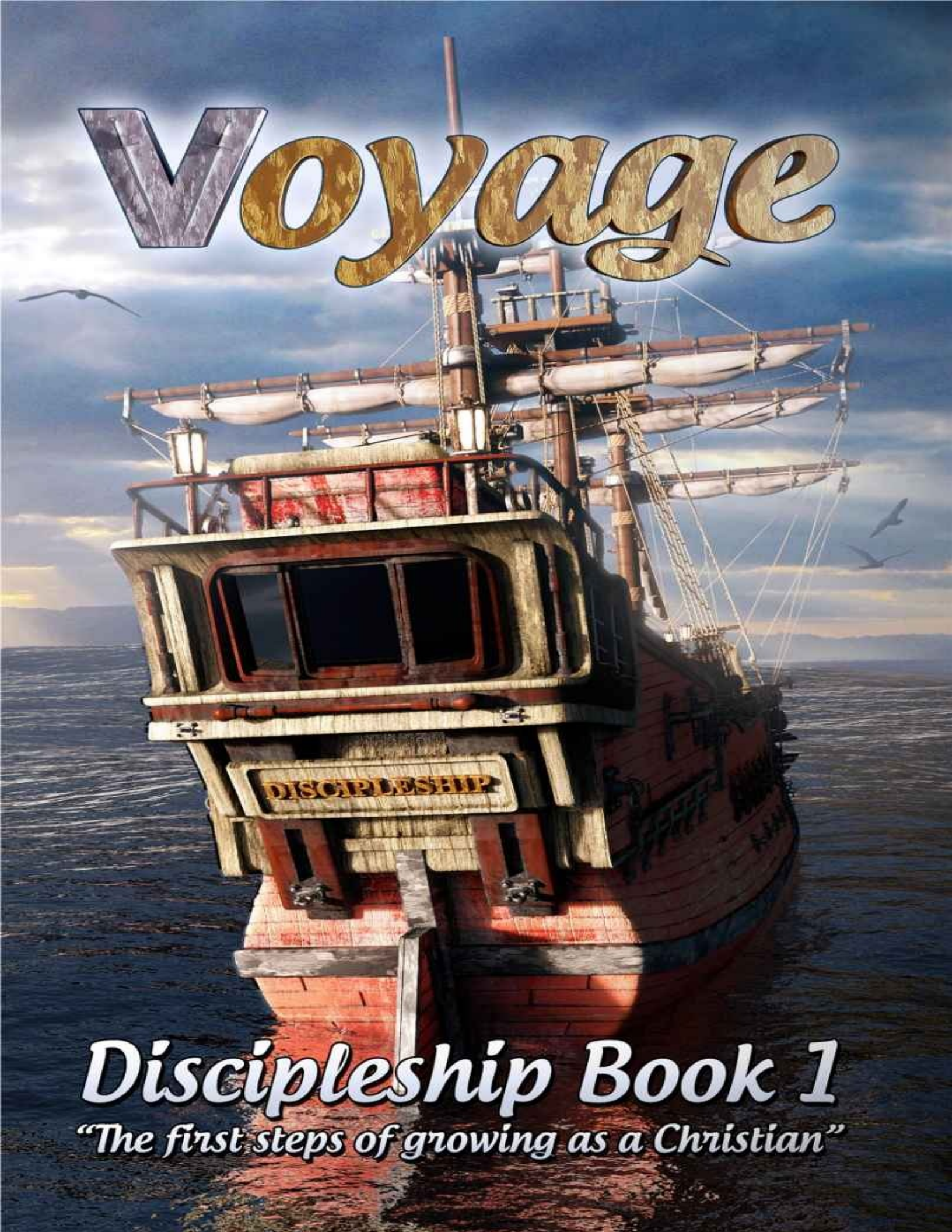
Voyage
DISCIPLESHIP
Discipleship Book 1
"The first steps of growing as a Christian"

VOYAGE

The First Steps of Growing as a Christian

Ten discipleship lessons meant to introduce young Christians to topics essential to the Christian life

By Pastor Jim Krohn

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The Purpose

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Matthew 28:19-20

God wants us not only to be saved, but also to learn about Him. God wants us not only to go to heaven when we die, but also to learn how to live for Him while we remain on this planet. The purpose of these lessons is so that the church might begin to fulfill its commission to teach you to *"observe all things whatsoever I (Jesus) have commanded you."*

The true Christian life is a wonderful life. It is better than anything the world can offer. It leads to happy marriages, children, and homes. It leads to a freedom from the bondage of sin. It leads to a fuller knowledge of Jesus Christ and a closer relationship with Him. The Christian life ultimately leads to a fulfillment of purpose and satisfaction that can be achieved no other way.

