective manner*]

Is there an **Introduction** or a **conclusion**? [*There is an introduction in Peter's question. Peter's question is a very good question. In fact, Jesus thinks it is so important he answers with this story. This verse prepares us to understand the parable. Note that in Jesus's time it was believed by the Jews that forgiving someone 3 times was all one had to do. After the 4<sup>th</sup> time you didn't have to forgive that person anymore. We see here that Peter was being very generous, offering a greater amount, 7 times. But Jesus wants us to understand what grace and mercy really is. And how gracious and merciful God is.*]

*[There is also a conclusion. Verse 35 is the conclusion because it explains the meaning of the parable. It reveals clearly how we must act in our hearts towards others. If we don't forgive, we are putting ourselves in "prison". We choose to remain in bondage to whatever someone has done to us.]*

**Step 3:** Look for comparisons that explain **important elements in the passage**.

*[This is what a parable is. It compares something spiritual to something earthly. It is a story that teaches us a spiritual lesson. Jesus is comparing the Kingdom of heaven to a king on earth.(v. 23) We are compared to the servant. Do we accept forgiveness but are unwilling to forgive others? Our sins are compared to the amount of debt.]*

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development**.

**What** was the king like? *[He was just and powerful. The settling of the accounts was something objective, not arbitrary. The servant owed him a lot of money. But the king was also merciful. He took pity on the servant who was in such a huge debt. He forgave the servant the whole debt.]*

**What** was the servant like? *[He saw his complete inability to pay so begged the king to forgive him. But once he was forgiven, he went out and put someone who owed him money in prison. He was unmerciful.]*

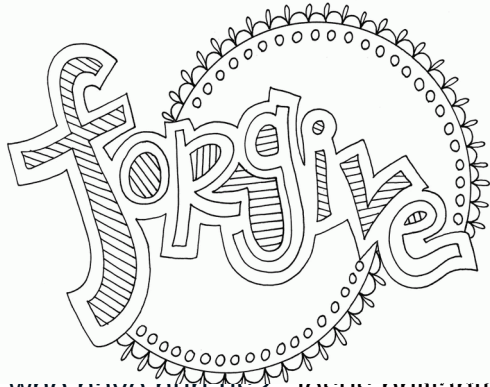
**What** amount was this servant forgiven? *[Ten thousand talents. It is equivalent to \$1,000,000 dollars.]*

**What** amount did the other servant owe? *[100 denarii. It is equivalent to a few dollars.]*

**Why** are we to forgive others? [*Because we have been forgiven such a huge debt by God! In our gratitude and in the sheer marvel of what He has forgiven us, we should freely forgive others.*(v. 33)]

How often are we to  
said 70 times 7. Which mea

**What** is the meaning of this  
*has forgiven us, we must a  
hearts. There is a clear way  
there are spiritual consequ*



**Conclusion:** Why is it that  
great mercy and forgiveness  
forgive the offences of those who have hurt us? Jesus primarily  
shows this in this simple story. Our response, when we really  
recognize the greatness of His mercy, is to forgive others.  
Forgiveness is the opportunity to let go of bitterness and anger  
and forgive from your heart. Only then you will know freedom and  
peace. When you forgive, you also are releasing that person to  
God, trusting that God will act according to his justice and grace.  
If you don't forgive then you build for yourself a "prison", where  
you are not free but forever connected to the wrong done to you.  
God can help us to forgive others and to be as gracious and  
merciful as He is.

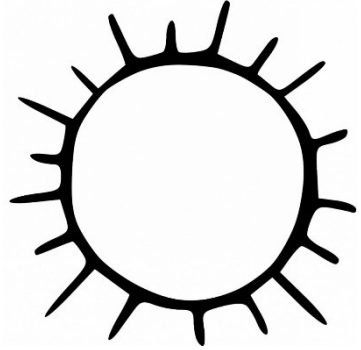
Take a good look into your heart. It is so much easier to see the  
wrongs of others but not our own. But as you walk with the Holy  
Spirit, He will guide you into all truth, enabling you to see what is  
true and then helping you to do what is right.

Do you have difficulty forgiving others? Is there someone in your  
life you don't want to forgive? Or someone who always makes  
you angry? Forgiving is not easy, but it is necessary. In the Lord's  
Prayer, it makes it very clear that if we do not forgive others, we

will not be forgiven. It is a sin not to forgive. By forgiving you are not saying that no wrong was done. Not at all. You are releasing them into God's hands and freeing yourself from all the anguish and the weight that unforgiveness causes. Don't wait to experience this freedom.

**Activity:** *If you are doing this lesson during the day have your disciple step to where they can feel the sun. If you only have an electric light, that can work too. If the student can feel the warmth of the sun ask, "Can you feel the warmth?" Or if you are using a light, ask "How does the light help us ?" (To see and read.) Now put a piece of paper between them and the sun or the light.*

*Ask, "Can you feel the heat?" Or "Can you see as well now?" They may say they don't feel the warmth anymore, or that the light is blocked. Ask them why? Then ask them if the sun changed or if the light got dimmer. Has their strength lessened? No, the heat and the light did not change. But the barrier caused a change to happen. That is what happens when we sin and don't forgive others. There is a barrier between us and God. But thankfully, the barrier is easy to remove. We can freely seek forgiveness and ask God to forgive us. It is that simple. God's love for us never changes. He is always there and always ready to forgive us. By repenting and asking for forgiveness all barriers are removed and we can feel His presence once again.*



**Key Verse:** *"And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?" — Matthew 18:33*

*[Write the verse on a piece of paper in 5 sections, each containing a phrase from the verse and one with the reference. "And should not you" "have had mercy" "on your fellow servant," "as I had mercy on you?" "Matthew 18:33" Put the verse*

*together and then take sections out. Then mix them all up and have the disciple put them in order.]*

***This week:***

- ✓ *Come honestly before God and ask for the Spirit to reveal any lack of forgiveness towards anyone. Surrender it, admit that it is wrong and then ask forgiveness. Pray for the person with whom you have had a broken relationship, during the week.*
- ✓ *Take time to study Romans 5:1-5 this week, using the **Five Steps**.*

*[Close the meeting in prayer]*

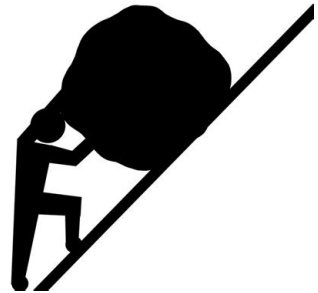
# Lesson 11

## Suffering and Difficulties

**Main Text:** Romans 5: 1-5

**Key Verse:** Romans 5:3a

**[Review:** *In the last lesson we talked about forgiveness. Ask the disciple if they remember how many times we are to forgive others? Seventy times seven. The story showed us that since we have been forgiven by God so graciously, a debt we could never pay, we also must forgive others. If we don't, we are in a real sense putting ourselves in "prison" as our hearts are not free, but full of fear, bitterness and anger. Were they able to forgive more freely this week? Were they able to have some quality time with the Lord this past week?]*



### **Introduction:**

Today we are going to look at the role of suffering in our lives, what it can reveal and what it can produce. In lesson 9 we learned that we are to walk with the Holy Spirit. This is such a huge help as He will help us to endure all the trials that come. We can only endure them and allow them to be used by God if we have totally surrendered ourselves to God.

### **Conversation Questions:**

- Have you experienced a lot of physical pain? How did that affect you?
- Have you experienced emotional pain? How did that affect you?
- Did you wonder why God permitted that to happen to you?

This is often our question. We wonder how a good God could have allowed it. Today we will see how God can use the suffering we face and how we can experience His presence during every difficulty.

### **Bible Study:**

Pray and read the scripture together.

### **The Five Steps:**

*[ In this study we will look at steps 1,2,4,5].*

**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context. Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**?

**Who** wrote the book of Romans and to whom? Read Romans 1:1 and 1:7 *[Paul is writing to the believers in Rome.]*

The word “Therefore” shows that these few verses are a summary or conclusion to what has been talked about in the previous chapters. Those chapters deal with faith. Knowing this, we understand better what Paul is affirming here, that we are justified by faith. He says, “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Do you remember what being “justified” means? *[It is how we are made right with God. It is not by our works, or anything that we can possibly do. We are made right with God only by faith, believing in Jesus, who died for all the world.]*

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage.**

*[Faith - 2, through -3, rejoice - 2, produces – 3, hope - 3.]*

Let’s look at the two times “faith” is mentioned. What does “faith” make possible in our lives? *[ Salvation and obtained this grace. Romans 3:24 repeats this idea of grace.]*

*[The word “through” is an important preposition in that it tells us how something happened. It is only **through** Jesus, or by the means of what Jesus did, that we have access to God’s grace. Also, **through** the Holy Spirit, or because of Him, we can know and experience the love of God.]*

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development**.

**How** do we have justification? *[Through our Lord Jesus Christ]*

**What** else do we have through him? *[We have obtained access into this grace. The marvelous place of favor and love. If we have His favor and love then it changes how we see everything, even our suffering.]*

**How** can react to our sufferings? *[By rejoicing. Even though we have peace with God that does not mean that we will have peace with man or in the world. The world is a sinful place so bad things will happen to all of us. When we follow Christ that may bring further suffering and create difficulties in our family, with our friends in our work or school. So, we not only shouldn’t be surprised that we will experience suffering. In fact, we should be ready.]*

**What** can suffering produce? List the possible outcomes. *[Produces endurance, character, and hope.]*

Suffering doesn’t naturally produce these things. Suffering can produce the opposite. **What** can suffering cause in us if we don’t have God’s grace in our lives? *[Suffering can make us quit, make us hopeless, make us weak, make us angry.]*

Only with God’s grace and help can difficulties produce good things. Difficulties often reveal the condition of our heart. How we react reveals what is in our hearts. We can blame others, be impatient, be angry, or be jealous. But that is not how God wants us to respond.

**How** does suffering produce endurance? *[With the Holy Spirit's help, we can withstand hard things because He is with us to comfort and help.]*

**How** does endurance produce character? *[When something is put to the test you will find out the quality of that thing. As we endure, we become aware of our own shortcomings. Difficulties test our hearts and our faith to see what we are made of.]*

**How** does character produce hope? *[As we endure trials we look to God with hope, and not despair, knowing that He will use the difficulty for our good. But we also have hope for our future home, in heaven, free from such trials and sufferings, to which someday we will go.]*

**What** does it mean that hope does not put us to shame? *[The hope we have in God and our future will not disappoint or deceive us.]*

**Why** can we endure with hope? *[Because God's love is shed abroad in our hearts! We experience this through the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.]*

**Step 5:** Look for the **main message** of the passage. After thinking about all the discoveries you made from the previous steps, use your own words to complete this sentence: "the main message of this passage is \_\_\_\_\_" [We can rejoice in Suffering through the aid of the Holy Spirit, or something similar]

When we entrust ourselves to God and His complete Lordship in our lives than that changes our perspective and the outcome of our suffering. Suffering can produce in us qualities that we would not have any other way.

The huge blessing that we receive in our suffering is God's love poured out into our hearts, by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The phrase "poured out" really means richly lavished on us. This is

what holiness is, when we are totally surrendered to the lordship of Jesus Christ and receive the Holy Spirit and God's love flows through us, unhindered in any way.

We tend to think that we can be joyful only if we are not suffering or in pain. Our passage tells us otherwise. The presence of the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies us, also sustains us and therefore we can rejoice.

## **Activity**

*[Plan to serve tea or coffee after the lesson. When you are preparing it, say that we have learned that suffering and difficulties can bring something better in our lives. Just like this hot water mixed with tea (or coffee). If we imagine that hot water represents difficulties and suffering, what happens when I pour it over this tea (or coffee)? It becomes something better. Tea turns into a wonderful drink. This is how God can turn our suffering and difficulties into something that can even bless others. When we trust Him, he can work through us and in us to make something beneficial to our lives and others.]*



**Key Verse:** “More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings.” — Romans 5:3a

### ***This week:***

- ✓ *This week when you experience any type of trial, difficulty, persecution, turn to Christ immediately and surrender to Him your attitudes and your reactions. Ask Him to fill you with His love and presence during whatever it is, to respond in a way that would be honoring to Him.*

- ✓ Take some time to study I Peter 3:14-17, for next week, using the **Five Steps**.

*[Close the meeting in prayer]*

## Lesson 12

# Your Story of Hope

**Main Text:** I Peter 3:14-17

**Key Verse:** . 1 Peter 3:15b.

**[Review:** *This week did you experience any type of trial, difficulty, persecution? Did you turn to Christ to change your attitudes and your reactions? How were your daily disciplines? Did you study the passage for today?]*

### **Introduction:**

Today we will talk about how to share your testimony, the story of how the Lord changed your life. Learning how to do this is important, both for your faith and the faith of others. We will learn some practical techniques to share your testimony in a simple and effective way—but before that, let's look at what the Bible has to teach us on the subject.



### **Conversation Questions:**

- How do you feel about sharing your story of coming to Christ? Have you shared it with anyone before? How did you feel about it?
- What hope do you have in your life? Where does that hope come from?
- What is a story from your life you like to tell people? What about that story makes it so special?

## **Bible Study:**

Read the passage, I Peter 3:13-16. Pray together.

## **The Five Steps:**

*[ In this study we will look at steps, 1- 5.]*

**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context. Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**? **Who** is speaking? *[Peter is speaking to Christians scattered all over the world. 1 Peter 1:1]*

**Who** is mentioned in these 4 verses? *[You (the believers), Christ as Lord, everyone, those who speak maliciously]*

**Where** is this happening? *[Throughout the world at that time.]*

**When?** *[In the first century]*

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage**.

*[but - 3 , fear/frightened – 3, harm/suffer -2, right/good 4, give an answer/give a reason 2 times]*

*[The repetition of the word “but” 3 times in such a short passage is significant. We will look more at this in step 3. Ask what the repeated words that they discovered reveal show. These repetitions show that when we live for Christ, we need to be ready to face hardships, to be prepared in our response, both spiritually and verbally.]*

**Step 3:** Look for comparisons that explain **important elements in the passage**. There are a few contrasts.

*[If you suffer, you are blessed (v. 14) This is an unusual way to*

look at it!

Your hearts won't fear what they fear because Christ is your Lord (v. 14)

Your answer will be gentle and respectful, different from malicious talk. (v. 15)

There is a clear contrast between suffering for doing evil and suffering for doing good. (v. 17). Our choice is the latter! It is very different.]

**Step 4**: Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development**.

**What** is the "reason for the hope that is in you"? (vs. 15)

[In the context of this passage, our hope is Christ. Use this question with your disciple, allowing the disciple to answer based on personal experience. Another way to phrase the question could be: "What has God done in your life that brought you hope?"]

**How** should we respond, or give an answer when asked for the reason? (vs. 16) [Be prepared. And respond with gentleness, respect, and with a good conscience.]

[The way we present our message is very important. Not only should we be prepared to share about the hope we have in Christ, but we should also be prepared to do it properly. With gentleness and with respect. This means we don't belittle the other person or talk rudely. Also with a good conscience: share honestly, without exaggerating to make it more 'exciting, or to bring glory to yourself.']

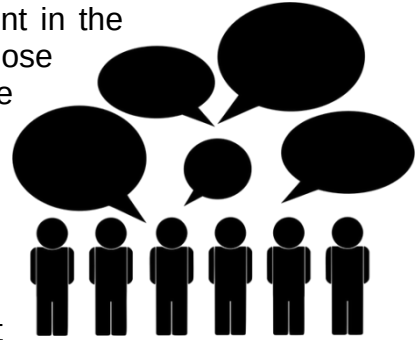
**Step 5**: Look for the **main message** of the passage.

\_\_\_\_\_ [Be ready to share your hope.]

**Practical Application**:

Let's be ready to share our story of hope! How can we do that?

A testimony can be a powerful instrument in the hand of the Lord to reach the hearts of those who are searching for hope. You can share how powerful and loving the Lord is, from your own experience. Share how he worked in your life, and gave you hope.



Your testimony doesn't have to be long, only 3-5 minutes long. This is one way you can be respectful of others but not talking so much about yourself and taking too much time.

Here are the A B Cs of a testimony:

**A**ppropriate, **B**rief and **C**entered on **C**hrist.

Make it *appropriate* for your audience, *brief* so that you focus on the highlights and *Christ-centered*, because He is the reason we have a story to tell.

Divide your testimony into 3 parts:

- 20% should be sharing about who you were before you met Jesus.
- 60% of should be about your experience of coming to Christ. What brought you to Jesus? How did it happen? What did he change? (Use specific and clear details, like what you felt, what you thought, where you were, what you did, etc.)



- 20% of the story should be about what happened after Christ met you, what is different now? How are you different? How is your life different? What is your relationship with Christ like?

Be as specific as you can, using clear and relevant details, both so that your testimony feels more “alive,” and so that it will be easier for others to relate to.

Tips

1) Stay away from general statements like, "I had many doubts." It is more interesting to mention what the doubt was. "I wondered if

God could really help me, because I felt so alone."

2) Look for a verse that is relevant to your story and include that.

Practice it! If you can, write it down as well.

*[Discipler: Ask questions to help generate ideas for the disciple if they are having difficulty. Questions like: when did you feel that your life needed to change? Why did you feel that? When did you start hearing about Jesus? How did it happen? Things like that. If it seems appropriate, help the disciple write it down. They can write out an outline and/or specific details. Then let them practice. Be encouraging! They will probably be nervous.]*

**Key Verse:** "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." —1 Peter 3:15b.

***This week:***

- ✓ Be sure to continue with the other things you've learned! Reading the Bible and praying are practices that should become habits, and don't forget to continue seeking to guard yourself against temptation, too.
- ✓ But for this week, you have a new challenge! Practice your story of hope. Pray for an open door to share this. It would be wonderful to find someone in the church to share this with first so that you will feel more comfortable.
- ✓ Use the **Five Steps** and study Matthew 28:18-20.

*[Close the meeting with prayer]*

## Lesson 13

# Discipleship – the mission of the Church

**Main Text:** Matthew 28:18-20

**Key Verse:** Matthew 28:19

***[Review:** In the previous lesson you learned about the importance of sharing your story of hope with others. Were you able to share it with someone? Share what happened. Were you able to practice your spiritual disciplines?]*



**Introduction:** In today's lesson we will study the Great Commission. The Great Commission gives a clear mission to all of us, to go and make disciples of all nations. Let's explore this text to understand what this means for each believer .

### **Conversation Questions:**

- Has someone taught you a valuable skill?
- What do you think it means to make disciples?
- How has discipleship made a difference in your life?
- Do you think you could disciple someone else?

### **Bible study:**

Let's read Matthew 28:18-20. *[Pray together]*

## **The Five Steps**

*[ In this study we will look at steps, 1,2,4, 5.]*

**Step 1:** Ask questions about the context. Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**?

**Who** gave this command? *[Jesus gave the command. (v.18)]*

**Who** did he give the command to? *[To his disciples]*

**When** was this command given to the disciples? *[This was given to the disciples after the resurrection of Jesus, just before he returned to heaven. (Matthew 28:16-20)]*

**Step 2:** Look for repeating words or things **emphasized or important elements in the passage**.

*[We have some all-inclusive words that are important: All -2 , everything- 1, always – 1.*

*Look at where the word “all” first appears. “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” This is a powerful statement.*

*Jesus has all authority so he can make this command. Going to “all nations” means the universal nature of this call. It is for all people. Then teaching them to obey all of his teachings. That is the message and hope we take. And finally, he will be with us “always, every second of every day forever!”*

**Step 4:** Ask questions from the text to understand the **message and its development**.

**What** does the word, “disciples” mean? *[As Jesus is speaking to those who have followed him, walked with him, heard him speak. Now Jesus commands them to go and make other disciples.]*

**How** are they to make disciples? *[By baptizing and teaching them. The word "baptizing" means a public profession of faith in Jesus and entry into the community of believers. The phrase "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" underscores the Trinity. (v. 19) "Teaching them to obey all that I have commanded," emphasizes the ongoing need to teach and guide new disciples, not just convert them initially. Ongoing teaching is vital for spiritual growth and maturity in the faith. (v.20)*

**Why** did Jesus give this mission to the church? *[Jesus gave this mission so that all nations would come to know and follow him, receiving salvation and becoming children of God.*

**How** can the church fulfill this mission in practice? *[The church can accomplish this by telling others about Jesus and when people respond then they teach about what Jesus said and did. In the discipleship process, after becoming believers is to experience baptism, and then teaching all that Jesus commanded. This can begin by testifying about your own experience of salvation, as you learned to do in the last lesson.]*



**What** is the importance of baptism in this context? *[Baptism is important because it is a public profession of faith in Jesus, as well as declaring that there has been a spiritual rebirth, representing entry into the community of believers.]*

**Step 5:** *"The main message of this passage is \_\_\_\_\_" [Jesus' plan to reach the world]*

These words of Jesus are not a suggestion, but a command from Jesus to the church. We must be active in going out into the world, sharing the Gospel, encouraging the baptizing of new believers, and teaching them to live according to Christ's teachings.

