

DISCIPLESHIP Series
2nd Book



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

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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 4th 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?

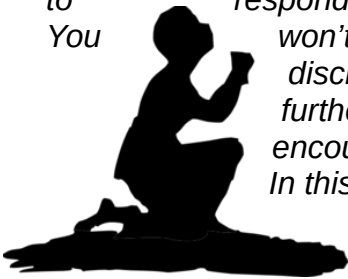
We have learned how important Bible study is and today we will talk about prayer. We refer to these two practices as “means of grace.” That is because, we receive God’s grace and blessing when we do these. God strengthens us spiritually when we study and pray. We don’t gain God’s favor, by doing them.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

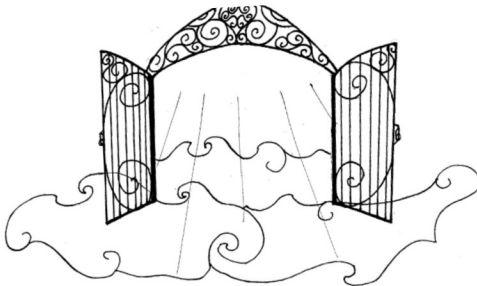
What words or ideas did you see repeated? *[Hopefully, they noted the words about "forgiveness" (v 12, 14, 15). Clearly the issue is being emphasized if it is repeated twice in just a short passage.]*

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 allways 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.]*

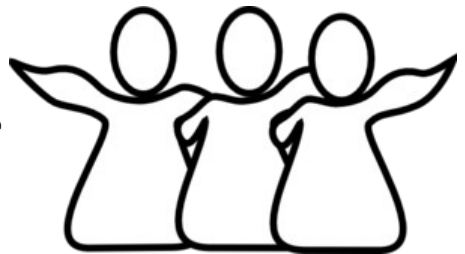
How did these new believers respond? *[It says in v. 44 they had all in common, or the distributed things amongst themselves so that no one was in need. They sold their possessions. They ate together in one another's homes (v. 45). Their hearts were full of the grace of God and wanted to extend it to 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^a

[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.

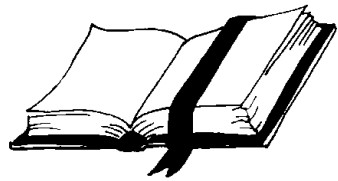
Conversation Questions:

- 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^a*

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*]

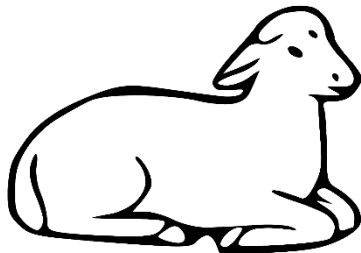
When is this happening? [*“Passover,” “Day of Unleavened bread”, one of the biggest Jewish feasts/holidays. “Before I suffer” vs. 15*]

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 14th. 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



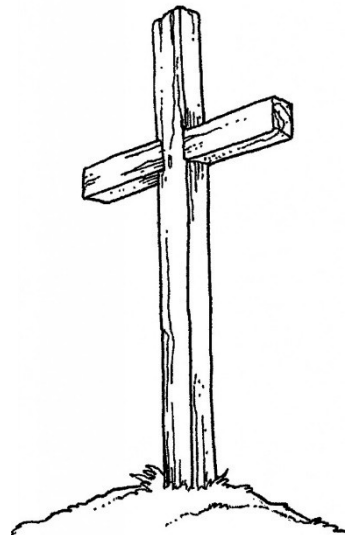
a bit about the Children of Israel getting ready to move into the land that God had promised them.) If anyone put the blood on their door post, the angel of death would “pass over” them. If not, the first born of that family would die. The Pharaoh’s son died and then Pharaoh let God’s people go. The 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.]*

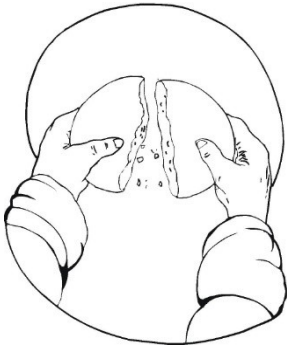
Why was there this special attention given to this preparation for Passover (vs. 7-13)? *[It shows the importance of this event. It*

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 book 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]*

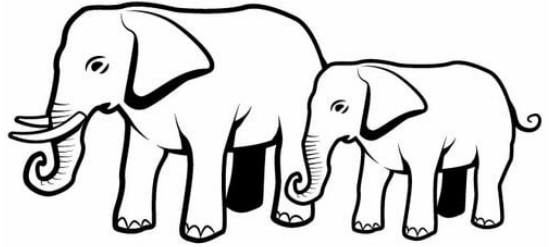
How did God create the world? *[God spoke. This demonstrated His creative power. He spoke, and creation took place, showing His omnipotence. Genesis 1:3]*