As you study these lessons, open your heart to the truths of the Bible and ask God to guide you as you seek to please the Lord who not only created you, but saved you from sin and hell.

Theme Teaching

"Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;" 2 Peter 1:13

In the Bible, the Apostle Peter often speaks of putting people in "remembrance." We are forgetful hearers and God, knowing this, comments on this in the Bible. For this reason, all of these lessons are taught around a theme. The verses used in the lesson will support this one central truth. Even if you do not remember all of the verses, if you remember the theme, it will help you apply the lesson to your everyday life.

Memory Verses

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Psalm 119:11

We are instructed to hide God's Word in our heart. God also tells us to meditate on it. Memorizing portions of God's Word is critical to that end. Each lesson has one verse associated with it to memorize. As you go through these lessons it is important that you memorize each verse. This is intimidating to some people, but it shouldn't be. Only one memory verse is used with each lesson, and God is more than able to help you memorize His Word as you study it.

VOYAGE

1. Faith in the Bible
2. The Role of the Bible in our Lives
3. God
4. Salvation
5. Personal Devotions
6. Dealing with Our Sin Nature
7. The Church and Your Pastor
8. Ordinances – Baptism and the Lord's Supper
9. Giving
10. Evangelism and Missions

LESSON 1
FAITH IN THE BIBLE

Theme: Your Believability

Memory Verse: John 14:29

> *"And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe."* John 14:29

There are many "religious" books and many religions in the world. How do we know that the Bible is the one from God and that Christianity has God's plan of salvation? Fortunately, God does not demand blind faith. He even tells us in the Bible that there will be many false christs and false religions. Therefore, He has given us an abundance of evidence that Christianity is the one true religion, and that the Bible is God's book. Some of these evidences include:

1. The prophecy contained in the Bible
2. The scientific accuracy of the Bible
3. The historical accuracy of the Bible
4. The affect the Bible has had on people's lives

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce Christians to a small sampling of these evidences.

Prophecy Contained in the Bible:

Our memory verse for the lesson (John 14:29) explains that God tells us things before they happen (prophecy), so that, when they happen, we might _____. God purposely included prophecy in the Bible to prove that it was His book and to increase our faith.

<u>Prophecy about Christ:</u>

Isaiah Chapter 53 is a very famous example of prophecy. Look up the following verses from this passage:

- Isaiah 53:4-6, 8 – over and over again we see that it was prophesied that Christ would die for the sins of the people.
- Isaiah 53:9 – He made His grave with the _____. He was crucified between two thieves.
- Isaiah 53:9 – Yet He was also with the _____ in His death. Though He died between thieves, He was buried by a rich man in the rich man's tomb.
- Isaiah 53:10 – After making His soul an offering for sin (for us), He shall _____ His days. Jesus rose from the grave three days after His death.

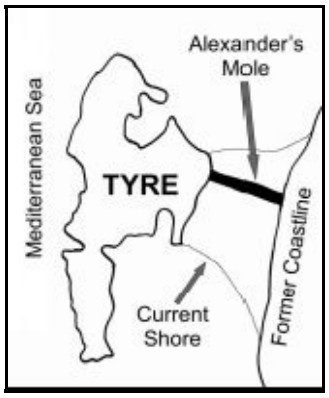
This is amazing considering that this passage was written thousands of years before Christ!

This is just one example of Messianic prophecy (prophecy about the Messiah). There are many others (including Micah 5:2, Isaiah 7:14, Zechariah 9:9, Zechariah 11:12-13, Psalm 22:6-8, 16, 18, and Psalm 34:20).

Prophecy about History:

Ezekiel 26 records an amazing prophecy about the ancient city of Tyre. Tyre was a city that was built partially on the mainland and partially on an island. Look up the following verses from this chapter:

- Ezekiel 26:8 – The mainland city will be destroyed. Nebuchadnezzar did destroy the mainland portion of Tyre.
- Ezekiel 26:3 – Many nations against Tyre – This was fulfilled when Alexander the Great gathered a fleet from many nations to suppress Tyre's fleet.
- Ezekiel 26:4 – Tyre will be made flat like the top of a _____. In order to attack the island portion of Tyre, Alexander the Great decided to build a causeway (he actually filled in part of the ocean). To do this, he used all the rubble from the mainland city. He literally removed the city and made it "flat."
- Ezekiel 26:5 – Fisherman will spread nets over the site. References have been made to how this has happened in modern history.
- Ezekiel 26:12 – The debris of Tyre will be laid in the midst of the _____. This happened when Alexander was making the causeway.