**Activity:**

In Acts 1:8, *Jesus tells the disciples that they will receive power when the Holy Spirit descends upon them and will be his witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.* This passage expands the geographic scope of the mission, indicating a natural progression: beginning locally (Jerusalem), expanding regionally (Judea and Samaria), and reaching the entire world (to the ends of the earth). In today's activity, you will assemble your Mission Map. Draw the following outline and complete by writing names of places that you think fall within the regional expansion of the mission, as described in Acts. Use place names that reflect your reality. For example: Instead of Jerusalem, write the name of your city, instead of Judea, write the name of your region, instead of Samaria, write names of cities in regions neighboring yours, instead of ends of the earth, think of places that cross borders that you or your church can reach.

**Key Verse:** *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."* — Matthew 28:19

Help your student memorize the verse with hand gestures. Feel free to be creative. Here are some suggestions.

"Therefore, Go" – point away from you.

"Make" – pretend to make something.

"Disciples" – pretend to put your arm on the shoulders of another.

"All nations" – arms opening.

"Baptizing them" – pantomiming pouring water.

"In the name of the Father" - point to heaven

"The son" – Open arms like on the cross.

“And The Holy Spirit” – make a dove sign with your hands.

***This week:***

This week's challenge will be threefold:

- ✓ Part 1 – **Pray for the Nations:** Take time daily to pray for the nations of the world. Use online resources to find out more about countries where the gospel is little known. Pray that Christ's message will reach people in every corner of the earth.
- ✓ Part 2 – **Encourage Others:** Be actively involved in the life of your church or community. Encourage and support those who engage in missionary activities. Be a motivator for those who are striving to fulfill the Great Commission.
- ✓ Part 3 - **Further Study:** Take time to study other Bible passages that talk about missions and evangelism, such as Acts 1:8, Romans 10:14-15, and 2 Timothy 4:5. Ponder how these passages complement the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20.

*[Conclude meeting with a hymn, Amazing Grace]*

# **A Time and a Reason to Sing – “Amazing Grace”**

Amazing Grace was a hymn that profoundly affected England and America. It dealt with the global moral battle to rid the world of slavery. It also was a hymn that was a powerful testimony, as the writer John Newton had been the captain of a slave ship before being saved. In 1754 he gave up the slave trade and, in together with William Wilberforce and John Wesley, they fought ardently against slavery. Together they won the battle against slavery which was banned in the British Empire, Amazing Grace indeed.

*1 Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)  
that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
was blind, but now I see.*

*2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
and grace my fears relieved;  
how precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed!*

*3 Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come:  
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.*

*4 The Lord has promised good to me,  
his word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be  
as long as life endures.*

*5 The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,  
the sun forbear to shine;  
but God, who called me here below,  
will be forever mine.*





# OUR HISTORY AND BELIEFS



Discipler



*He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. Psalm 1:3*

# Book 3

## Our History and Beliefs

### Our History

- 1.** Wesley, England, and USA p. 2
- 2.** The Wesleyan Church up to the Present p. 6

### Our Theology

- 3.** The Trinity and Humankind p. 15
- 4.** Salvation and Sanctification p. 19
- 5.** Last Things and the Church p. 25

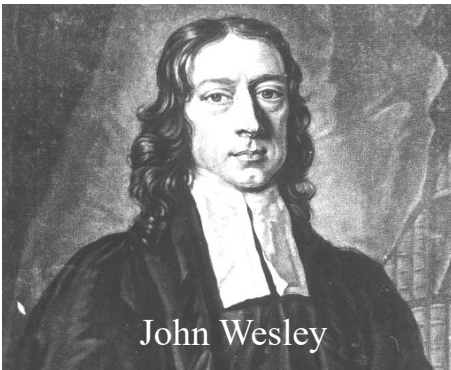
### Our Commitments as Members

- 6.** God, You and the Family p. 29
- 7.** The Church and Others p. 32
- 8.** Suggestions for the Christian Life p. 35
- 9.** Membership and Leadership p. 37
- 10.** Baptism p. 41

# **Lesson Number 1- History I: From John Wesley to the Wesleyan Methodist Church**

## **The Rise of the Wesleyan Movement**

1. The Wesleyan movement was centered on scriptural truth with respect to the doctrine and experience of holiness, which declares that reconciliation in Christ provides not only the regeneration of sinners, but also the entire sanctification of believers. The revival of these biblical truths with respect to Christian perfection and biblical holiness occurred under the leadership of John Wesley in the 18th century, and continues, in various forms, to the present.



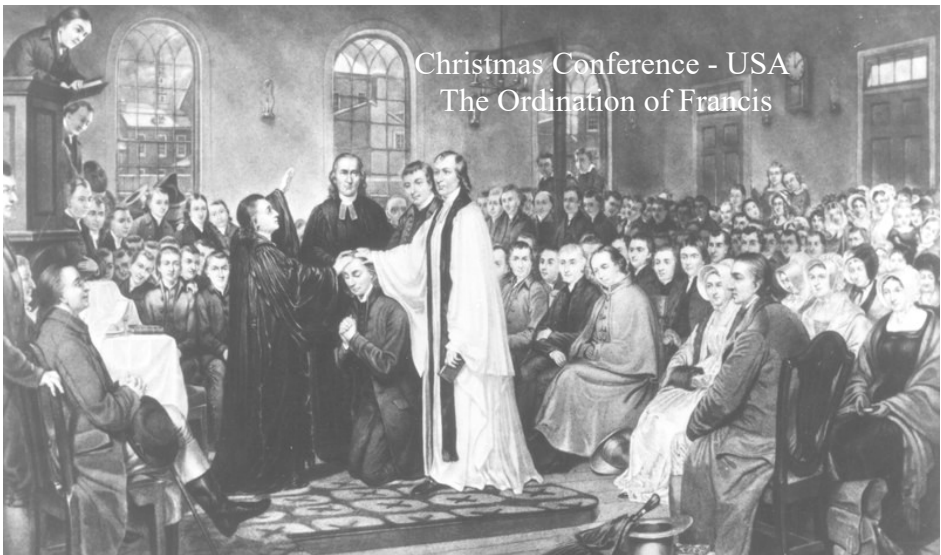
2. Having been raised in a godly home, John Wesley devoted himself to seeking God from an early age. While studying at Oxford University, along with his brother Charles and a few other serious-thinking students, he methodically sought holiness through systematic Bible study, prayer, good works, intensive self-examination, and selflessness. The group earned the

nicknames "Holiness Club" and "Methodists", but Wesley did not yet have the certainty of salvation. Having graduated from Oxford and having been ordained as a minister in the state church, he intensified his pursuit of peace through legalism and self-discipline. The change occurred in a prayer meeting at Aldersgate Street in London on May 24, 1738, when he perceived the way of faith and felt his heart "strangely warmed" by the new birth. As he went on to the experience of entire sanctification, he shared with others his testimony and teaching, and a spiritual awakening spread throughout the British Isles, reaching America.

3. It was not Wesley's purpose to start a new church denomination, but the awakening caused the spontaneous birth of the "societies" that became the Methodist movement. Near the end of 1739, eight or ten people came to Wesley in London who were deeply convicted of their sin and sincerely longing for redemption. Two or three more people came the next day asking that Wesley spend some time with them

in prayer and advise them how to flee from the coming wrath, which weighed on their hearts continuously. It was planned that one day a week, on Thursday night, they would meet. For these people, and as many as wished to join them (for their numbers increased daily), Wesley gave counsel that he judged most necessary for them, and always concluded their meeting with prayer. The Commitments of Membership found in this Handbook (260-268) represent, in revised form, those counsels that Wesley gave to members of societies to enable them to test the sincerity of their purpose and to guide them in holy living.

4. The movement spread to America by the emigration of Methodists, who, in 1766, began organizing "classes" and "societies" of the Methodists in the American colonies. In December 1784, the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized at the Christmas Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. The new church grew miraculously, especially on the coast, and quickly became one of the largest religious forces in the new nation.



## **B. The Wesleyan Methodist Connection Organization**

6. John Wesley and America's first Methodist leaders were adamant in denouncing human slavery. But with the invention of the

cotton-gin, the economic advantages of slavery involved many ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in slave ownership. When a group of ministers from the New England Conference, led by Orange Scott, began to fight once again for the abolition of slavery, bishops and others in the church sought to silence them so that the peace of the church would not be disturbed.

7. The inner conviction of truth provoked a confrontation with the ecclesiastical authority and led to a series of departures from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The states of Michigan, New England and New York were the first states to begin to leave. Important leaders who did not agree with slavery published the newspaper: The True Wesleyan. In the first issue was listed all of the reasons for leaving the church, and summoned others to do the same. In the formation of a new church there would be no episcopal government or slavery. As a result a new organization, called "Wesleyan Methodist Connection", emerged in 1843. A "connection" of local churches organized in annual assemblies which avoided the episcopal government and provided equal ministerial and lay representation in all its governing bodies. Moral and social reforms were strongly emphasized, prohibiting the possession of slaves and all involvement with intoxicating beverages.

8. The organizing convention of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America was held in Utica, New York, from May 31 to June 7, 1843.

## **C. The Revival of the Wesleyan Experience**

11. The Wesleyan Methodist Connection saw the conclusion of the crusade against slavery in the Civil War. Later, many felt that there was no more reason for the Connection to continue as such and returned to the larger Methodist church. Others found, as expressed by the



12. At its first General Conference in 1844, the Connection adopted an article of religion on "sanctification", becoming the first denomination to do so. But doctrine and experience suffered neglect and decline among all branches of Methodism in the mid-19th century. To renew them, God raised a revival of holiness promoted by literature, evangelistic meetings, and camps that stretched through all of Methodism and crossed over to other denominations. The revival induced the establishment of several new denominations emphasizing holiness, to the renewal and new orientation of others.

13. This spiritual revival, rigorously promoted by a group of itinerant evangelists, soon established the doctrine of holiness as the most important doctrine of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, which once emphasized social and political reforms.

### **Questions to Deepen Understanding**

1. *What happened at a prayer meeting on Aldersgate Street in the city of London that initiated a spiritual awakening in the British Isles and spread to America? What was the date of this important event? (I.2)* (Wesley did not yet have the certainty of salvation. On May 24, 1738, he felt his heart "strangely warmed" by the new birth. As he went on to the experience of entire sanctification, he shared with others his testimony and teaching, and a spiritual awakening spread throughout the British Isles, reaching America.)
2. *It was not Wesley's purpose to begin a new church denomination, but the awakening led to the spontaneous beginning of the "societies". Describe what these groups were like. (I.3)* (One day a week believers would meet. At first Wesley himself would give counsel that he judged most necessary for them. These societies offered the members guidance in holy living.)
3. *What was the date of the beginning of the Methodist church in America, the Christmas Conference in the city of Baltimore and how was the progress of the new church? (I.4)* (December 1784, the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized. The new church grew

quickly and became one of the largest religious forces in the new nation.)

4. *What was the date and reason for the organization of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection? (I.6&7)* (The Wesleyan Methodist Connection", emerged in 1843 because many were against slavery, which the Methodist Church allowed.)
5. *At the first Connection conference, they included an article of religion that served and still serves as a distinction of the Wesleyan movement. What was it? (I.12)* (The article of religion was on "sanctification".)
6. *This doctrine caused a spiritual revival in North America. Who promoted it? (I.13)* (This spiritual revival was promoted by a group of itinerant evangelists.)

## **Lesson Number 2 History II: The Wesleyan Church up to Present**

### **D. The Development of the Wesleyan Methodist Church**

16. The revival that spread through the Wesleyan Methodist Connection introduced a new emphasis on evangelism. The need for an organized effort to extend the work and provide for the needs of new converts caused the gradual development of a more formal organization as a church rather than a connection. In 1891, the name was changed to *the Wesleyan Methodist Connection (or Church) of America*, and the denomination went from merely having a leadership to produce publications (editor and publisher) to elect a general superintendent. Other departmental executives were gradually added. In 1947, the name changed to *The Wesleyan Methodist Church of America*, and a central supervisory board was established with the general conference president as the full-time leader and the Board of Directors as the central and coordinating board.

## **E. The Formation and Development of the Pilgrim Holiness Church**

**23.** The Pilgrim Holiness Church came into being because of the revival of scriptural holiness that spread throughout the various denominations in America in the last half of the 19th century, the same awakening that guided in a new direction the energies of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection from social and political reform to holiness evangelism (12-13). The awakening crystallized in the establishment of many non-denominational and interdenominational unions and holiness associations and independent churches. Near the end of the 19th century many of such precious faith began to draw together in the unity of the Spirit.

**35.** It remained an indelible characteristic of the original purpose of the founders of the Pilgrim Holiness Church such as Martin Wells Knapp and Seth Rees to promote world evangelism with an emphasis on holiness. Missionary work was carried on in many places,

## **F. The Formation of the Wesleyan Church**

**50.** The merger between the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America was proposed several times and was brought to a vote by the General Conferences of the two groups in 1958 and 1959, not passing the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference by just one vote. In 1962, the General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church expressed renewed interest in joining with the Wesleyan Methodist Church. In 1963, the General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church acted similarly, instructing its Committee on Church



Union to carry out its work with due diligence. On June 15, 1966, the Thirty-Second General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church adopted the Basis for Merger and Constitution, and subsequently the annual conferences and local churches ratified the action. On June 16, 1966, the Twenty-fifth International Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church also adopted The Basis for Merger and Constitution. Thus, the

formation of the *Wesleyan Church* was authorized. The General Board of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the General Board of Administration of the Wesleyan Methodist Church cooperated in planning the uniting General Conference, and in preparing the new *Manual* for its consideration. On June 26, 1968, the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America came together, forming the Wesleyan Church.

## **G. The Development of the Church Outside of North America**

As the Wesleyan Church developed in North America, the mission to reach all people with the Gospel did not grow cold. At the end of the 18th century both branches of what would become the Wesleyan Church engaged in missions. Although the two branches would become one church, they operated distinctive areas in missions and followed different procedures. This joining together would make for a stronger, more effective vision.

The Pilgrim Holiness Church reached their first mission field, Peru, South America, in 1892. They continued to send out missionaries and spread the Gospel, especially to the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa, and the Philippines.

In the Pilgrim Holiness Church, when the missionaries sensed a call, the church recognized this call and then the missionary chose the field where they felt led. They raised their own support among the churches and then they were sent out. The emphasis for mission work in the Pilgrim Wesleyan Church was on outreach. This including church planting, revivals, camp meetings and Bible Institutes.

Latin America is a good example of the work of the Pilgrim Holiness branch of the Wesleyan Church. The church in this area grew gradually until 1996 (after merging to become the Wesleyan Church). The Wesleyan church was in nine countries in Central and South America (Latin America). The Lord began to move through the hearts of the national leaders during a Latin American (LA) missions conference hosted in Puerto Rico. The call was strong to begin to reach the unreached countries in LA. In 2011 during the LA missions conference, it was announced by the Global Partners area director, Rick West, that

through their efforts, the Wesleyan church was now in 24 countries in LA. From nine countries in 1996 to twenty-four in only fifteen years. This growth occurred because the missionary activity of LA missionaries, not North American (NA) missionaries. This revealed the strength of the work in LA and God's anointing. Latin America has become a regional conference and is working to become a general conference, equal to NA, the Caribbean, and the Philippians.

The Wesleyan Methodist branch began their mission outreach two years after the Pilgrim Holiness branch had reached Peru. Their first work, in 1894, began across the globe in Chhattisgarh, India. Their desire to obey the great commission also led them to the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa. But it also led them to further points east like Japan, New Guinea, Australia, Nepal, and Taiwan.

The Wesleyan Methodist branch of the Wesleyan Church organized itself differently. Funding was centralized and the NA church raised funds and sent out missionaries with a salary. The denomination chose where the missionary would go. The emphasis was on a wholistic ministry including schools, hospitals, and other social ministries.

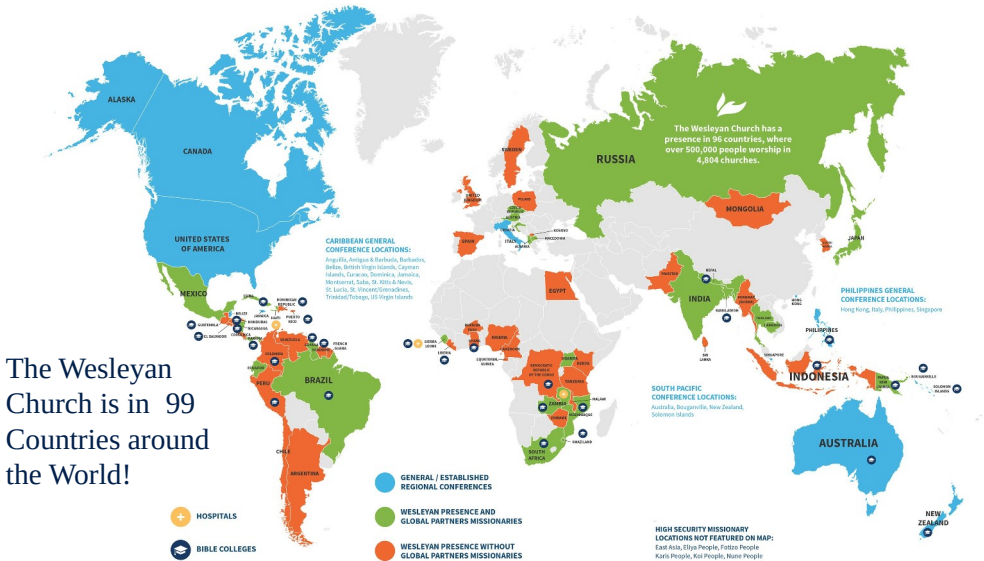
Perhaps the best example of the ministry of the Wesleyan Methodist branch would be Sierra Leone. Begun in the early 1900's, church planting was extremely difficult, but the faithfulness of the laborers eventually began to bear fruit. Besides churches, schools and a hospital were also established.

In 2008, the president, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, made a special video for our international conference to greet and thank our church for our important work and investment in the people and country of Sierra Leone. He received his education in a Wesleyan school and is currently a member of a Wesleyan church.

In 2014-2016 with the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa, particularly in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, the Wesleyan hospital, the schools, and churches were instrumental in the containment and eradication of the disease. World Hope Intl came along side and offered needed aid in this crisis.

As of 2020 there are 228 churches in Sierra Leone, with a membership of over 30,000 people. There are 128 elementary schools and 27 high schools, with a combined total of almost 50,000 students. There are two Bible Institutes and a hospital with 110 beds.

The Wesleyan Church is and has always been a missionary church. And quite often, the Lord has used missions to revive and refocus the efforts of the church to obey the Great Commission. The Wesleyan Church is currently in ninety-nine countries of the 204 around the world. God continues to use the people of the Wesleyan Church to spread the Gospel and the message of holiness. All can be a part of God’s work to reach those who are in prison, who sit in darkness.