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.]*

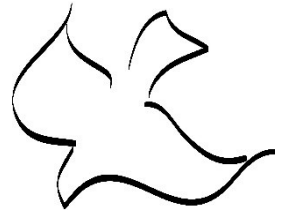
What does it mean to be created in God's image? **How** is this image reflected in humanity? *[We mentioned a few ways, but let's look at some other implications. Being created in the image of God means that human beings have dignity, morality, and the ability to relate to God. This image is reflected 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.

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.

[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**.

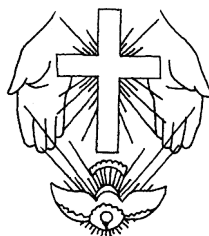
[*Different names for the Holy Spirit – Helper, the Holy Spirit, Spirit of Truth – 3, Father -2*

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.

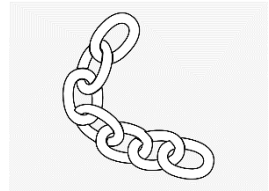
Step 1: Ask questions about the context. Is there an **introduction** or a **conclusion**?

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

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)]



by

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

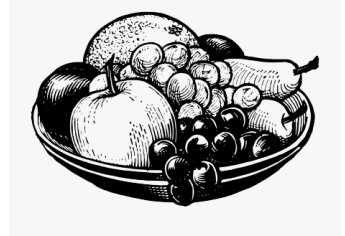
[Pray together, offering your hearts and lives to the full leadership of the Holy Spirit. Below is a prayer of consecration by John Wesley]

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 4th 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.]*

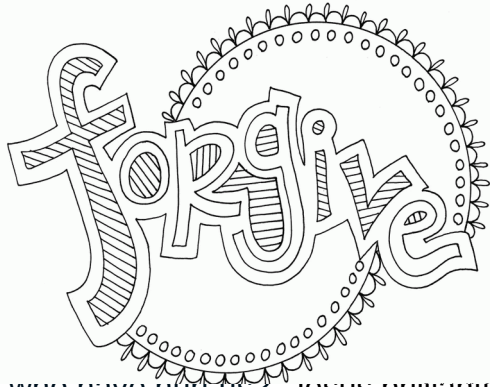
What amount was this servant forgiven? *[Ten thousand talents. It is equivalent to \$1,000,000 dollars.]*

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.

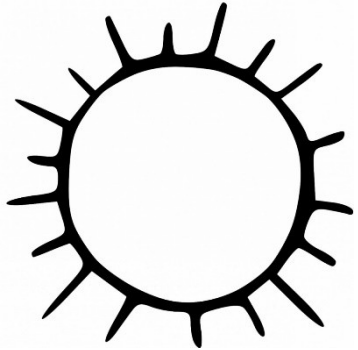
Take a good look into your heart. It is so much easier to see the
wrongs of others but not our own. But as you walk with the Holy
Spirit, He will guide you into all truth, enabling you to see what is
true and then helping you to do what is right.

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]

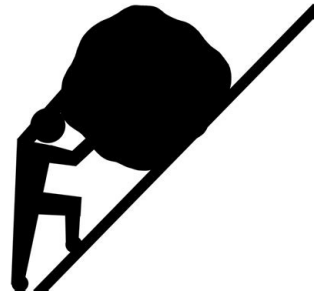
Lesson 11

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 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.']

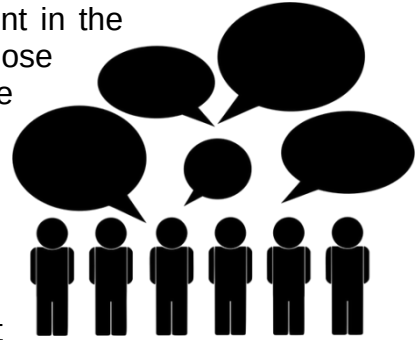
Step 5: Look for the **main message** of the passage.

_____ *[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:

Appropriate, **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.*

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**

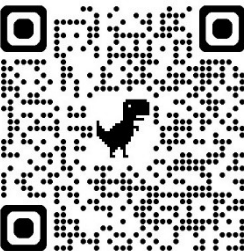


**Which Will
My**

Unless otherwise indicated, all the Scriptures that are quoted in English will be from the ESV version of the Bible

Please adapt and translate this material for your needs. Also use the QR Code or link below, 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. 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.

Discipleship Material



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