## H. The Wesleyan Church in South Asia

For more than 125 years, God has been blessing and developing His church in South Asia. The Wesleyan Church started in the great country of India, as was mentioned in Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh in 1894. Churches were planted, a leprosy hospital built, and seven schools were established. Missionary doctor, Rebecca Bibbee served for decades in the leprosy hospital, caring for the least and the disadvantaged of India. There are currently 15 churches and over 1,200 members in Chhattisgarh. In 1904 the Wesleyan Church arrived in Gujarat and Vape became the headquarters. Rev. Linus Justin, a third generation Wesleyan, is the current leader. His grandfather helped to establish and develop the church in Gujarat. The work includes 25 churches, two elementary Schools and a high school.

After this early beginning in South Asia, it was 90 years before new works began for the Wesleyan Church in this part of the world. In 1991 Rev. Jang Bahadur in Pakistan began to seek partnership with the Wesleyan church, because of growing liberalism in denomination he was a part of. In 1994 the Wesleyan Church of Pakistan was made official with Rev. Eric Bahadur (son of Jang) in leadership, the only actor to found a Wesleyan Church! The fifty churches and elementary schools are under the national leadership of Rev. Patrick Bahadur.

As a young man Cedric Rodrigo of Sri Lanka sensed a call to serve the Lord. In 1993, after studying in Australia he returned to Sri Lanka, to start a Wesleyan work. The church has experienced a steady growth with a strong emphasis on discipleship and preparation of leaders. There are strong leaders in the eight Wesleyan churches, with more being prepared. Today the work is poised for greater growth as the churches are in key areas around Sri Lanka (west, north and south), in both principal languages (Sinhala and Tamil).

In 1996 a group of churches in Northeast India united with the Wesleyan Church, because of growing doctrinal differences they were experiencing with the Methodist Church of India. The Wesleyan Methodist Church of East India (WMCEI) was born. WMCEI came with strong churches from two states, Manipur and Mizoram. These churches had strong mission work in other nearby states. In 2012 WMCEI became two districts – WMCEI and Mizoram. Both districts

are strong, with each over 2,000 members. Mizoram has a close relationship with Myanmar because of the many Mizo (the same tribal group) in the country. Manipur, made up of the Hmar tribe, are active in reaching into neighboring states to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the late 1990's, through the reading of John Wesley's writings about revival and holiness, there was a fresh awakening of the Spirit in Myanmar. This group of believers resolved to find a like-minded church to join. In 1997, this Methodist group of churches joined with the Wesleyan Church. Presently, in Myanmar, there is a clinic as well as over 50 churches, with over 3,000 people in attendance each Sunday. In 2021, the military coup resulted in religious persecution and violence against the church. Many families have lost everything. Some fled across the border into Mizoram and are being aided by our Wesleyan churches there. The church in Myanmar has remained strong during all the persecution, a testimony to God's grace.

Through a contact from WMCEI, a new work began in Nepal in 1999. The Jesus film was instrumental in planting even more churches. Today there are more than 20 churches. The leader, Rev. Obed Yongen, was ordained in 2023. He is presently our only ordained minister in Nepal. Their vision is to reach all of Nepal and are working on a training center which will serve to prepare workers for the churches being planted.

2012 was a year of new ventures in India. First, Dr. Jo Anne Lyon visited as the North American General Superintendent and challenged the church to begin a work in Mumbai. The Gujarat district took up that challenge and sent a church planter, Prashant Shinde, to Mumbai, Maharashtra to plant our first church in this new state. We now have 3 churches in Mumbai and other preaching points.

Second, in the same state of Maharashtra, Kentwood Community Church, from Grand Rapids, Michigan, decided to plant a church in Nagpur, "Zero Mile", the geographical center of India. Brother Anup Salve became the worship pastor. Today Rev. Anup is leading this vibrant growing church as the head pastor.

Then, Global Partners sent a young Indian man with a calling from the Lord to begin a work in Karnataka, India. Rev. Vivek Saiman went with

his wife, Darla, and family to start a work in his hometown of Badami. With a strong emphasis on discipleship and preparing leaders there are now two churches planted and another pioneer church begun. There is a pre-school ministry to the community with plans to begin elementary school.

2012 was also a key year for a connection with Bangladesh. In this year a group of independent churches joined with the Wesleyan Church. The leader Rev. John Bose had been tragically killed in a car accident but had expressed to his brothers before his death, a desire to make a connection with the Wesleyan church. Joshe Boshe honored his brother's wishes. Also connected with the death of his brother, came the motivation for a much-needed ministry in Bangladesh. When Rev. John Boshe died, along with his wife, they left a young son, Joshua, who was now an orphan. First a boy's home was established and later a girl's home. This approach of discovering and meeting social needs has resulted in rapid church growth, with more than 50 churches and over 2,000 members. The present leader in Bangladesh is Rev. George Bose, John's brother.

*(Below, first South Asia Leader's Conference – 2022, Sri Lanka)*



### **Questions to Deepen Understanding**

1. *What was the date of the merger of the Wesleyan Methodist and the Pilgrim Holiness churches? (On June 26, 1968, the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America came together, forming the Wesleyan Church.)*
2. *In the development of the Wesleyan Church outside of North America, what was the first mission field of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and what year was it established? (The Pilgrim Holiness Church reached their first mission field, Peru, South America, in 1892.)*
3. *Which was the first mission field for the Wesleyan Methodist Church and in what year was it founded? (The Wesleyan Methodist branch began their mission outreach in 1894, began in Chhattisgarh, India.)*
4. *What was the country where the reading of John Wesley's writings led them to have a revival and ultimately join the Wesleyan Church? ( In 1997, a Methodist group of churches in Myanmar joined with the Wesleyan Church because of the readings of John Wesley.)*
5. *What are the two fields where the church has had 3 generations of leaders involved in the development and expansion of the church? (Gujarat, India.)*
6. *In how many countries around the world is the Wesleyan Church? (99)*
7. *Which country came to the Wesleyan Church because of a car accident, opening the door for the church and two orphanages? (Bangladesh)*
8. *What are the 2 states in northeast India where we have a strong work? (Manipur and Mizoram)*

## **Lesson No 3 Articles of Religion I: The Trinity and Humankind**

### **Article II. Articles of Religion**

#### ***I. Faith in the Holy Trinity***

**210.** We believe in the one living and true God, both holy and loving, eternal, unlimited in power, wisdom and goodness, the Creator and Preserver of all things. Within this unity there are three persons of one essential nature, power and eternity — the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**Gen. 1:1; 17:1; Ex. 3:13-15; 33:20; Deut. 6:4; Ps. 90:2; Isa. 40:28-29; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; John 1:1-2; 4:24; 16:13; 17:3; Acts 5:3-4; 17:24-25; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; Eph. 2:18; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:16-17; 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 1:8; 1 John 5:20.**

#### ***II. The Father***

**212.** We believe the Father is the Source of all that exists, whether of matter or spirit. With the Son and the Holy Spirit, He made man, male and female, in His image. By intention He relates to people as Father, thereby forever declaring His goodwill toward them. In love, He both seeks and receives penitent sinners.

**Ps. 68:5; Isa. 64:8; Matt. 7:11; John 3:17; Rom. 8:15; 1 Peter 1:17.**

#### ***III. The Son of God***

**214.** We believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, truly God and truly man. He died on the cross and was buried, to be a sacrifice both for original sin and for all human transgressions, and to reconcile us to God. Christ rose bodily from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and there intercedes for us at the Father's right hand until He returns to judge all humanity at the last day.

**Ps. 16:8-10; Matt. 1:21, 23; 11:27; 16:28; 27:62-66; 28:5-9, 16-17; Mark 10:45; 15; 16:6-7; Luke 1:27, 31, 35; 24:4-8, 23; John 1:1,**

14, 18; 3:16-17; 20:26-29; 21; Acts 1:2-3; 2:24-31; 4:12; 10:40; Rom. 5:10, 18; 8:34; 14:9; 1 Cor. 15:3-8, 14; 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Gal. 1:4; 2:20; 4:4-5; Eph. 5:2; 1 Tim. 1:15; Heb 2:17; 7:27; 9:14, 28; 10:12; 13:20; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 2:2; 4:14.

#### ***IV. The Holy Spirit***

**216.** We believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is of the same essential nature, majesty, and glory, as the Father and the Son, truly and eternally God. He is the Administrator of grace to all and is particularly the effective Agent in conviction for sin, in regeneration, in sanctification, and in glorification. He is ever present, assuring, preserving, guiding, and enabling the believer.

Job 33:4; Matt. 28:19; John 4:24; 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:13-15; Acts 5:3-4; Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6.

#### ***V. The Sufficiency and Full Authority of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation***

**218.** We believe that the books of the Old and New Testaments constitute the Holy Scriptures. They are the inspired and infallibly written Word of God, fully inerrant in their original manuscripts and superior to all human authority and have been transmitted to the present without corruption of any essential doctrine. We believe that they contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man or woman that it should be believed as an article of faith or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. Both in the Old and New Testaments life is offered ultimately through Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and humanity. The New Testament teaches Christians how to fulfill the moral principles of the Old Testament, calling for loving obedience to God made possible by the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit.

Ps. 19:7; Matt. 5:17-19; 22:37-40; Luke 24:27, 44; John 1:45; 5:46; 17:17; Acts 17:2, 11; Rom. 1:2; 15:4, 8; 16:26; 2 Cor. 1:20; Gal. 1:8; Eph. 2:15-16; 1 Tim. 2:5; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12; 10:1; 11:39; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:23; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 John 2:3-7; Rev. 22:18-19.

## ***VI. God's Purpose for Humanity***

**220.** We believe that the two great commandments which require us to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and our neighbors as ourselves, summarize the divine law as it is revealed in the Scriptures. They are the perfect measure and norm of human duty, both for the ordering and directing of families and nations, and all other social bodies, and for individual acts, by which we are required to acknowledge God as our only Supreme Ruler, and all persons as created by Him, equal in all natural rights. Therefore, all persons should so order all their individual, social and political acts as to give to God entire and absolute obedience, and to assure to all the enjoyment of every natural right, as well as to promote the fulfillment of each in the possession and exercise of such rights.

**Lev. 19:18, 34; Deut. 1:16-17; Job 31:13-14; Jer. 21:12; 22:3; Micah 6:8; Matt. 5:44-48; 7:12; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:27-29, 35; John 13:34-35; Acts 10:34-35; 17:26; Rom. 12:9; 13:1, 7-8, 10; Gal. 5:14; 6:10; Titus 3:1; James 2:8; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 John 2:5; 4:12-13; 2 John 6.**

## ***VII. Marriage and the Family***

**222.** We believe that every person is created in the image of God, that human sexuality reflects that image in terms of intimate love, communication, fellowship, subordination of the self to the larger whole, and fulfillment. God's Word makes use of the marriage relationship as the supreme metaphor for His relationship with His covenant people and for revealing the truth that that relationship is of one God with one people. Therefore, God's plan for human sexuality is that it is to be expressed only in a monogamous lifelong relationship between one man and one woman within the framework of marriage. This is the only relationship which is divinely designed for the birth and rearing of children and is a covenant union made in the sight of God, taking priority over every other human relationship.

**Gen. 1:27-28; 2:18, 20, 23-24; Isa. 54:4-8; 62:5b; Jer. 3:14; Ezek. 16:3ff.; Hosea 2; Mal. 2:14; Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 10:9; John 2:1-2, 11; 1 Cor. 9:5; Eph. 5:23-32; 1 Tim. 5:14; Heb. 13:4; Rev. 19:7-8.**

## ***VIII. The Free Will of Man***

**224.** We believe that humanity's creation in the image of God included ability to choose between right and wrong. Thus, individuals were made morally responsible for their choices. But since the fall of Adam, people are unable in their own strength to do what is right. This is due to original sin, which is not simply following Adam's example, but rather the corruption of the nature of each mortal and is reproduced naturally in Adam's descendants. Because of it, humans are very far gone from original righteousness, and by nature are continually inclined to evil. They cannot of themselves even call upon God or exercise faith for salvation. But through Jesus Christ the prevenient grace of God makes possible what humans in self-effort cannot do. It is bestowed freely upon all, enabling all who will to turn and be saved.

**Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Deut. 30:19; Josh. 24:15; 1 Kings 20:40; Ps. 51:5;  
Isa. 64:6; Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:21-23; Luke 16:15; John 7:17; Rom.  
3:10-12; 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:22; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 2:5; Titus 3:5;  
Heb. 11:6; Rev. 22:17.**

### **Questions to Deepen Understanding**

- 1.** *What are the three parts of the Trinity and how can we understand that they are part of the one true God? (cp. 210)* (The three parts are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We believe in the one living and true. Within this unity there are three persons of one essential nature, power and eternity — the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.)
- 2.** *We believe that the Bible is inspired and infallible. What does that mean? For example, in relation to the birth of Christ who was born of the Virgin Mary, what that true or this just a myth or symbolism? (cp. 214 and 218)* (We believe that the Scriptures are true and completely reliable. This means that we believe what the Gospels say about Jesus. He is the only begotten Son of God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, truly God and truly man.)

3. *The Bible is without error but is it possible that the Bible does not contain all the things necessary for salvation and a holy life?(cp. 218)* (We believe that they contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatever is not there, is not to be required or necessary to salvation.)
4. *What is God's purpose for man? (cp.220)* (We believe that the two great commandments which require us to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and our neighbors as ourselves, summarize the divine law as it is revealed in the Scriptures.)
5. *Since we have free will, we alone can exercise faith for salvation.*  
 True  False *Justify your answer. (cp.224)* (We believe that humanity's creation in the image of God included ability to choose between right and wrong But because humans are very far gone from original righteousness, they cannot of themselves even call upon God or exercise faith for salvation. But through Jesus Christ the prevenient grace of God makes possible what humans in self-effort cannot do.)
6. *Does God's grace reach some people or all people? Explain.* (God's grace makes it possible for all people to turn and be saved.)

## **Lesson No 4- Articles of Religion II: Salvation and Sanctification**

### ***IX. Atonement***

**226.** We believe that Christ's offering of himself, once and for all, through His sufferings and meritorious death on the cross, provides the perfect redemption and atonement for the sins of the whole world, both original and actual. There is no other ground of salvation from sin but that alone. This atonement is sufficient for every individual of Adam's race. It is unconditionally effective in the salvation of those mentally incompetent from birth, of those converted persons who have become mentally incompetent, and of children under the age of accountability. But it is effective for the salvation of those who reach the age of accountability only when they repent and exercise faith in Christ.

**Isa. 52:13—53:12; Luke 24:46-47; John 3:16; Acts 3:18; 4:12; Rom. 3:20, 24-26; 5:8-11, 13, 18-20; 7:7; 8:34; 1 Cor. 6:11; 15:22; Gal. 2:16; 3:2-3; Eph. 1:7; 2:13, 16; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 7:23-27; 9:11-15, 24-28; 10:14; 1 John 2:2; 4:10.**

## ***X. Repentance and Faith***

**228** . We believe that for men and women to appropriate what God's prevenient grace has made possible, they must voluntarily respond in repentance and faith. The ability comes from God, but the act is the individual's.

Repentance is prompted by the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit. It involves a willful change of mind that renounces sin and longs for righteousness, a godly sorrow for and a confession of past sins, proper restitution for wrongdoings, and a resolution to reform the life. Repentance is the precondition for saving faith, and without it saving faith is impossible. Faith, in turn, is the only condition of salvation. It begins in the agreement of the mind and the consent of the will to the truth of the gospel, but issues in a complete reliance by the whole person in the saving ability of Jesus Christ and a complete trusting of oneself to Him as Savior and Lord. Saving faith is expressed in a public acknowledgment of His Lordship and an identification with His Church.

**Mark 1:15; Luke 5:32; 13:3; 24:47; John 3:16; 17:20; 20:31; Acts 5:31; 10:43; 11:18; 16:31; 20:21; 26:20; Rom. 1:16; 2:4; 10:8-10, 17; Gal. 3:26; Eph. 2:8; 4:4-6; Phil. 3:9; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:25; Heb. 11:6; 12:2; 1 Peter 1:9; 2 Peter 3:9.**

## ***XI. Justification and Regeneration***

**230.** We believe that when one repents of personal sin and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, that at the same moment that person is justified, regenerated, adopted into the family of God, and assured of personal salvation through the witness of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that justification is the judicial act of God whereby a person is accounted righteous, granted full pardon of all sin, delivered from guilt, completely released from the penalty of sins committed, by the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by faith alone, not on the basis of works.

We believe that regeneration, or the new birth, is that work of the Holy Spirit whereby, when one truly repents and believes, one's moral nature is given a distinctively spiritual life with the capacity for love and obedience. This new life is received by faith in Jesus Christ, it enables the pardoned sinner to serve God with the will and affections of the heart, and by it the regenerate are delivered from the power of sin which reigns over all the unregenerate.

We believe that adoption is the act of God by which the justified and regenerated believer becomes a partaker of all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a child of God.

**Justification:** Hab. 2:4; Acts 13:38-39; 15:11; 16:31; Rom. 1:17; 3:28; 4:2-5; 5:1-2; Gal. 3:6-14; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil 3:9; Heb. 10:38.

**Regeneration:** John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-8; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:26; Eph. 2:5, 10, 19; 4:24; Col. 3:10; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3-4; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:1.

**Adoption:** Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5, 7; Eph. 1:5.

**Witness of the Spirit:** Rom. 8:16-17; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 2:3; 3:14, 18-

## ***XII. Good Works***

**232.** We believe that although good works cannot save us from our sins or from God's judgment, they are the fruit of faith and follow after regeneration. Therefore, they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and by them a living faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

**Matt. 5:16; 7:16-20; John 15:8; Rom 3:20; 4:2, 4, 6; Gal. 2:16; 5:6; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 1:11; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 1:3; Titus 2:14; 3:5; James 2:18, 22; 1 Peter 2:9, 12.**

## ***XIII. Sin after Regeneration***

**234.** We believe that after we have experienced regeneration, it is possible to fall into sin, for in this life there is no such height or strength of holiness from which it is impossible to fall. But by the grace of God one who has fallen into sin may by true repentance and faith find forgiveness and restoration.

**Mal. 3:7; Matt. 18:21-22; John 15:4-6; 1 Tim. 4:1, 16; Heb. 10:35-39; 1 John 1:9; 2:1, 24-25.**

#### ***XIV. Sanctification: Initial, Progressive, Whole***

**236.** We believe that sanctification is that work of the Holy Spirit by which the child of God is separated from sin for God and is able to love God with all his heart and to walk in all His holy commandments without reprimand. Sanctification begins at the moment of justification and regeneration. From that moment there is a gradual or progressive sanctification just as the believer walks with God and grows daily in grace and in a more perfect obedience to God. This prepares for the crisis of complete sanctification that takes place instantly when the believer presents himself as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, by faith in Jesus Christ, being affected by baptism with the Holy Spirit who purifies the heart of all inborn sin. The crisis of complete sanctification perfects the believer in love and empowers him for effective service. This is followed by a lifetime growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The life of holiness continues by faith in the sanctifying blood of Christ and is evident by loving obedience to God's revealed will.

**Gen. 17:1; Deut. 30:6; Ps. 130:8; Isa. 6:1-6; Ezek. 36:25-29; Matt. 5:8, 48; Luke 1:74-75; 3:16-17; 24:49; John 17:1-26; Acts 1:4-5, 8; 2:1-4; 15:8-9; 26:18; Rom. 8:3-4; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:13, 24; 5:25-27; 1 Thess. 3:10, 12-13; 4:3, 7-8; 5:23-24; 2 Thess. 2:13; Titus 2:11-14; Heb. 10:14; 12:14; 13:12; James 3:17-18; 4:8; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 1:7, 9; 3:8-9; 4:17-18; Jude 24.**

#### ***XV. The Gifts of the Spirit***

**238.** We believe that the Gift of the Spirit is the Holy Spirit himself, and He is to be desired more than the gifts of the Spirit which He in His wise counsel bestows upon individual members of the Church to enable them properly to fulfill their function as members of the body of Christ. The gifts of the Spirit, although not always identifiable with natural abilities, function through them for the edification of the whole Church. These gifts are to be exercised in love under the administration of the Lord of the Church, not through human volition. The relative value

of the gifts of the Spirit is to be tested by their usefulness in the Church and not by the ecstasy produced in the ones receiving them.

**Luke 11:13; 24:49; Acts 1:4; 2:38-39; 8:19-20; 10:45; 11:17; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:1—14:40; Eph. 4:7-8, 11-16; Heb. 2:4; 13:20-21; 1 Peter 4:8-11.**

## **Questions to Deepen Understanding**

- 1. If we have not been saved by our works, how are we saved, then? (cp. 230) ( It is only by the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by faith alone, not based on works.)*
- 2. What would be the evidence of a living faith, according to the Bible? (cp. 232) (We believe that although good works cannot save us from our sins or from God's judgment, they are the fruit of faith. A living faith is known just as a tree is discerned, by its fruit.)*
- 3. Is there a moment in a believer's life when the Holy Spirit cleanses him of all inborn sin? (cp. 236) (Yes) When does this happen? (This occurs at the crisis of complete sanctification, when the believer presents himself as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, by faith in Jesus Christ. When the baptism with the Holy Spirit comes, who purifies the heart of all inborn sin. This is followed by a lifetime growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord.)*
- 4. What are the two things that happen in the believer when the Holy Spirit sanctifies entirely? (cp.236) (The crisis of complete sanctification perfects the believer in love and empowers him for effective service.)*
- 5. Does the Wesleyan Church believe in spiritual gifts? (cp. 238) (Yes)*
- 6. What is the value of these gifts to the church? What is the purpose of these gifts for the church? (The gifts are given to enable each person to properly to fulfill their function as members of the body of Christ. The gifts function for the edification of the Church. End this lesson with a hymn on holiness – I Surrender All)*



The hymn, “I Surrender All” was written by a Methodist Evangelist, Judson W. Van DeVenter. It comes from the rich heritage of the holiness revivals at the end of the 1800 century. It is a theological statement of our total need of the Lord and His faithfulness to fill us with His Spirit. Here is DeVenter’s own testimony of how the Lord inspired him to right the hymn.

*“For some time, I had struggled between developing my talents in the field of art and going into full-time evangelistic work. At last the pivotal hour of my life came, and I surrendered all. A new day was ushered into my life. I became an evangelist and discovered down deep in my soul a talent hitherto unknown to me. God had hidden a song in my heart, and touching a tender chord, He caused me to sing.”*

1. All to Jesus I surrender,  
All to Him I freely give;  
I will ever love and trust Him,  
In His presence daily live.

Refrain:

I surrender all, I surrender all;  
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,  
I surrender all.

2. All to Jesus I surrender,  
Make me, Savior, wholly Thine;  
Let me feel Thy Holy Spirit,  
Truly know that Thou art mine. [Refrain]

3. All to Jesus I surrender,  
Lord, I give myself to Thee;  
Fill me with Thy love and power,  
Let Thy blessing fall on me. [Refrain]

## **Lesson No 5 - Articles of Religion III: The Church and the Last Things**

### ***XVI. The Church***

**240.** We believe that the Christian Church is the entire body of believers in Jesus Christ, who is the founder and only Head of the Church. The Church includes both those believers who have gone to be with the Lord and those who remain on the earth, having renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil, and having dedicated themselves to the work which Christ committed unto His church until He comes. The Church on earth is to preach the pure Word of God, properly administer the sacraments according to Christ's instructions, and live in obedience to all that Christ commands. A local church is a body of believers formally organized on gospel principles, meeting regularly for the purposes of evangelism, nurture, fellowship and worship. The Wesleyan Church is a denomination consisting of those members within district conferences and local churches who, as members of the body of Christ, hold the faith set forth in these Articles of Religion of The Wesleyan Church and acknowledge the ecclesiastical authority of its governing bodies.

**Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Acts 2:41-47; 9:31; 11:22; 12:5; 14:23; 15:22; 20:28; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:28; 16:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:9-10, 21; 5:22-33; Col. 1:18, 24; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 12:23; James 5:14.**

### ***XVII. The Sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper***

**242.** We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the sacraments of the church commanded by Christ and ordained as a means of grace when received through faith. They are tokens of our profession of Christian faith and signs of God's gracious ministry toward us. By them, He works within us to quicken, strengthen, and confirm our faith. We believe that water baptism is a sacrament of the church, commanded by our Lord and administered to believers. It is a symbol of the new covenant of grace and signifies acceptance of the benefits of the atonement of Jesus Christ. By means of this sacrament, believers declare their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

**Matt. 3:13-17; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 3:5, 22, 26; 4:1-2; Acts 2:38-39, 41; 8:12-17, 36-38; 9:18; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16; Rom 2:28-29; 4:11; 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27-29; Col. 2:11-12; Titus 3:5.**

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death and of our hope in His victorious return, as well as a sign of the love that Christians have for each other. To such as receive it humbly, with a proper spirit and by faith, the Lord's Supper is made a means through which God communicates grace to the heart.

**Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; John 6:48-58; 1 Cor. 5:7-8; 10:3-4, 16-17; 11:23-29.**

### ***XVIII. The Second Coming of Christ***

**244.** We believe that the certainty of the personal and imminent return of Christ inspires holy living and zeal for the evangelization of the world. At His return He will fulfill all prophecies made concerning His final and complete triumph over evil.

**Job 19:25-27; Isa. 11:1-12; Zech. 14:1-11; Matt. 24:1-51; 25; 26:64; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 17:22-37; 21:5-36; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:6-11; 1 Cor. 1:7-8; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-11, 23; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 2:1-12; Titus 2:11-14; Heb. 9:27-28; James 5:7-8; 2 Peter 3:1-14; 1 John 3:2-3; Rev. 1:7; 19:11-16; 22:6-7, 12, 20**

### ***XIX. The Resurrection of the Dead***

**246.** We believe in the bodily resurrection from the dead of all people—of the just unto the resurrection of life, and of the unjust unto the resurrection of damnation. The resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of the resurrection which will occur at Christ's Second Coming. The raised body will be a spiritual body, but the person will be whole and identifiable.

**Job 19:25-27; Dan. 12:2; Matt. 22:30-32; 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 14:14; 24:1-53; John 5:28-29; 11:21-27; 20:1—21:25; Acts**

1:3; Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:1-58; 2 Cor. 4:14; 5:1-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 20:4-6, 11-13.

## ***XX. The Judgment of All Persons***

**248.** We believe that the Scriptures reveal God as the Judge of all, and the acts of His judgment are based on His omniscience and eternal justice. His administration of judgment will culminate in the final meeting of all persons before His throne of great majesty and power, where records will be examined, and final rewards and punishments will be administered.

Eccl. 12:14; Matt. 10:15; 25:31-46; Luke 11:31-32; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 2:16; 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 9:27; 2 Peter 3:7; Rev. 20:11-13.

## ***XXI. Destiny***

**250.** We believe that the Scriptures clearly teach that there is a conscious personal existence after death. The final destiny of each person is determined by God's grace and that person's response, evidenced inevitably by a moral character which results from that individual's personal and volitional choices and not from any arbitrary decree of God. Heaven with its eternal glory and the blessedness of Christ's presence is the final abode of those who choose the salvation which God provides through Jesus Christ, but hell with its everlasting misery and separation from God is the final abode of those who neglect this great salvation.

Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:34-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 13:3; John 8:21-23; 14:2-3; 2 Cor. 5:6, 8, 10; Heb. 2:1-3; 9:27-28; 10:26-31; Rev. 20:14-15; 21:1—22:5, 14-15.

## Questions to Deepen

1. *What is the "Christian Church"? What is a local church? What is the Wesleyan Church? (cp. 240)* (We believe that the Christian Church is the entire body of believers who follow Jesus Christ. A local church is a body of believers who meet regularly for fellowship and worship. The Wesleyan Church is a denomination made of members hold to the faith that is in the Articles of Religion of The Wesleyan Church.)
2. *What does it mean by the "means of grace"? Why is the Lord's Supper and baptism considered a means of grace? (cp. 242)* (By doing and participating in certain practices God communicates His grace to our hearts. Two such practices are the Lord's Supper and baptism. By them, He works within us to quicken, strengthen and confirm our faith.)
3. *Is the Lord's Supper only for those who deserve it? (cp. 242)*  
(No, it is to be received humbly by each person.)
4. *Jesus Christ will return! Do you believe that? (cp. 244 to 246)*
5. *The Bible says all are going to be judged. How will God judge? Is it arbitrary? (cp.248)* (No, His judgment will be based on His omniscience and eternal justice.)
6. *Does hell exist? How do you explain the existence of hell if God is a God of love? (cp. 250)* (We believe that the Scriptures clearly teach that there is a conscious personal existence after death. The final destiny of each person is determined by God's grace and that person's response. Heaven with its eternal glory and the blessedness of Christ's presence is the final abode of those who choose the salvation which God provides through Jesus Christ, but hell with its everlasting misery and separation from God is the final abode of those who neglect this great salvation.)

## **Lesson No. 6 - Commitments of Membership I: God, You and the Family**

### ***Article III. Commitments of Full Membership***

**260.** To be identified with an organized church is the blessed privilege and sacred duty of all who are saved from their sins and are seeking completeness in Christ Jesus. From the Church's beginnings in the New Testament age, it has been understood that such identification involves putting off the old patterns of conduct and putting on the mind of Christ. In maintaining this Christian concept of a transformed life, The Wesleyan Church intends to relate timeless biblical principles to the conditions of contemporary society in such a way as to respect the integrity of the individual believer yet maintain the purity of the Church and the effectiveness of its witness. This is done in the conviction that there is validity in the concept of the collective Christian conscience as illuminated and guided by the Holy Spirit.

**265.** Those admitted to Full Membership in our churches commit themselves to demonstrate their life in Christ in such ways as:

#### ***Toward God***

**(1)** To reverence the name of God and to honor the Lord's Day by divine worship and spiritual edification, participating in those activities which contribute to the moral and spiritual purposes of this day

**Gen. 2:3; Ex. 20:3, 7-11; Deut. 5:11-15; Isa. 58:13-14; Mark 2:27; Acts 20:7; Heb. 4:9.**

**(2)** To seek only the leading of the Holy Spirit and to abstain from all forms of spiritism, such as the occult, witchcraft, astrology, and other similar practices.

**Lev. 19:31; 20:6; Deut. 18:10-14; Acts 19:18-19; Gal. 5:19-20.**

#### ***2. Toward Self***

**(3)** To exercise faithful stewardship through the wise use of their time and material resources, practicing careful self-discipline in order to

further the mission of Christ's church (remembering the principle of tithing which is basic to the New Testament standard of stewardship) and to demonstrate compassion to those in need.

**Prov. 3:9; Mal. 3:10; Matt. 25:34-40; Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:7; Eph. 5:16; Col. 3:17; James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17.**

**(4)** To demonstrate a positive social witness by abstaining from all forms of gambling and by abstaining from using or trafficking (production, sale or purchase) in any substances destructive to their physical, mental and spiritual health, such as alcoholic beverages, tobacco and drugs (other than proper medical purposes of drugs);

**Ex. 20:17; Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 6:12.**

Gambling violates the principle of Christian stewardship and the tenth commandment, is harmful to the individual in that it is emotionally addictive, is a poor example to others, and pollutes the moral climate of society.

**Prov. 20:1; Rom. 6:12; 14:21; 1 Cor. 6:12-20; 10:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:12.**

Christians are to regard their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. While no "thing" of itself is sinful, the Christian should avoid the use of anything which would not help build the fellowship of the church, would not help the believers to realize their full potential in Christ, or which would enslave them. In the light of the scientific knowledge of our day concerning the actual and potential harm of these substances, total abstinence is more in keeping with these biblical principles than is moderation.

**Ex. 20:3; Matt. 5:34-36; John 18:20; Acts 4:12; James 5:12.**

### ***3. Toward Family***

**(5)** To follow the teachings of the Scriptures regarding marriage and divorce. We affirm that sexual relationships outside of marriage and

sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful. We further affirm that heterosexual monogamy is God's plan for marriage, and we regard sexual sin of the spouse, such as adultery, homosexual behavior, bestiality or incest, as the only biblical grounds for considering divorce, and then only when appropriate counseling has failed to restore the relationship.

**Ex. 20:14, 17; 22:19; Lev. 20:10-16; Matt. 5:32; 19:19; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18.**

**(6)** To preserve the sanctity of the home by honoring Christ in every phase of family life and by demonstrating Christlike love (always avoiding spousal or child abuse), and by living peacefully with one another, thereby encouraging the nurture and education of the children to the Christian faith so as to bring them early to the saving knowledge of Christ.

**Prov. 22:6; Mark 10:9; Eph. 5:28; 6:4.**

### **Questions to Deepen Understanding**

- 1.** *Give a description of The Wesleyan Church, showing its purpose. (cp. 260)* (The Wesleyan Church, wishes to relate to contemporary society timeless biblical principles and intends to help her members live of a transformed life.)
- 2.** *What activities do not contribute to your spiritual well-being?* (cp. 265:4) (Abstaining from all forms of gambling, from using or trafficking any substances destructive to their physical, mental and spiritual health, such as alcoholic beverages, tobacco and drugs; and by refraining from membership in secret societies and lodges which are oath bound.)
- 3.** *Can you explain why the Wesleyans don't drink? (cp. 265:4)* (To demonstrate a positive social witness by abstaining from all forms of any substances destructive to physical, mental and spiritual health.)

## **Lesson No 7- Commitments of Member II: The Church and Others**

### ***With Respect to the Church***

**(12)** To work together for the advancement of God's kingdom and for the mutual edification of fellow believers in holiness, knowledge, and love; to walk together in Christian fellowship by giving and receiving counsel with gentleness and affection; by praying for each other; by helping each other in sickness and distress; and by demonstrating love, purity and courtesy to all

**Rom. 15:1-2; Eph. 4; 1 Thess. 5**

**(13)** To grow in the knowledge, love and grace of God by participating in public worship, the ministry of the Word of God, the Lord's Supper.

**Mark 2:18-20; Acts 13:2-3; 14:23; Rom. 12:12; 1 Cor. 11:23-28; Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 10:25; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18.**

**(14)** To preserve the fellowship and witness of the Church with reference to the use of languages. The Wesleyan Church believes in the miraculous use of languages and the interpretation of languages in the biblical and historical setting. But it is contrary to the Word of God to teach that speaking in an unknown tongue or the gift of tongues is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit or of that entire sanctification which the baptism accomplishes; therefore, only a language readily understood by the congregation is to be used in public worship.

**Acts 8:14-17; 1 Cor. 12:1—14:40; Gal. 5:22-24.**

### ***1. Towards Others***

**(16)** To do good as much as possible to all people as God gives opportunity; especially to those in the body of Christ; by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the destitute, by visiting or helping those who are sick or in prison; by instructing, correcting, or encouraging them in love.

**Matt. 25:31-46; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:14; Heb. 3:13; 10:23-25.**

**(17)** Respect the inherent individual rights of all persons, without regard to race, color, or sex.

**1 Cor. 8:13; 12:13; Gal. 3:28; 1 Tim. 5:21**

**(18)** Live honestly, be just in all business dealings and faithful to all commitments.

**Eccl. 5:4-5; Rom. 12:17; Phil. 4:8-9; 1 Peter 2:12.**

**268.** These are the Full Membership Commitments of our Church. We believe all these to be consistent with the principles of Christ as taught in the Word of God, which is the only and sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. If any among us do not observe them, and/or habitually break any of them, we will admonish such persons in love with the hope of restoring them to lives of harmony with the above Full Membership Commitments. If such efforts of restoration continue to prove fruitless, official action should be taken toward termination of said person's church membership. However, the church members are encouraged to continue efforts toward the spiritual restoration of these persons.

**Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:6-7, 9-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-7; 5:18-20; 6:14-18; Gal. 6:1-10; Eph. 4:25-32; Titus 3:10-11.**

## Questions to Deepen Understanding

1. *What would be the necessary condition for speaking in strange languages in a Wesleyan church and why? What are the verses supporting this? (cp. 265:15)* (There needs to be an interpretation of the strange language because a language readily understood by the congregation is to be used in public worship. I Corinthians 14:9-19).
2. *How should we act towards others? What kinds of things should the church do to help others? (cp. 265:16)* (To do good as much as possible to all people, especially to those in the body of Christ; by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the destitute, by visiting or helping those who are sick or in prison; by instructing, correcting, or encouraging them in love.)
3. *What do we do when someone in the church lives dishonestly? (Example: Do you keep honest accounts?) (cp. 265:18)* (Live honestly, be just in all business dealings and faithful to all commitments
4. *What is the only and sufficient rule of our faith and practice? (cp. 268)* (The Word of God, or the Bible.)
5. *What should you do if a member of the Church is not keeping the commitments of membership? (cp. 268)* ( In love, with the hope of restoring them, approach them. If they do not respond, then official action might be needed. But continue to continue efforts toward the spiritual restoration of these persons.)

## **Lesson No 8 - Suggestions for the Christian Life**

Beloved brother, you have taken a very important step in your life; it was a decisive, transformative, and renewing step, because through it you decided to start a new life. God has become your heavenly Father, and you are now His child. Therefore, there are some things that are important for the maintenance and growth of your spiritual life. We will then give suggestions that will assist you in your Christian life.

### **1. Christian Witness**

One of the best ways to keep a vibrant faith is to guide others to Christ. You are to be a light to the world and allow the light to shine through you, at every opportunity. Sharing about what the Lord Jesus has done in your life is an easy way to talk about Christ.

You are now an ambassador of God. Testify to the things you have seen, heard, and experienced.

**Rm. 5:8; 11; Acts. 1:18; 22:15; Rev. 12.**

### **2. Temptation**

Many people think that when they are saved, they will be free from temptation, but this is not true; all believers are tempted. The Bible says in 1 Peter 5:8-9 *“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith...”*.

We can resist the devil and overcome temptations by praying, reminding the devil that our sins are covered by the blood of Christ (Rev. 12:11), praising God, singing a hymn, or thinking of verses from the Bible, and not arguing with Satan, for the Lord is the one who fights for us.

### **3. A Balanced Life**

The tendency towards extremes is a characteristic of humanity. The believer, however, cannot let emotions take control. Emotions are not religion. The joy and peace that the believer enjoys are the result of a life of fellowship with God. Emotions rise and fall, but the believer's faith in the eternal God must be firm as a rock.

## 5 . Stewardship: Uses of Life and Goods

Christian life is not just worship and bible reading. It includes careful stewardship of all that we are and all that we have. The believer no longer belongs to himself, but to God.

Every believer has the responsibility to spread the Gospel, but this is only possible when every child of God obeys the teachings of His Word regarding tithes and offerings. The Bible teaches that the believer should give a tenth of their salary or income to sustain God's work. The giving of tithes and offerings is the result of a grateful heart for the many blessings received from God. When there is genuine love, giving is a real joy. It is important to start this practice immediately and give regularly to your church. (1 Cor. 16:1-2). But give it freely, whatever you desire, and the Lord will help you prosper. The believer who does this will learn that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Malachi. 3:8-10; Luke 6:38.

### Questions to Go Deeper

1. *What does the word "tithing" mean? What is the position of the Wesleyan Church in relation to money? Do you agree with the church's position? Defend your position using the Bible. (cp. III:5)*  
(It means to give a tenth of our income to sustain God's work. The giving of tithes and offerings is the result of a grateful heart for the many blessings received from God. All that we have has been given to us by God, so we are to be good stewards of all that He gives us.)
2. *We know that temptation and maintaining a balanced life are areas of struggle and sometimes defeat for everyone. How can you keep your balance and resist temptation? How can others help you? (cp. III:3)* (Understand that temptations will come, but we can resist the devil and overcome temptations by praying, reminding the devil that our sins are covered by the blood of Christ, praising God, singing a hymn, or thinking of verses from the Bible, and not arguing with Satan, for the Lord is the one who fights for us. Ask for prayer, share about our own temptations. )

## **Lesson No 9 - Membership and Leadership**

### **I. Provisional Member**

**558.** Those who are converted to Christ but who are not yet able to assume the responsibilities of full membership, or because they are immature in Christ or in age (Junior Member), will be received as provisional members. For Junior members, if they are attending and part of the family, no ritual is necessary, but can be used if it is meaningful.

**560.** The rights of the provisional member are:

- (1)** The fellowship of the saints and the encouragement, admonition, and guidance of the ministry.
- (2)** Access to the sacraments and rituals of the Church. (This does not mean that the Wesleyan Church practices closed communion: cp. 5605; 5615.)
- (3)** Eligibility for any position or position in the local church except *those reserved by the Handbook* for full membership.

### **II. Full Member**

**297.** The conditions for full membership are:

- (1)** Candidates for full membership shall be examined as provided for by the local church board (782:7), to determine whether they meet the requirements for membership including their experience of regeneration, Christian baptism, their acceptance of the Articles of Religion of The Wesleyan Church, the Full Membership Commitments and the authority of The Discipline in matters of church government, and their willingness to enter into full with the Church.
- (2)** Candidates for full membership who have satisfactorily passed the examination by the local church board, shall be voted upon by the local church conference.
- (3)** Persons who have been accepted for full membership should be formally received into full membership in a public service, in which they shall make their confession and vows public.

**302.** The rights of the full member are:

- (1)** Christian fellowship of the other believers and the encouragement, admonition, and spiritual guidance from the pastor.

- (2) The right to partake of the sacraments of the Church.
- (3) The right to vote and to hold any office in the church.
- (4) The right to trial and appeal if charged with failure to maintain the conditions of membership, with the specific provision that joining another religious body shall of itself cut off membership in the Church.
- (5) A member in good standing in any Wesleyan Church may transfer membership to another Wesleyan Church.

## **Government and Leadership**

As a member of the Wesleyan Church, it is good to know how it works, who the leaders are, and how you can participate in the life and ministry of your church.

***Local Church Conference*** - The highest authority in the local church is the local church conference in which all full members of the church can participate. The assembly meets only once a year to make the larger decisions and elect church leadership. Also, leaders will report on what has happened during the past year. In the assembly the church elects the pastor and the board, so it is the highest authority in the local church.

***Local Board of Administration*** - The local church conference is the highest authority; however, it is the *local board of administration* that leads the church during the year. By its name you can understand the role of the board – to help the church in the area of administration, freeing the pastor (the spiritual leader) to devote himself to the Word and prayer (Acts 6:1-4). What is administrative work in the church? Financial issues, building maintenance, construction, church events and calendar, the fulfillment of the church's mission to win souls and disciple them, Sunday School, Christian education, music, and the Worship service, all this and more are the responsibilities of the board. Let's see who is part of the board and the function of each member. This is important because you, as a full member, can be part of the board!

***Secretary*** – is the person who takes care of the statistics and documents of the church. For example, at the end of the fiscal year a statistical report will be made that will tell how many members there are, how many worship services have been held, what was the average attendance, how

many people have been saved in the worship services, how many people have been baptized, etc. These statistics are important because it has to do with the purpose of the church which is to win souls, to make disciples, and to advance the kingdom of God. The secretary also takes care of church documents by keeping the minutes of board meetings, archiving important records, and even recording church history, such as the church's birthday date and others.

***Treasurer*** – The treasurer is to receive, hold, and pay out all money of the local church, as ordered by the local church conference or the local church board. Also, the treasurer is to help the pastor keep complete and accurate records of all money taken in and of the way in which they are paid out. Also, the treasurer will make monthly reports to the local church board and make reports to all regular meetings of the local church conference about the finances of the church.

***Superintendent of the Sunday School*** – The Sunday school superintendent will have supervision of the Sunday school, consult with the pastor or board on all major decisions, and to promote interest in and attendance in Sunday school. Also, the superintendent will have immediate supervision of each meeting of the Sunday school, seeing that each department and class has the necessary leaders and that order is maintained. The superintendent will promote the study of the Word of God, offer training for the teachers, and encourage the church in the making of disciples.

***Trustee*** - The trustees take the weight off the pastor and zealously care for the things of God pertaining to the building, equipment and grounds. The trustees normally help with the Lord's Supper and are overall lay leaders. They must be people who are mature in the faith and deeply spiritual.

***Member-at-large*** – The member-at-large is a person who has the trust of the congregation and who can represent the people of the church in general. This member is a wise and experienced person who can help the church make decisions and guide the church in fulfilling the church's mission.

## Questions to Deepen

1. *What are the rights of a full member? (cp. 302) (The right of Christian fellowship in the church, spiritual guidance from the pastor, the right to partake in all the sacraments of the Church. The right to vote and to hold any office in the church. The right to appeal if questioned about keeping the full conditions of membership. If once joined to another religious organization, membership will be cut off. You may, however transfer membership to another Wesleyan Church, if you are in good standing with the church.)*
  
2. *What is the difference between the provisional member and the full member? (Those who are not yet able to assume the responsibilities of full membership.)*
  
3. *Who chooses the pastor when needed? (II: 302:3) (Those who full membership.)*
4. *Describe the role of church officers, listed below:*
  - a. *Secretary:* (The one who takes care of the statistics and documents of the church.)
  
  - b. *Trustee:* (They look after the physical property of the church.)
  
  - c. *Superintendent of The Sunday School:* (The Sunday school superintendent will have supervision of the Sunday school.)
  
  - d. *Member-at-large:* (This member represents the members at the board meetings.)
5. *What are the monthly tasks of the church treasurer? (Besides keeping complete and accurate records of all money taken in and paid out, the treasurer will make monthly reports to the local church board about the finances of the church.)*

## Lesson 10

# Baptism

**Main Text:** John 3:5-7

**Key Verse:** John 3:5

*[Review: [Today we will deal with something else that is very special in the Christian's life: baptism!]*

### **Introduction:**

Baptism is an act that marks you as someone who belongs to God's family. Whether you're preparing for baptism or have already been baptized, since it is an important part of Christianity, we want to take time to better understand what this process looks like and in particular how it works in the Evangelical Wesleyan Church. To learn more about it, let's look at the Bible and see what it says, starting with John 3:5-7.



**Readings:** John 3:5-7, (additional texts—Acts 8:36-38, Colossians 2:11-12)

### **Discussion Questions:**

**John 3:5-7:**

**Who cannot enter the kingdom of God? (vs. 5)**

*[Whoever is not born of water, or of the Spirit. This is referring to baptism (being born of water) and our new life, which comes from the Holy Spirit (i.e., God). These are what show that we have been redeemed, and that we are of God's family. Only when we are redeemed and adopted into God's family can we enter His kingdom.]*

**What does "being born of water" mean? (vs. 5)**

*[To be baptized with water, which serves as the symbol and mark of our new life.]*

**What does "being born of the Spirit" mean? (vs. 6)**

*[To be renewed inwardly by the Holy Spirit, to go from sinner to child of God, to be born again, to be redeemed by the blood of our Redeemer, Christ. All this to say: to be saved and to enter the family of God.]*

**What is the difference between flesh and spirit? (vs. 6)**

*[One is born of flesh (our old, human natures), the other is born of the Spirit. While this seems obvious, it is important to emphasize. It tells us that origins matter. We cannot create something moral and good out of the flesh, for it comes from the flesh and can only be fleshly, even if it is an imitation of spiritual things. It also means that if someone is exhibiting attitudes of the flesh, these attitudes cannot come from the Spirit. The difference between those who were reborn in the Spirit should be obvious since those who are not reborn will not be able to act as a new person must act.*

*[To sum up: "fleshly" attitudes come from the flesh, whereas spiritual attitudes come from the Spirit. Who we are and how we act will be the true proof of whether we have been saved.]*

**What does "being born again" mean? (vs. 7)**

*[That's what happens inside of us when we're saved. We were spiritually dead because of our sins, but now we have a spiritual life. As we are getting a new life, this is characterized by the description "being born again".]*

## Activity:

Now, for a game! This game is called word search and is simple: Try to find words that are hidden among many other letters. The words can also be written backward, or diagonally. Look for these words: *baptism, water, Lord, born, grace.*

Y	O	R	D	A	J	H	W	L	Q	<b>W</b>	F	<b>E</b>	T	Q
T	<b>D</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>O</b>	L	W	A	Z	U	<b>A</b>	S	G	<b>C</b>	R	S
<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>T</b>	E	D	H	<b>A</b>	P	U
E	<b>O</b>	T	B	I	C	D	<b>E</b>	M	C	A	K	<b>R</b>	N	W
N	L	<b>R</b>	K	R	O	<b>R</b>	V	F	B	R	J	<b>G</b>	I	X
M	A	I	<b>N</b>	G	Y	P	S	E	A	G	O	M	L	Y

*[Discipler's note: In the disciple's book the words will not be outlined in bold]*

## What does the Church Manual say?

*[Discipler: Read this part with the disciple, and make sure they understand. It is not necessary to spend a lot of time on this—only what will be necessary for the disciple to understand what they are committing to by being baptized]*

The Church Manual shows the Wesleyan Church's position on baptism. It says this:

*- We believe that baptism with water and the Lord's Supper are the sacraments of the church, given by Christ and ordained as means of grace when received by faith. They are marks of our profession of the Christian faith, and signs of God's gracious ministry to us. For through them, He works within us to quicken, strengthen, and confirm our faith.*

*We believe that baptism with water is a sacrament of the church, ordained by our Lord and administered to believers. It is a symbol of the new covenant of grace and signifies acceptance of the benefits of the reconciliation of Jesus Christ. Through this sacrament, believers declare their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.*

Some say that baptism is an external sign of an internal transformation, but it is more than simply an external sign. It is a "means of grace," ordained of God. It creates a stronger bond between us and Him, and God works in us and blesses us when we obey Him.

### **Baptism**

*[This part shouldn't take too long, either. Basically, just read along with the disciple, and then practice the questions and answers that will be used in the baptism ceremony. Repeat it a few times together, to make sure that they understand it well and feel prepared.]*

Now that we know more about baptism, let's look at the process, and how it will happen.

First, the church will organize an event. The details of the event depend on the individual, local church. But it will include water, and usually the person getting baptized will be submerged in the water. Traditionally, the baptism candidate will share their testimony before the congregation. When the time comes, the candidate for baptism will come forward, and will answer some questions.

When candidates are presented before the minister, the minister will say:

"Dear friends, according to the example of Jesus, you will present yourselves today to receive the sacrament of baptism. Baptism is not the way to salvation, but rather an outward sign of the new birth that God has worked in your hearts. Baptism proclaims to all the world that you have received Christ Jesus as the Lord of your lives, and that it is your desire

to always obey Him. So that we may hear your testimony of what God has done for you, and so that we may know that you understand the meaning of this step you are taking, we shall ask you the following:

“Do you believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? That Jesus Christ the Son suffered in your place on the cross, that He died, but was resurrected, that He now sits at the right hand of the Father until He returns to judge all the people on the last day? And do you believe that the Holy Scriptures are the inspired Word of God? That by the grace of God each person has the ability and responsibility to choose between good and evil, and that those who repent of their sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are justified by faith?”

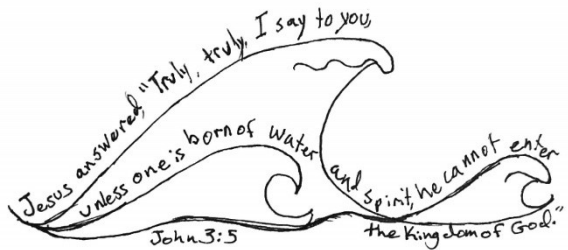
**Answer:** All this I firmly believe.

“Do you intend for this act to testify to the whole world that you are a believer in Christ and that you will be His follower?”

**Answer:** This I intend, and so I will be.

Then the minister will ask each candidate for their name, saying:

“\_\_\_\_\_, I baptize you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” And then the minister will immerse the candidate in water—or, if desired, sprinkled or water poured on the head—followed by a closing prayer.



Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."  
John 3:5

**Key Verse:** John 3:5 –

*Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*

**Weekly Challenge:**

- ✓ Talk to the pastor and see when it will work to be baptized.
- ✓ Congratulations! You have completed the third book!

*[Close meeting with singing the hymn “It is Well”]*

## **A Time and a Reason to Sing – “It Is Well”**

It’s one of the most beloved and recognizable hymns of all time. Many have sung its words for comfort, strength, and peace during difficult times. The origins of this hymn can be traced back to an event that happened in the life of Horatio Spafford, a prominent lawyer from Chicago who lost his four daughters in a shipwreck on their way to Europe in 1873. Despite this incredible tragedy, he responded with a faith so strong that he was able to write in the midst of anguish the lyrics of “It is Well”. It is another song that is a testimony to the Lord our Father, a powerful testimony that continues to speak today.

1. When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
when sorrows like sea billows roll;  
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,  
"It is well, it is well with my soul."

*Refrain* (may be sung after final stanza only):

It is well with my soul;  
it is well, it is well with my soul.

2. Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,  
let this blest assurance control:  
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,  
and has shed his own blood for my soul. *Refrain*

3. My sin oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!  
my sin, not in part, but the whole,  
is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more;  
praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! *Refrain*

4. O Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,  
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll;  
the trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend;

over so it is well with you and. Refrain  
**DISCIPLESHIP Series**  
**4th Book**



# OUR MISSION MULTIPLICATION



**Discipler**



*He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. Psalm 1:3*

# **Our Vision – Mission Multiplication**

## **Content**

<b>Introduction and Vision</b>	<b>page 2</b>
<b>The Columns</b>	<b>page 6</b>
<b>- Mission: Prayer</b>	<b>page 8</b>
<b>- Mission: Evangelism</b>	<b>page 14</b>
<b>- Mission: Discipleship</b>	<b>page 20</b>
<b>- Mission: Daughter Churches</b>	<b>page 25</b>
<b>The Beams</b>	<b>page 29</b>
<b>The Societies</b>	<b>page 32</b>

## Introduction

The church, that is, the body of Christ, has many purposes, but one purpose more important than the others: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations.”

This message is central to all that we do. Everything the church does should bow itself before this mission. *Mission Multiplication* was created to bring this about in our churches with more efficiency. In both the plan and mathematics of God, this is multiplication, not addition. Because the responsibility of each disciple is to make disciples, when a disciple gains another disciple, both teach other disciples, and those disciples make more disciples, even as their disciplers continue on discipling. And so, it's multiplication—and there are more types of multiplication, too. A family will win over a family, a family group will multiply and gain other groups, a church will multiply and plant a daughter church, a district will reach other parts of the country and establish another district.

With God's help, one day Wesleyan Church in each country will start work in another country, and start a new Wesleyan family. Our goal is to plant churches to minister in communities until, in the end, the kingdom of God grows in our city, our state, our country, and beyond. This is *Mission Multiplication*. This name Mission Multiplication is part of a denominational vision. Your individual church can have another name for our vision.

## The Vision of Our Church

In the vision of *Mission: Multiplication*, we look at three ways that God is leading the Wesleyan Church to fulfill the Great Commission. We want to start by emphasizing the *values* of our church, that have lasted through the centuries and that make up our DNA.

### 1. The Values – Given by the Lord

*The first value* that we embrace, as a church, is that the *Bible* is the Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit to teach, inspire, and guide

His church. It is our rock, our foundation. It is the only source in this world that we hold to be trustworthy, without error, and divine. Every other book, thought, and person must bow before its authority.

***The second value*** that we embrace is *Holiness*. We believe that God is powerful and able to carry out what He promised: to free the followers of Jesus from being slaves to sin, and to help them to walk in perfect love. In this way, the Spirit gives gifts and the strength to build the church and expand the Kingdom. We believe in entire salvation, sanctification, baptism of the Holy Spirit in such a way that the believer is “complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Tm. 3:17). Our traditions and our church family are built on holiness; we believe it and do not hesitate to proclaim it.

***The third value*** that we embrace is the *calling of every Christian*. God has a special and perfect plan for every follower of Christ. This calling means that every person has gifts and talents given by the Lord, for the purpose of edifying, building up, and expanding the kingdom of God. No one is useless! We all have some way that we can contribute or be used in the larger mission of the church. The implications of this are huge! It means that discipleship is vital, and that every person in the church has a ministry. And this leads us to the second part of our mission.

## 2. The Multiplication of Ministries – Gifts of the Spirit in Action

*Mission Multiplication* is also the multiplication of ministries within the church. Since every person in the church has a calling, a purpose given by the Lord, the Spirit enables them with gifts from God to further edify the church– to build or participate in *a ministry*! In Mission: Multiplication, we identify four ministries that are *essential* for us to be faithful to our mission. These essential ministries are called “Columns” and they are: Mission: Prayer, Mission: Evangelism, Mission: Discipleship, and Mission: Daughter Churches. In this booklet we want to show how these ministries will operate.

We have identified four other important ministries that should be implemented “*as soon as possible*,” to further support our mission. These four ministries we call “joists” and they are: Sunday School,

Worship, The Societies, and Family/Small Groups. The joists will tie the structure together, strengthening the main ministries, and will involve many people in the effort to “make disciples of all nations.”

Can your local church have other ministries besides those listed here? Of course! The purpose of ***Mission: Multiplication*** is to offer material and a plan in order to develop fruitful ministries in the church, but also to structure the church in a way that will utilize everyone in the great and grand work of the church. At the same time, the church gives the freedom to expand and reach a lost world in new and creative ways. In ***Mission: Multiplication*** we try to use the best material available, from our own church—material proved and approved in countries around the world.

### 3. The Ministerial Team – Uniting and Multiplying Leaders

The leaders of these ministries have responsibility and influence in the church. In our vision, we have a structure that will help discover, enable, and unite these leaders to build up the church, forming them into “*The Ministerial Team.*” The ministerial team is not the initial structure, but like the “joists”, it is something we want to see develop as soon as possible. In the same way that the administrative board meets once a month to take care of administration, the ministerial team meets once a month to give direction to the ministries in the church.

Trying to implement a ministry before it is time can result in a structure that becomes top-heavy and difficult, and that could even damage the development of the church. Nevertheless, we have seen great benefits from these ministries, and God has raised up leaders and strong, fruitful people to do His work. More often than not, it is better to take a risk! A ministerial team can create connections between the people and the leadership of the church—multiplication of leaders.

The people making up this team are the Sunday School superintendent, the worship leader, the presidents of the societies, and the prayer coordinator. And we can have more—coordinators for evangelism, missions, and social work. Many churches have assistant pastors to help with new church plants (more about that later).

And so, every member of the ministerial team is a leader of a ministry,

and the pastor will meet with this group to evaluate, coordinate, and support them and their work. At the end of the year, the ministerial team will meet to start planning for the next year. These plans should be approved by the board and subsequently be put on the church's calendar.

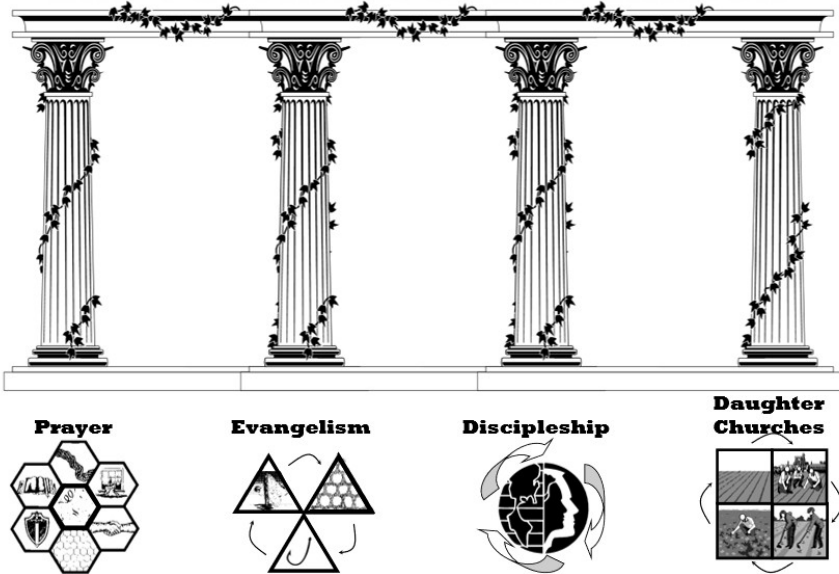
The administrative council gets its authority from the general conference. The ministerial team serves the council and the church in order to carry out ministries in the church—building it up! In the next part, on the columns, we can see how these values, ministries, and leaders function in a practical setting. Lets get to know the columns!

# The Columns

Let's look at how we can fulfill our mission in the church, by using *Mission Multiplication!* We have visualized the four essential ministries as columns, sustaining and supporting everything that the church does to carry out its mission. Because of its importance, the columns are crafted with more care, and the image below each columns illustrates how the ministries could function.

The topics corresponding to each column will be treated individually.

## THE 4 COLUMNS OF THE CHURCH



The order is important, and, according to our understanding, they should be implemented in the church in this order. First, Mission: Prayer, then Mission: Evangelism, Mission: Discipleship, and lastly, Mission: Daughter Churches. But all of the steps are essential for a church that is healthy, growing, and fulfilling the Great Commission. Let's learn about and practice all these ministries in our churches!

## Questions for Discussion

1. What is the name of our vision? What does this name mean?

*Mission Multiplication. It means that our vision is that the church will grow and multiply on every level—one member should win a new member, one family group should grow and multiply, one church should start another, one district should plant another. This is our vision!*

2. What are the three values of our church? Why are they important?

*First, the Bible is the inspired and perfect **Word of God**. It is the basis of our faith and our life. 2. Our heritage and message is **holiness**, a desire to see all members grow and be complete, equipped for every good work. 3. We understand that every person in the church is worthy and has gifts and talents to serve the church. We believe that **everyone is called!***

3. Besides our values, the vision looks at the multiplication of ministries. Why do we want more areas of ministry?

*More ministries mean that more people are helping in the Lord's work. It is good, in general, for Christians to serve their Lord, and allows the church to grow and multiply. It increases the number of leaders, too. In this way, God is glorified through the church.*

4. Who makes up the ministerial team? Who is the leader?

*The leader is the pastor. The team is built up of leaders from all the organized ministries in the church.*

5. What is the highest authority in the church: the administrative board or the ministerial team?

*The administrative council has its authority given by the general conference. The ministerial team serves the council and the church in carrying out different ministries in the church.*

6. Are the columns necessary to the church? Why?

*Yes. Because they sustain and support everything that the church does to fulfill its mission.*

# Mission: Prayer

## Prayer as a Priority

*Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)*

Prayer is a priority. Everyone knows that they should pray, and we say that we should. Nonetheless, much of the time, the believer or the church is only familiar with casual prayer, and not a dedication to focused prayer, to true spiritual battle.

“I want to be a faithful servant who produces good fruit for the Master. I want to be a blessing to others and to show a victorious life to the world. But I don’t have fifteen minutes to spend in prayer, talking with my Heavenly Father.” Many people believe and act like this—but it doesn’t make sense! It doesn’t work. It is self-deception, leading to spiritual death.

For our church and for our lives in Christ to progress, we should strive for powerful and effective prayer. Certainly the forces of evil are organized, intentional, and focused. Can we be at peace if we ourselves are less than that? The prayers of the church should also be organized, intentional, and focused if we hope for victory and success in our mission to save lost souls, make disciples, and expand the Kingdom of God. Mission: Prayer was created to help this work in your church!

## Three Goals in *Mission: Prayer*

**1. Imitate Jesus:** *And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. Mark 1:35*

While Jesus was on Earth, He was constantly bombarded with peoples’ needs. It was difficult to take time to be alone and in communion with His Father. We might also say that we are so busy and bombarded by needs. Difficult or not, however, Jesus, the Son of the Living God, considered prayer essential. This is proved by both the example and the teaching of Jesus (here are some references—and this just from the book

of Luke: 3:21, 4:1-2, 4:42, 6:12, 9:18, 9:28-29, 11:1-4, 11:5-8, 11:9-13, 18:1-8, 18:9-14, 21:29-36, 22:39-46, 23:34, 23:46, 24:30). Therefore, from Scripture we can learn that...

- ◆ Jesus began to pray early in the day.
- ◆ Jesus avoided distractions in order to spend time in prayer.
- ◆ Jesus prayed before struggles happened (not afterwards, as we often do).
- ◆ Jesus valued His time with His Father—they had a close relationship.

In prayer, we come to know our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and we sit at His feet to learn about spiritual living.

**2. Commune with the Father:** *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.... Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. (James 4:8 and 10)*

In prayer, we draw near to the Creator of the universe and call him “Father.” In prayer, we receive the strength and courage to minister in an antagonistic world, a world that stands against the truth and all we hold dear. In prayer, we come to understand the will of God and we receive guidance for our lives and church. The eternal majesty and love of our Father will overwhelm the values and things of this physical and temporary world, freeing our souls to focus on eternal matters.

**3. Fight in the Holy Spirit:** *...for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:12)*

In prayer, a person full of the Holy Spirit will conquer spiritual battles, break the chains of sin, and cure illnesses. In prayer, we will shake the strongholds and the influence of darkness in our lives, churches, and communities. In prayer, we are strengthened to take the good news of Jesus Christ to a lost world. In prayer, God’s will for our lives, His direction is revealed so that we are effective in building His kingdom.

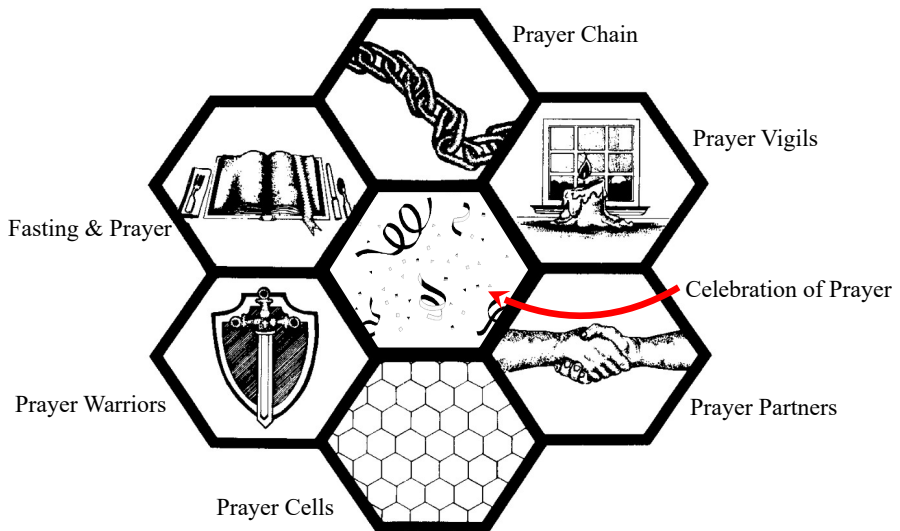
Mission: Prayer was created to establish a ministry of prayer that will

organize and involve the church and its every member in the powerful work of prayer. Let's see how it could work...

We have two natural divisions in the ministry of prayer and the life of the church: **Regular Prayer** and **Prayer Events**. We have various activities included in these divisions, offering many ways for each person to participate. Each one of the seven activities has a symbol to identify it. Search for your place in the will of the Lord, and contribute to the work of God in a significant way through prayer!

"One thing that comes from fanaticism is to hope to obtain the end without the means; to expect knowledge, for example, without studying the Scriptures; to expect spiritual strength without prayer..."

João Wesley



# Regular Prayer

## ***Prayer Warriors***

**Purpose:** This dedicated group will: 1) lead the church in prayer for the pastor, establishing a shield around him of strong prayer; 2) intercede for the life and ministry of each leader in the church; 3) pray for the mission and ministries of the church; and 4) receive prayer requests from the congregation (via Prayer Cards) and take them before the throne of God. The symbol is a sword and a shield to represent the spiritual battle. The leader of these warriors, and of the prayer ministry, is a *coordinator*. As a goal, we want to see 10% of the church involved in this intense ministry of prayer. The prayer warriors are the heart of ***Mission: Prayer.***



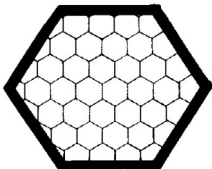
## **Prayer Partners**

**Purpose:** Encourage spiritual growth between the prayer partners; have them grow into a closer relationship through divine love; have accountability between the two; create a support network for both of them. This is most often done within the societies and each group - men, women or youth, can develop prayer partners



## **Prayer Cells**

**Purpose:** Through prayer in small groups or home groups (an ideal format for intercession), we lift up the needs of individuals as well as the whole church. It is also an outreach tool, as we pray for the salvation of others in the family or community. Prayer cells connect us to the divine strength, and promote unity and spiritual health in the body.



# Prayer Events

## Prayer Chains

**Purpose:** Mobilize the church or small groups to intercede during times of urgent necessity and/or emergency. Usually there are one or two “starters” of the prayer chain. When there is a special need, they begin the chain, calling the next person to pray and so on.



## Prayer and Fasting

**Purpose:** A personal time to deny your physical appetites for the purpose of having a special moment alone with God, nourishing your spiritual discipline and strength, deepening your appetite for spiritual things, and sacrificing our desires in order to please God.

Intercession and fasting were frequently acts of corporate worship in the Bible, in which the Lord’s people sought after Him.



## Prayer Vigils

**Purpose:** Freeing the power of God to work in the church through the intense prayer of the body of Christ united in common purpose and worship. These often are scheduled before a big outreach event.



## Prayer Celebrations

**Purpose:** These are events for celebrating what God has done during the past year, His faithfulness, strengthening the faith of those participating and encouraging more people to pray. The prayer warriors

keep a book of prayer with requests and answers. Some of these testimonies will be read. At the end, the plans for the prayer ministry for the new year will be announced and people will be given an opportunity to participate with the hope that all will in some way.



## Questions for Discussion:

1. What are the three goals in Mission: Prayer?

*Imitate Jesus, commune with the Father, fight in the Spirit.*

2. What does a prayer warrior do?

*Leads the church in prayer, intercedes for the leaders, prays for the mission and ministry of the church, prays for the lost.*

3. List three prayer events that can happen in the church.

*There are four—Prayer Chains, Prayer and Fasting, Vigils, and the Celebration of Prayer.*

4. What is the leader of Mission: Prayer in the local church called?

*That would be the leader of the prayer warriors, the **coordinator**.*

5. Who should participate in the church's ministry of prayer?

*Everyone! We want 100% of the people involved in some form of the prayer ministry.*

# Mission: Evangelism

## The Command to Evangelize

*As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.* – 2 Timothy 4:5

*“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”* – Matthew 4:19

So, the church needs a plan for evangelism. Jesus had a plan to reach the world and those around Him—in emulation of our Leader, the local church also needs a plan. Mission: Evangelism was created to establish the ministry of evangelism inside of the local church.

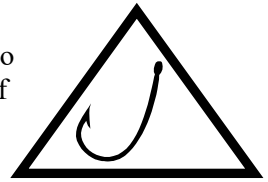
Each local church will establish a coordinator of evangelism and a ministry of evangelism, as soon as it is possible. The structure we envision is that the church will have people called and excited to be a part of the ministry of evangelism. One will be the coordinator and others will be a part of Mission: Evangelism team.

This team will seek the Lord, and form a plan of evangelism for the church, referring this plan to the council for approval. Mission: is to serve the church and is subject to the board. This ministry should be enacted in the three different settings of the church—individual, small groups, and the church as a whole.

*“It is not your priority to preach so many times, and take care of this program or this society; but rather to win as many souls as possible; lead as many sinners as possible to repentance, and with all your strength, build them up in holiness, without which they can never see the Lord.”* (John Wesley, *Works of Wesley*, Vol. 8, p. 310)

## Personal Evangelism

**Purpose** – symbolized by a hook, the goal is a do powerful evangelism face to face, going to the houses of people in the community to offer them the message of salvation.



Sometimes, it seems as though Christians are afraid to talk about their faith. But many times it is, instead, the lack of a strategy or purpose in their outreach. There is also a lack of training and discipleship in this area. What are some of our strategies for evangelism?

### *1. The Main Strategy – Bible Studies in Houses.*

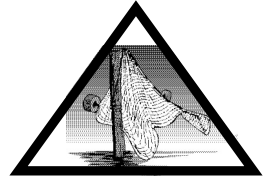
The most effective way that we have found in seeing conversions and also in successfully engaging many people in evangelism, is to have Bible Studies in the home. We emphasize it because it is based on relationships that are already there or are being formed. The Bible studies, ideally, will take place in the unbeliever's home, therefore opening the door to others hearing, although it could happen in any home, in any neighborhood or any place. We value this method because the fruit of this strategy persists in the church, people who respond to the Gospel in this way, stay in the church and remain faithful. Because it is a study of God's word, people can already begin to growth and the power of God's truth. We use it because it bears fruit and multiplies and can soon be the start of a small group which could lead to a church. We suggest it because we have already planted churches in the rural areas and in the city alike with this strategy.

### *Other Evangelism Tactics*

- ◆ Direct new converts towards discipleship and participate in the lesson on how to share their testimony. Later, go out and practice.
- ◆ The Four Spiritual Laws or the Roman Road to Salvation with someone who is seeking or wants to know how to be saved.
- ◆ Praying in peoples' houses
- ◆ Using Christian holidays to invite people and talk of Jesus.

## Evangelism in Small Groups

**Purpose** – When a small group is alive and growing, reaching people in the community, few things are more effective for winning souls. Every new person who joins brings with them contacts, knowledge of people that they know as well, and their testimony can be powerful. If disciplined well, the new member can work on bringing their family and friends to the group—and to Jesus.



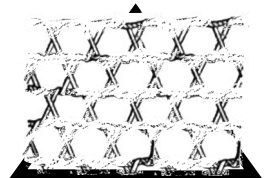
We have seen that, in regards to evangelism, small groups or home groups are very effective. One of the principle reasons is that they create relationships. Using these special qualities of a small group, we have various tactics available for reaching others with the gospel. Here are some of the ways you can use small group evangelism, ways that have proved to be effective. We symbolize this type of evangelism with a *casting net*.

### Tactics

- ◆ *Personal invitations to friends or family*
- ◆ *Group events that would be attractive to others*
- ◆ *Interest Groups (anything from Cricket to cooking)*
- ◆ *Friendship celebrations, birthdays, etc.*

## Big Events of Evangelism

**Purpose** – Symbolized by gillnet, (a large net to catch many fish), these events involve the whole church in an effort to reach the largest number of people possible with the gospel. The event should be something interesting, that attracts people, and the church should invite friends and neighbors and those that might be interested. This is a moment of planting many seeds at once, but we should be ready in case someone has thought for a long time and they are moved to make a decision. However, for some it will only a single moment of contact with the body of Christ, and the church should seek to follow up some



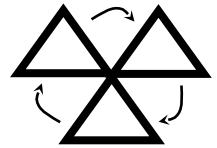
how, using members or small groups closest to them to maintain contact. People usually need many contacts before they are ready to talk about or ask questions about their faith.

### Tactics

- ◆ *Retreats/camps*
- ◆ *Social or community works or events*
- ◆ *Evangelistic Movies, especially at Christmas or Easter*
- ◆ *Workshops or Craft Fairs*
- ◆ *Family events, mother's day, etc.*

## Plan of Evangelism

**Purpose** – the mission of the church of Christ is to “make disciples of all nations,” and all that we do should be with that objective - fulfilling the great commission. **Mission: Evangelism** helps the church in this important task. But how will we coordinate the various methods of evangelizing in order to have a strong impact on the community?



Each local church should have a plan which will include their goals to evangelize their surrounding community and beyond. How many families do they want to reach? Do they want to start two home groups? How many people do they want to see baptized this year? Is there some training in evangelism to prepare the church, etc.? Secondly, this plan should have strategies that use the three different settings of the church—the individual (Personal Evangelism), small groups (Evangelism in Family Groups), and the church as a whole (Events for Evangelism). The coordinator of evangelism should meet with the ministerial team in order to gain the support of the whole church. In order to plan, train, and put effective evangelism into practice in the local church, resources such as time, money, and people are necessary from every quarter.

**Evangelism as a Sieve** – “*But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.*” (Mark 4:20)

Evangelism must be viewed as a sieve. We cannot begin to evangelize and then after a while think that we've done enough, so we can simply stop. Evangelism is something continuous; it often works as a sieve. We go out to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to fill the sieve with grains (souls). Then we sift them (discipleship). The people who have taken a serious decision for the Lord will stay, but others will be choked or led astray by the world. Because of this, our job is to continue to fill the sieve (evangelism), and the result is that we can have a regular and effective program with which to win as many souls as we can, and continue filling the sieve. The church needs the Mission Evangelism, and needs it to be constantly in action.

## Questions for Discussion

1. *What does Mission:Evangelism mean, what purpose does it serve?*

It is the ministry of evangelism in the local church, and its purpose is to organize the church, and give each person a way to get involved in the powerful work of evangelism.

2. *What is the leader of evangelism called?*

Coordinator of evangelism.

3. *What is the symbol for each of the three settings—individual, small groups, and the church as a whole? Why are these symbols used?*

Hook - individual evangelism, similar to how a hook catches one fish at a time. Casting Net - it catches more fish and can be done with one or two people. It is associated with small groups. Gillnet - it can catch a lot of fish at once, and represents things like evangelistic events.

4. *What is our main strategy for personal evangelism?*

Bible studies in the home

5. *What is the purpose of large evangelism events?*

To make contact with the largest number of people possible.

6. *List two of these types of events.*

There were five listed: 1) Retreats/camps, 2) Social or community works or events, 3) Evangelistic Movies, especially at Christmas or Easter, 4) Workshops or Craft Fairs, 5) Family events, etc.

8. *Why do we need a plan of evangelism?*

A regular and effective program to win souls can help the church experience continuous and healthy growth.

9. *What does the sieve teach us in relation to evangelism?*

The sieve, together with the parable of the sower, shows us that we will inevitably lose people, which also means that evangelism should be effective and constant to reach as many as possible.

# Mission: Discipleship

## The Necessity of Discipleship

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” – Mt 28:19

Many of us think that one of the biggest problems in the Evangelical church is the lack of personal evangelism. This is true! We have to see and believe that the lack of discipleship and support to new converts in every church, today, constitutes an even more dangerous problem for the Church. The reality is that studies have shown that less than 1% of members of evangelical churches are involved in the work of discipleship. How many people can tell stories of conversions where the new convert soon gave up due to lack of teaching?

It is easy to see in the above text that the commandment to make disciples is exactly that: a **command!** Therefore, the responsibility that the church has towards new converts is serious and should be a priority.

Many times the problem isn't a lack of interest or desire, but a lack of understanding about the discipleship process. Often, as a result of that fact, many Christians didn't have someone disciple *them*, and don't have the necessary training to disciple others.

*I am more convinced today than at any other time that preaching as good as an apostle, without an organization of new converts, without training in the ways of the Lord, is only breeding children for the assassin..."*

*John Wesley (Works, Vol. 8, p. 300)*

## The Nature of Discipleship

What does “Christian discipleship” mean? Christian discipleship is a relationship between two (or more) people, in which Jesus uses a mature Christian to nurture spiritual growth in the other, participating in the process of transforming people into true followers of Christ, and fulfilling the great commission that we find in Mt 28:19-20.

What are the objectives that we have in the discipleship process? We

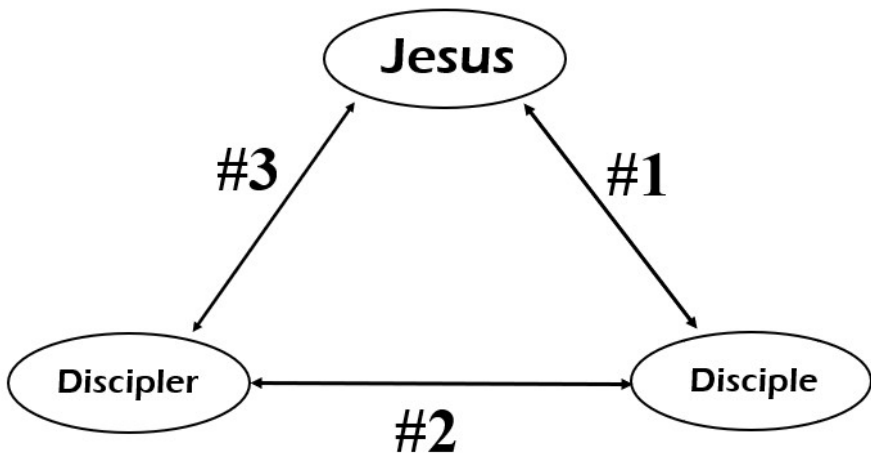
have three main objectives: 1) spiritual growth, 2) integrating people into the life and vision of the church, and 3) training someone in their area of ministry, developing their gifts and talents, and so furthering experience and passion.

*How does a relationship of discipleship work?* To explain this, we will use the triangle of discipleship. The goal of all disciples of Jesus is simply to reflect our Savior in our lives. Therefore, the relationships in the triangle of discipleship works like this:

**Line #1** – in the relationship between the disciple and Jesus, the disciple learns and receives directly from Jesus;

**Line #2** – in the relationship between the discipler and the disciple, the goal of the discipler is to bring the disciple to reflect Jesus more and more, and not just *copy* or *follow* the discipler;

**Line #3** – in the relationship between the discipler and Jesus, the discipler has as their highest priority being near to the Master and being the best discipler possible—that is, mirroring Jesus in the best way possible.



Therefore, we will understand better how the discipler works on these two levels: Personal Discipleship and the Program of Discipleship.



## ***Personal Discipleship***

**Purpose:** It is easy to see in the Word of God that discipleship is based in relationships. Our own Lord Jesus formed a relationship with each of his disciple in order to create a better environment for their learning and training. He (Jesus) sat, ate, walked, prayed, and lived with them so that the disciples could learn within a relationship.

***What is the goal of Personal Discipleship? People in the full strength of the Holy Spirit creating other disciples of Christ.***

In order to reach our goal, we have found that it is essential for the discipler to form a relationship with their disciple, creating a real environment of learning and growth (the principle of living *alongside*). Four things are necessary to create an atmosphere favorable for personal discipleship: 1) time, 2) trust and friendship, 3) commitment one with the other, and 4) accountability, or a support network (spiritual, moral, and emotional support).

It will be fundamental for disciplers to see the importance of forming a relationship with a new convert, their “disciple.” The new convert (disciple) needs to see Jesus in the life of the discipler. So a close relationship with the discipler is of the greatest importance for the disciple.

## ***Discipleship Program***

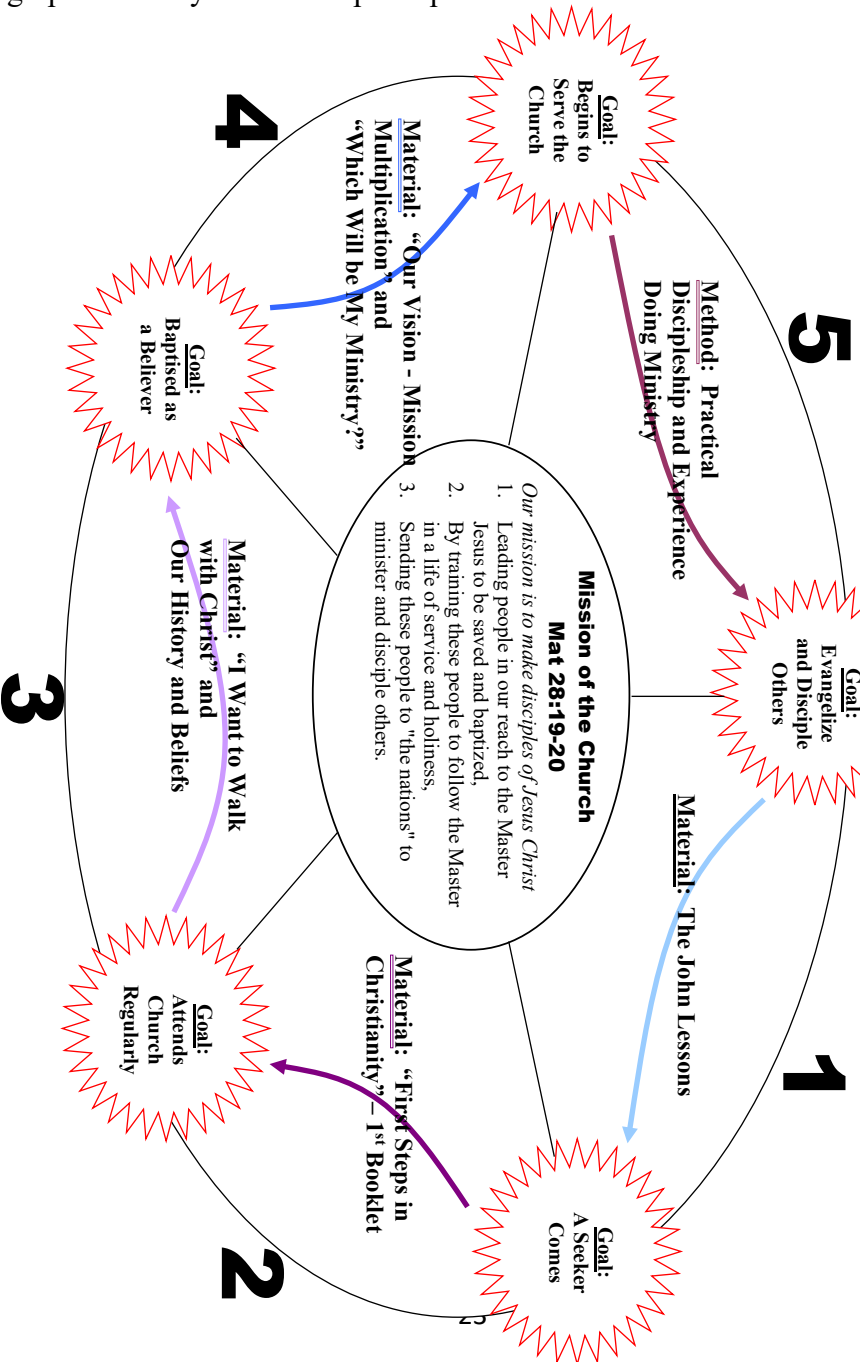
**Purpose** – The purpose of the Discipleship Program is to accompany a new convert in a way that is biblical, systematic, and facilitates spiritual growth. Its goal is to bring each person to enter into the church and become a member, and that each person would find their active role in the vision and ministry of the local church.



This discipleship program was created by the Wesleyan Church to accompany new converts, and help them to grow into the full stature of

Christ. Let's see how the discipleship series works, using the following graph: "The Cycle of Discipleship."

# Cycle of Discipleship - Mission Multiplication



## Questions for Discussion

### 1. *What is Christian Discipleship?*

It is a relationship between two (or more) people, in which Jesus uses a mature Christian to nurture spiritual growth in the other.

### 2. *What are the three objectives that we have in the discipleship process?*

1) spiritual growth, 2) integrating people into the life and vision of the church, and 3) training someone in their area of ministry, developing their gifts and talents, and so furthering experience and passion.

### 3. *How do the relationships work in the triangle of discipleship?*

The person involved receives from the other in the triangle. We would imagine that the discipler will lead and give more. But they will also receive from their disciple, and both will receive from Jesus!

### 4. *What is the goal of Personal Discipleship?*

People in the full strength of the Holy Spirit creating other disciples of Christ.

### 5. *What are the four things that are necessary for creating an atmosphere favorable for personal discipleship?*

1) Time, 2) Trust and friendship, 3) Commitment one with the other, and 4) Accountability or a Support Network.

### 6. *What is the purpose of the “discipleship program?”*

To give biblical, systematic accompaniment to the new convert in a way that brings spiritual growth.

### 7. *Why is the “Cycle of Discipleship” a cycle?*

It is a cycle because once someone finishes the process, they are ready to disciple someone else and it keeps going. Discipleship is a cycle that multiplies disciples!

# Mission: Daughter Churches

*“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which obtained with his own blood.” – Acts 20:28*



*“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.” – 1 Corinthians 3:6-7*

## Introduction

A family will win another family, a small group will multiply and win others, a church will multiply and plant a daughter church. Our goal is to plant churches, Wesleyan churches, to minister to the communities. Until, in the end, the kingdom of God literally invades our cities, our states, our countries, and much more. This is **“Mission: Multiplication”** for the Wesleyan Church!

It is easy to see that the natural result of church growth was planting more churches, back in the era of the beginning church (book of Acts). When a church’s goal is gaining “members,” and it becomes an “organized church,” the result, many times, is that after becoming “organized” it loses its focus on growth. We end up with churches that are organized—and weak and stagnated. We understand that the remedy for this tendency is the vision of Mission: Daughter Churches. The vision of multiplying churches doesn’t allow for the church to remain comfortably stagnant.

While we often emphasize more the categories of Members and Churches, our vision isn’t to only have “members” and “organized churches,” but to have **“mature members”** meeting in **“fruitful churches.”** Our plan emphasizes spiritual growth in the life of both members and church. With this plan, the church doesn’t have a way to “stop,” because the goal is to continue planting daughter churches.

The objective for a pioneer church is to become an organized church. The objective for an organized church is to plant daughter churches that are strong, healthy, and fruitful, and so become a planting church, or, a

multiplier of new churches. This objective needs to be ingrained in the heart of the pastor, whose role is to ingrain it in the heart of the church. The church needs to know, desire, and seek to reach this objective, and no one is better suited to developing this feeling and attitude in the life of the church than the pastor.

If there is an assistant or associate pastor, they can take leadership of the team that goes to plant the new church. But with or without an assistant pastor, the head pastor is fundamental to oversee the growth of the work. Whether leading or supporting the associate pastor, they can find key people to help in the new church, people in the area of evangelism, people experienced in leading small groups, in discipleship, etc.

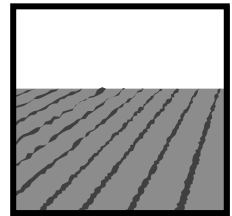
The church that develops a culture of working with small groups (prayer cells, family groups, or the societies) can, very naturally, plant “daughter churches.” The small group works as a “contact point” to choose “target areas,” that is, the contact point in neighborhoods where they would plant a church. It is important that all the churches follow the plan and with all the steps in it. This way, the church can and will generate daughter churches.

This plan is divided into four periods, and, in our vision, it can take as little as two years from beginning to mature church.

The periods are these:

### ***1st Period – Preparation***

**Purpose** – Prepare the established church to become a planting church, or a mother church. Pull together and train a team that will plant the church.



***Preparing the Soil***



***Sowing the Seeds***

### ***2nd Period – Pioneer Church***

**Purpose** – Help the new work to become a firm young church, emphasizing the areas of evangelism and discipleship, with the goal of receiving its first full members.

(Note: every new convert will be discipled, going through the discipleship material of our church.

This means that they will all be *provisional*

members first, and *full members* when they are received as such, having matured and grown.)

### ***3rd Period – Growth and Organization***

**Purpose** – Form the administrative part of the new church and deepen their spiritual understanding, with the goal of making them a mature and fruitful church, which we would call an *organized church*. This period is long, and the work is divided into two fronts: 1)

**Growth** and 2) **Organization**.

**Growth:** this part of the work has three emphases: Prayer, Discipleship, and Evangelism.

**Organization:** the purpose of this part of the work is raising the church to reach the requirements of an established and self-sufficient church, to be a church with its own leadership.

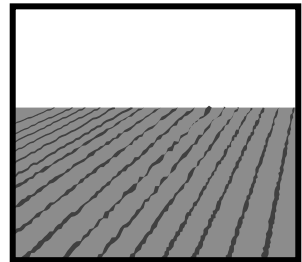
### ***4th Period – Multiplication***

**Purpose** – To reach the point of multiplying, having the vision to plant another church—to become a mother church. During this phase, the church runs a great risk. Many pastors, together with their teams, get settled and the church stops, right where they are! We can't stop here! When the church doesn't have the vision of continuing to plant churches built into their DNA, the church loses its strength.

The members can get lost, having no vision. And, truthfully, it's never easy or convenient to plant a church. It can be impossible, but it is still what we must do! The Lord can bring us to victory. The pastor and their team has to find a way to overcome the barriers and to advance for the sake of the Gospel. In this way, and with this spirit, the church enters into the fourth period—Multiplication.



***Caring for the Soil***



***The Harvest***

## Questions for Discussion

1. *What is the remedy for a weak, stagnated church?*

The vision of Mission: Daughter Churches. The vision to multiply churches doesn't allow the church to get settled and stagnant.

2. *In the vision "Mission: Daughter Churches" the goal isn't "members" or an "organized church," but what?*

Having **mature members** meeting in **fruitful churches**. The goal is to continue to plant daughter churches.

3. *What are the four periods in Mission: Daughter Churches?*

Preparation, Pioneer Church, Growth and Organization, and Multiplication.

4. *What is the emphasis during the second period of Daughter Churches?*

On the areas of evangelism and discipleship, with the goal of the church receiving their first full members.

5. *The third period is the longest and is divided into two parts. What are the two parts?*

Growth and organization.

6. *What is the great danger of the fourth period?*

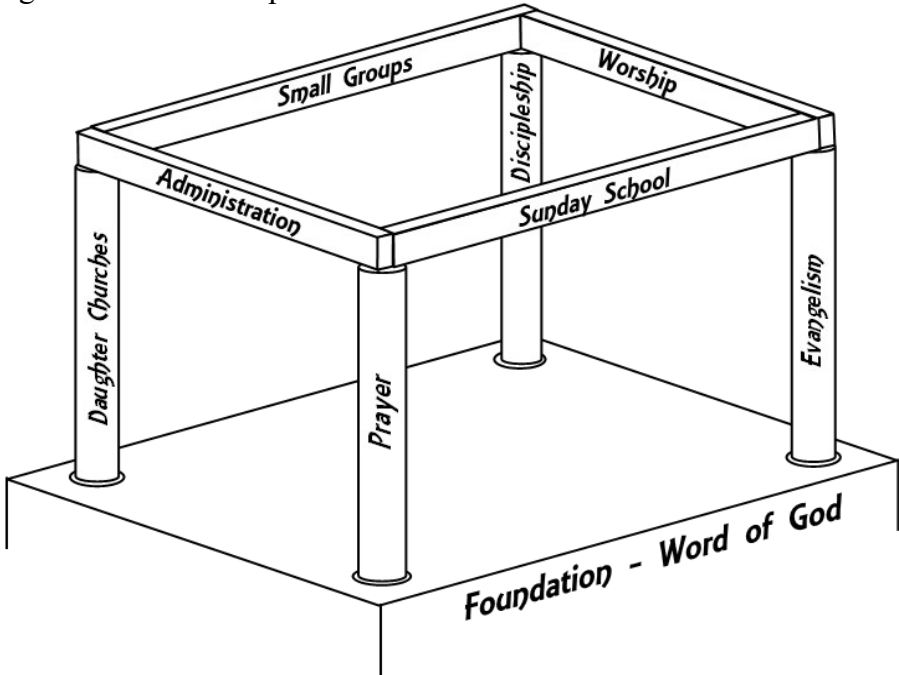
Many pastors, together with their team, get settled and comfortable, and the church stops where they are!

7. *How can we overcome this danger?*

The Lord will take us to victory! The pastor and their team has to find a way to overcome the barriers and advance onwards, in His power.

# The Joists

**Mission: Multiplication** is a carefully integrated system where every part supports and complements the others and, in the end, fulfills our goal of “make disciples.” We like to visualize the structure like this:



The joists of the church are different in nature from the columns. We understand that the columns are essential in the life of the church, and should be implemented first, from the beginning. However, the joists are implemented “*as soon as possible*” for the growth of the church, using the members and their gifts and callings.

It is necessary to unite and direct these ministries in the church for the greatest possible effect. These ministries, the Joists, complement and reinforce the columns, the fundamental ministries of the church. They should be focused and coordinated in order to unite the church for her mission. This coordination/uniting is the job of the **ministerial team**. The ministerial team is the group of ministry leaders in the local church, including the leaders of the “*Joists*” ministries.

## **Ministry of Worship**

Music exerts a strong influence over peoples' lives, and it is present in almost every program and activity that we do in the church. Because of this, we should value this ministry accordingly, carefully establishing proper parameters for it to grow well.

### **I. The purpose of the Ministry of Worship**

The Worship Team should serve the church in the area of music; it carries the responsibility of leading the congregation during times of worship, bringing their brothers and sisters to praise and glorify the Lord, and transmitting and teaching Biblical principles through the lyrics of the songs.

The leader and the members of the Worship Team should be considered spiritual leaders in the church, and, as such, should be servants, obedient to Biblical principles and church leadership, bearing loyal testimony to the love of Christ.

### **II. The Leader of the Ministry of Worship**

The leader of the Worship Team should be someone with spiritual maturity, someone ready and willing to work with the church leadership, and who has a good Christian testimony among the congregation. This leader is chosen by the head pastor of the church and is approved by the administrative board.

### **III. Requirements to Join the Ministry of Worship**

1. Six months of active participation in the work of the church
2. Faithful with tithe
3. A full member
4. Has pastoral approval
5. About clothing while leading worship:
  - a. For men: the use of shorts, tank-tops, earrings, or hats is not allowed, nor any other clothing or adornments that would be inappropriate in a church setting.

- b. For women: the use of low-cut shirts, mini-skirts, short dresses/skirts, or skin-tight pants are not permitted, nor any other clothing or adornment inappropriate for church.

## **Sunday School**

**I. The objectives of Sunday School** – The idea behind Sunday School isn't restricted to just meeting every Sunday, or simply an extra service for members. It has three main objectives:

- A. Win souls for Jesus – the first great duty of a Sunday School teacher is to pray before the Lord, following Him as Lord and Master, and acting in such a way that all their students are inspired to accept Jesus as their Savior.
- B. Develop faith leading to Holiness of life – through teaching the Word, which is a spiritual work. Winning a soul for Christ is only the beginning—it is necessary to take care of them, and help them form Christian habits that result in an ideal character, modelled by the Word of God.
- C. Train the Christian to Serve their Master – still using the Word of God, Sunday School presents to the student many opportunities to serve their Divine Master.

The complete motto of Sunday School should be:

- 1 – every student a saved Christian
- 2 – every saved Christian, a Christian well trained
- 3 – every student trained, an active worker, diligent and dynamic.

## **II. Leadership of Sunday School**

- A. The superintendent of Sunday School is a leader, recognized in the church, and a member of the administrative board. Also, as the leader of one of the largest ministries in the church, they are part of the ministerial team, led by the pastor to unite and organize the various ministries of the church.

- B. The structure of Sunday School is one of the more developed, which also indicates some of its importance. Beyond the normal leadership positions of secretary, treasurer, etc., there exists a team of trained teachers, who will operate weekly with material chosen or created by our church.
- C. The Sunday School teacher is one of the fundamental connections between student and church, and between student and spiritual growth.

There is always a need for workers, teachers, and supporters for our Sunday Schools! Join us!

## The Societies

### YOUTH SOCIETY

#### Declaration of Purpose

Everything that the Society of Youth plans and does should be built on purpose. Ask yourself, “what is the purpose of this activity with the youth?” or “what is the purpose of these plans?”

This society is founded around five purposes: worship, evangelism, discipleship, service, and fellowship. It focuses on working on your testimony, through discipleship, and making it useful and in line with your gifts and talents, for a life of fellowship and service. It is as Paul counsels in 1 Tm 4:12: *“Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.”*

#### Criteria for the Leadership

What stands out in the leader is their style of life that can inspire others. For this reason, this criterion contemplates questions of holiness, Christianity, and doctrine in the lifestyle of the leader. The president of the Youth should be a full member, should be actively participating in the weekly programs and in Sunday School, for their own growth and in

order to be an example for the other youth, and should have a good testimony/reputation in the congregation.

### Training of Local Leaders

The district youth leadership also has the responsibility to capacitate and train local leaders. Annually, there will be a meeting of the local youth leaders in order to strengthen them and prepare them for serving in their churches. Local leaders can seek out the District Youth Leadership to receive counsel, materials for support, guidance, or training in specific areas.

### Duties, Functions of, and Expectations for the Local Leader

The duties of a leader center around directing both spiritual and administrative activities. Spiritual activities would be evangelistic, missionary, or social events, discipleship, etc. Administrative activities have to do with working with their team to organize the calendar around the objectives of their society and the church. For this reason, the leader of the Youth is part of the Ministerial Team, under the leadership of their pastor.

### **Activities in the Local Church**

Every month has more or less four Saturdays, and one is used for the district programs—which is important to strengthen the fellowship between the local churches and to give announcements that would be of general interest. The other three Saturdays of each month are available to be used as the local leadership best sees fit. For example, a social work event, a celebration, Bible competitions, outings, open-air services, street evangelism (plays, movies, presentations), talent shows, joint events with other local churches, worship in a public setting, sports competitions, and more.

## **WOMEN'S SOCIETY**

Purpose – the purpose of this society is to expand the Kingdom of God through missionary works, education, charity, and by being an extension of the Evangelical Wesleyan Church both in and out of their country.

Historically, this society has also taken care of the pastoral families, ministered to the women of the church, fought for families, and led the social work of the church.

Leadership and the Local Structure: every year in the local conference, a lady is elected as president of the local society. She will lead the society and organize the women to participate in ministry and regular meetings. To support her, the society can elect officials to help in the ministry of the society—a vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The president is part of the ministerial team, and participates in the monthly team meetings to share plans, support and be supported, and to unite the church for the expansion of the Kingdom.

Activities and Meetings: the local leadership, with the support of the District, will plan and carry out activities in order to reach the objectives of the society, such as:

- Meet with the women for a time of fellowship and edification.
- Carry out activities or events of evangelism, especially those for reaching other women.
- Raise funds for missions or social work.
- Promote events to strengthen families.
- In other ways, support the ministry of the church and the pastor.

District Leadership: the District Women’s Society conference will elect a district president, one who will bring vision and leadership. Also, they will elect the other officials to form a board. The district meetings of the women’s society occur on the first Saturday of every month.

The district leadership will promote unity and will support the ministry of the local societies, through monthly meetings and training events, as well as events for specific themes, such as missions, family, etc. Be sure to join in!

## **MEN’S SOCIETY**

Purpose – Wesleyan Men will seek to expand the Kingdom of God,

using the ministries of the Evangelical Wesleyan Church, through evangelism, serving, being good stewards, and fellowship. The society typically uses the experience and jobs traditionally done by men in the work of the Lord, such as construction, watching over property, acting in areas of medicine, transport, business, etc.

These areas are connected to another important area in the men's ministry – leadership. The church often looks to its men to take leadership and to give direction.

Forming the Society – Oftentimes the men's society is the last to form. The biggest reason for this is the lack of purpose—but the church needs the presence and leadership of its men. You don't need more than two to begin the society! The meetings can grow from there, providing ways to serve the church in construction, in evangelism, in coordinating events, or in playing a game of soccer with the community. It is necessary that the men come together in order to serve the Kingdom! Even a small group of committed men can do great things!

The President – The leader of the men's society is elected annually by the local conference. As with any leader in the church, he should be a full member, with a good reputation, someone who is faithful both in attending services and finances, including through tithes. The president is part of the ministerial team, and is under the pastor, and serves the church.

## **SMALL GROUPS**

*And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were begin saved. (Acts 2:46-47)*

In order to fulfill our mission, we want to structure the church to prepare it for victory, to take off and take flight. We want to follow closely what the Bible says. We see that the formation of small groups is a Biblical idea, and important for the life of the church. In our vision, the church acting in small groups is essential for strength and growth.

Jesus talked with large groups and taught them. But He also disciplined smaller groups. Jesus also visited and ministered in peoples' homes. The church, both naturally and practically, has three settings—the wholesale (everyone together), the individual, and the selective (small groups).

Small groups offer many opportunities to serve the church. We need hosts, and as a host your house can be used for meetings. We need leaders to direct the meetings, and to lead people to grow spiritually and in the Word. We need evangelists to visit the neighborhoods and to invite people to small groups. We need people with the gift of hospitality in every neighborhood! Let's grow through small groups!

## Questions for Discussion

1. *What is the difference between columns and joists (beams), in light of our vision?*

The columns are essential in the life of the church and should be implemented first. The beams should be implemented “*as soon as possible*” for the advancement of the church.

2. *What is the importance of the worship team in the church?*

Music exerts a strong influence over peoples' lives. It is present in practically every event the church has.

3. *Cite two requirements for someone to join the ministry of worship.*

Six months of active participation in the works of the church, giving tithe faithfully, be a full church member, have pastoral approval.

4. *What are the three objectives of Sunday School?*

Win souls for Jesus, develop spirituality in the students, train Christians for serving the Master.

5. *What is the title of the Sunday School leader?*

Superintendent.

6. *The mission of the Youth looks at five goals. What are they?*

Worship, evangelism, discipleship, service, and fellowship.

7. *List three activities that happen in Youth meetings. (See page 29)*

8. *Historically, the women's society has had a strong purpose to support missions and expand the church. List other purposes.*

Take care of the pastoral family, minister to women in the church, fight for the sake of families, and lead social work in the church.

9. *How does the leadership of the women's society strengthen the local church?*

Through monthly meetings and training events, and events with specific themes—missions, the family, etc.

10. *The men's society serves the Wesleyan Church differently than the other societies. How?*

Experiences and jobs that are traditionally men's in the work of the Lord, such as construction, watching over property, medicine, transportation, business, etc. In leadership!

11. *Small groups are a setting that Jesus used frequently. How?*

He discipled in small groups, and visited and ministered in peoples' homes.

12. *What are the opportunities to serve the church through small groups?*

Hosting, leading a group, evangelizing in the neighborhoods.

*[End this lesson and this book by singing a hymn.]*

## **A Time and a Reason to Sing – “Christ the Lord is Risen Today”**

*The author of this hymn is Charles Wesley, John Wesley's brother. The hymns of the Methodists, particularly Charles Wesley's hymns, were used to teach theology, to remind the people of Scriptural truth and to even teach them to know the history of the Bible. Christ the Lord is Risen Today, is a song written in 1739 to celebrate and remember the victory over death of our Lord Jesus on Easter morning. Charles Wesley wrote more than 6 thousand hymns, as well as being a pastor and evangelist in the Methodist movement.*

1. Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!  
Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!  
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!  
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!
2. Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!  
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!  
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!  
Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!
3. Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!  
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!  
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!  
Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!
4. Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!  
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!  
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia!  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!



# WHAT WILL BE MY MINISTRY?



Discipler



*He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. Psalm 1:3*

# **Which will be My Ministry?**

## **Index**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>p. 2</b>
<b>Lesson 1 – Your Heart</b>	<b>p. 3</b>
<b>Lesson 2 – Your Gifts and Talent</b>	<b>p. 6</b>
<b>Lesson 3 – Your Experience</b>	<b>p. 9</b>
<b>Lesson 4 – The Needs</b>	<b>p. 11</b>
<b>Lesson 5 – Your Ministry</b>	<b>p. 14</b>

# **Which Will be My Ministry?**

## ***What are the Goals?***

A church member needs responsibilities, a place to contribute, a say to help others, specifically some ministry. If this does not happen, that person becomes weak, unmotivated, and spiritual growth stops. *This is a fact!* It is common for people to be willing to help and there will always be needs in the church. However, some times, people try to do things outside of their gifts, abilities and experience. Or the pastor can be so busy that he stops leading people into a ministry, which is why too many just sit in the benches. And when our people are not growing, the church is not growing.

This book, "Which is My Ministry?" will help the pastor and local church leadership "put the right person in the right place for the right reasons." This leadership should use the last meeting (*The Needs*) in order to show all the things the church is in need of and even dream about new things to do. And so everyone will benefit. The most important thing being that the Lord's work will move forward!

## ***How can we move forward? How can I get involved?***

We will meet 5 times and each time we will see a different aspect regarding your calling and ministry in the body of Christ. At the last meeting we will seek from God a ministry, a position, a calling, particularly for you, in your local church. This means that we will seek God's will for you in this period. This may change in the future. You will grow and mature as well. But this is the first step. God is faithful in leading the steps of true followers. We expect God to reveal new things to us. We expect God to meet the needs in the church at the same time that He is teaching and discipling the members. We also hope to have great victories because we are faithfully seeking and serving the Lord.

# 1<sup>ST</sup> MEETING: YOUR HEART

First fill out the "Preferences Sheet" form on the next two pages. Then answer the questions below.

What will motivate you and touch your heart more than anything else?

If someone mentioned your name to a group of your friends, what would they say is your greatest interest or your greatest passion?

The people you enjoy working with or would like to help are:

- Babies
- Children
- Young
- Teenage Mothers
- Parents
- Single Moms/Dads
- University
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Single
- Refugees
- Mature couples
- Elderly
- Physically deficient
- Inmates
- V
- Hos
- Ne
- Homeles
- Une
- Disad

What are the church issues, ministries, or possible needs that get me excited or worried?

If I could know I wouldn't fail, what would I do with my life?

Based on my answers above, I feel I have a passion for: \_\_\_\_\_

I think the area where I could contribute significantly would be:

---

# PREFERENCES SHEET

Mark (✓) next to the activities you like to do.

Mark (X) next to the activities you'd like to try to do.

Mark (O) next to the activities you wouldn't want to do.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_, Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b><u>I like:</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> sing alone</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> singing in worship</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> playing an instrument</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> be an usher</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> help in the area of multimedia</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> help with sound</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> help physically disabled</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assist with sports</p> <p><b><u>Use my skill to work as:</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> carpenter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> painter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> plumber</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> electrician</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> mechanic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> secretary</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> other:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> greeter in the</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> cooking, serving food</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ornamentation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> help in Project Planning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> office</p> <p><b><u>Help in the areas of:</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> library</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Help with medicines</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Work with children</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Events for Children</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Care for babies</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Handiwork</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Theological Education</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> social media outreach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> maintenance of vehicles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Construction and maintenance of the church</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> needy children</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> develop relationship-Visits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> shelter/asylum/</p>	<p><b><u>I Could Try:</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Teaching young people</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ensinar adults</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> sharing the faith</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> volunteer in local school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> local preacher</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> preacher or teacher on social networks</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> evangelist</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Trustee at the Church</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> professor de EBD</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> work w/ kids club</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ministry to singles or separated persons</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> leader of discipleship</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> missionary for short or long period</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> evangelize</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bible translator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> líder of family groups</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Counselor in camps or</p>
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# **2ND MEETING: YOUR GIFTS AND TALENTS**

*Fill out the questionnaire called "Talents and Skills" on the next page.  
Then answer the following questions.*

1. What is your profession?
2. What are the other tasks or skills you have experience and knowledge of?
3. What would be your area of expertise or a strong, hard-working skill?
4. What subjects have you spoken to an audience about or spoken about?
5. What is the most valuable personal resource you have to offer?
6. How can your skills be useful in the church?

***Combine what you already know about your personality and style, add now to your skills. No everyone is an evangelist or pastor.***

7. How can this be used in the Lord's work to help others?

# TALENTS AND SKILLS

*Carefully mark each talent or skill in which you have proven expertise with respect to each area below. Then go back to the previous page about Your Skill.*

## Office

- Word processing
- Receptionist
- E-mail, fax, etc.
- Editing, language
- Translation
- Secretary

## Professional Services

- Counselling
- Sales
- Administration
- Legal Compliance
- Financial Area
- Legal Area
- Marketing Area
- Communication
- Computer science
- Accounting
- Engineering:

- 
- Education
  - Nursing
  - General Services
  - Medicine:

- 
- First aid
  - Public relations
  - Psychology

- Dept. Personnel

## Working with

- Disabled
- People w/  
Addictions
- Children in need
- Immigrants
- People who are  
marginal, poor
- Oral health
- Hospital visit

## Arts

- Multimedia
- Handiwork
- Artist \_\_\_\_\_
- Decoration
- Photography
- Graphics
- Layout

## Theatre

- Dance
- Pantomime
- Puppets
- Poetry
- Acting (Drama)

## Mechanics

- Diesel Mechanic
- Auto/motorcycle
- Bicycle Repair
- Equipment
- Small engine

## General Aid

- Cooking
- Caring for Children
- Youth and Adult  
Educator
- Gardening
- Maintenance
- Driver
- Training

## Teaching or Assist.

- Single Adults
- Couples
- Dance
- Sports
- Faculty
- Men's Groups
- Women's Groups
- Preschool
- Elementary School
- Middle school

## Other

- Architect
- Plumber
- Electrician
- Joiner
- Master Builders
- Mason
- Driver

## **A Time and a Reason to Remember – “The Apostle’s Creed”**

*The Apostle’s Creed is a statement of faith that many churches recite as a confession, a personal statement of what one believes. It came about in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century of the church and was used to refute false teaching and heresy. That seems to be its purpose, a confession for all Christians to remember and declare the basic Christian doctrines. It is still used today by all of the main Christian groups around the world.*

“I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church\*, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen”

## **3RD MEETING: YOUR EXPERIENCE**

*The focus of this meeting goes beyond your experience in doing something, in a job, for example. We want to probe and value your experience with God and then apply it to the Lord's ministry to help others. Every experience can be used by the Lord.*

**The Spiritual Journey:** Tell how and when you accepted Jesus as the Savior of your life.

Have you been baptized in the Spirit or do you have doubts about whether it happened or not? Have you had an encounter with God in which your life was impacted and changed (other than salvation)? Talk about these experiences. Have you felt that God has a purpose for your life? What is His calling in your life?

Share the times when you felt closest to God and also your significant spiritual experiences that stand out in your mind. How can these experiences be used to encourage others in the faith?

Remember pleasant experiences that have provided you with a sense of accomplishment, a great achievement or victory. It doesn't have to be a church related experience, but it can be a moment that God has worked or blessed. Did God have a purpose in these experiences?

What are your painful or difficult experiences that can help you counsel someone suffering or encourage another believer?

How have you served in the church? What are your experiences in the Lord's work? Looking back, is there an experience where you felt used by the Lord and very helpful? Can this be a ministry to you?

Do you believe that God works in people's lives and experiences, even before they are converted? Reflect on how God has prepared and is preparing you for His work. Think about your skills, your experiences working and your studies. What is the direction you are seeing or feeling from God?

What is the next step in your walk with Christ? How should you prepare for the work the Lord has for you?

# **4<sup>TH</sup> MEETING - THE NEEDS**

*(Prayerfully fill out the "The Servant's Profile" form on page 11 and take it to the last discipleship material meeting.)*

What are the needs of your church, district, neighborhood, or community? How can you be used by God to minister to others and assist in the expansion of God's Kingdom? One of the purposes of this meeting is to hear from the needs. God uses many ways to call people. We can discover God's will by spiritual gifts, our abilities or experiences, or through the desires God places in our hearts. However, sometimes God calls directly through a need and the person will say like Isaiah, "Here am I, send me!" Remember that God does not always reveal all of His will at once. But let's seek the Lord!

In the previous book, *Mission Multiplication*, you saw the various ministries in the church, the 4 pillars – prayer, evangelism, discipleship, church planting. Could you disciple someone, just like you are being disciplined? The joists – the societies, the Sunday School, the worship group, the family groups, the church always needs people getting involved in these areas. Can you help as secretary or treasurer? In the area of construction and maintenance, there is always the need. The church can have more ministries and you yourself can be used by the Lord to start a new ministry!

One thing we believe, God has a calling, a purpose for every person. God wants to use you to build the church, to bless people, and to advance the kingdom of God, certainly. The *Personal Profile for Ministry* exists for you to contemplate this call and enter the ministry of the church. With your discipler's help, you are being asked to choose a ministry! It may change. No problem. But be active, engaged in God's great work! It is the last meeting of discipleship. Let's use questions, the tests in this *Personal Ministry Profile booklet*, and a conversation at this time to choose how you can be involved in the church.

The conversation:

I would very much like to help in the area of...

I think the Lord has prepared me to work in the area of...

Dear discipler, what do you think I can do in the church...

Discipler, what are the needs in the church with which I can help, with the Lord's help...

I feel like God wants me to...

Put here the ministry (or ministries) chosen by you: \_\_\_\_\_

---

*Fill out the Servant Profile by the next class in preparation to talk to the pastor, discipler or counselor about ministry in the church.*

*[End this lesson and the discipleship material singing one last hymn.]*

# **A Time and a Reason to Sing – “How Great Thou Art”**

Carl Gustaf Boberg, the author of How Great Thou Art, was born in Mönsterås, Sweden. He was a member of the Swedish Parliament, 1912-1931, popular speaker and appreciated writer. He published several collections of poetry and a number of hymns.

How Great Thou Art is probably the all-time favorite hymn today. Although its origin had roots in Europe, it was not widely known until 1957, when the Billy Graham Crusade in New York City launched it on a never-ending spiral around the world. It was performed nearly a hundred times during those meetings and countless times since.

One cannot sing this majestic hymn of praise and adoration without realizing anew the omnipotence of the Creator who did it all.

1. O Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder,  
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have made;  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

*Refrain: Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.  
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!*

2. When through the woods, and forest glades I wander,  
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.  
When I look down, from lofty mountain grandeur  
And see the brook, and feel the gentle breeze. (Refrain)

3. And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;  
That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin. (Refrain)

4. When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.

Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,  
And then proclaim: "My God, how great Thou art!" (*Refrain*)

# **5<sup>TH</sup> MEETING – YOUR MINISTRY**

## **THE SERVANT'S PROFILE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State.: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital status: \_\_\_\_\_ Born: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Name of spouse: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_ Born: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_ Born: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_ Born: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_ Born: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Conversion Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_, Date of Baptism: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

## **CURRENT MINISTERIAL INVOLVEMENT**

List the ministries in which you are currently involved:

Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_ Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_ Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **PAST MINISTERIAL INVOLVEMENT**

Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_ Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_ Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

I am an employer  I am an employee\*  I am without a job

\*Where I work: \_\_\_\_\_

Role/Responsibility: \_\_\_\_\_

Schooling:  Elementary  Medium  Graduate  Post-Graduate

In what area? \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## SERVANT PROFILE

I have a passion for 1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

The people I'd like to work with: \_\_\_\_\_

My time availability is:

- Limited (1-2 hours per week)
- Moderate (2-4 hours per week)
- Significant (more than 4 hours per week)
- Uncertain

I would like to know more about the following ministries:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*The discipler/counselor will work with the disciple to 1) involve him or her in a ministry of the church and also, 2) to connect them to a discipler who will help them develop their calling, gifts and ministry for the glory of God and for the benefit of the church.*



# Discipleship Material Transcultural – Global - Adaptable

## **5 Books that form a plan of discipleship, and prepare people to serve the Lord.**



**First Steps  
Be In Christianity  
Ministry?**



**Growing in  
Christ!**



**Our History  
and Beliefs**



**Our Mission -  
Multiplication**



**Which Will  
My**

Unless otherwise indicated, all the Scriptures that are quoted in English will be from the ESV version of the Bible

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Discipleship Material



The Wesleyan  
Workshop  
[wesleyanchurch1k@gmail.com](mailto:wesleyanchurch1k@gmail.com)

Evaluation Form