Scientific Accuracy of the Bible:

While the Bible is not primarily a book about science, when it speaks about science, it speaks accurately. Even in the arena of creation versus evolution, the Bible speaks volumes, but that is a topic for a more in depth lesson. Some simple and easily understood examples of the Bible's scientific accuracy are:

The Earth Hangs on…What? – Job 26:7

According to this verse, the earth hangs on _____. The educated Greeks believed that Atlas supported the earth on his back. Other cultures believed that there were four great pillars holding up the earth or that it rested on the back of a giant turtle that swam through a celestial sea. So, how did Job know the truth four thousand years ago?

The Timing of Circumcision – Genesis 17:12

This verse says that a child should be circumcised on the _____ day. If your child is circumcised today, it is normally done within the first two days of his life before you go home from the hospital. Before doctors circumcise, they will give him a vitamin K shot. This vitamin naturally helps with clotting and is vital for the stoppage of bleeding.

Now, in Abraham's time, before vitamin K shots, he was instructed by God to circumcise on the eighth day. This just "happens" to be the day that a child will have the highest naturally occurring levels of vitamin K and prothrombin (necessary for clotting in conjunction with vitamin K) in his entire life. How did they know?

In a way, these scientific truths are almost prophetic in that these things were unknown at the time they were written. ***Remember that the reason these things (and the prophecies listed earlier) are in the Bible is so that you might believe.***

Historical Accuracy of the Bible:

There are literally thousands of examples of the historical accuracy of the Bible. Perhaps the most famous one is the fall of Jericho. Archeology has discovered that the walls of the city fell down flat and the city was burned just like the Bible says. The most satisfying proofs of accuracy, however, are items that at one time were in dispute. The following is a sampling of items that are all accepted as true today, but, ***as little as one hundred years ago, were once cited by "scholars" as errors in the Bible.***

- The Roman Census of Luke (Luke 2:1).
- The concept of people going back to the area of their ancestral home during the Roman Census (Luke 2:3).
- The fact that Quirinius (Cyrenius) was governor of Syria (Luke 2:2).
- Luke's use of the Greek word "praetor" (Acts 16:20) to describe the rulers in Philippi.
- Luke's use of the Greek word for "proconsul" (Acts 18:12) as the title for Gallio.
- King Sargon of Assyria [Isaiah 20] - "It was the sole reference to Sargon preserved in the records of the ancient world until the excavations in old Assyria showed what a great king he was" [The Bible and Archaeology, Thompson, pp 142-143]
- Belshazzar as the last king of Babylon. History at one time only recognized Nabonidus as the last king. However the discovery of the Nabonidus Chronicle makes it clear that Nabonidus was away on campaigns and established a dwelling at Teima. The tablet says of his son, Belshazzar that "He [Nabonidus] freed his hand; he trusted the kingship to him." Thus Belshazar exercised co-regency in Babylon and Daniel is correct. It also shed light on Daniel 5:30 where a man like Daniel would be "third" in the kingdom. [The Bible and Archaeology, Thompson, summarized from pp 166-169]

The Effect the Bible has on Lives:

Kenneth Scott Latourette puts it this way: "Through Him (Jesus) movements have been set in motion which have made in society for what mankind believes to be its best – in the inward transformation of human lives, in political order, in the production and distribution of goods to meet the physical needs of men, in healing physical ills, in the relations between races and between nations, in art, in religion, and in the achievements of the human intellect. Gauged by the

consequences which have followed, the birth, life, death, and resurrection have been the most important events in the history of man. Measured by His influence, Jesus is central in the human story."

Christianity is not a recent fad. The power of the Holy Ghost and Christ's resurrection changed the quivering and fearful disciples in the upper room to a group of flaming evangelists who were willing to lay down their lives for their faith. This same power has changed lives all through time. It has started hospitals, spurred people to untold sacrifice, freed the drunkard from the bonds of his sin, and saved souls from a devil's hell.

Conclusion:

God does not require blind faith. God's Word is true and He has given it to us, not only to tell us how to live, but so we might believe. ***You can trust your Bible!***

> *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*
> Romans 10:17

Bonuses for Lesson 1

- ☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.
- ☐ Attend Sunday school and a Sunday morning church service.
- ☐ Memorize John 14:29

LESSON 2
THE ROLE OF THE BIBLE IN OUR LIVES

Theme: Your Authority

Memory Verse: John 14:15

"If ye love me, keep my commandments."
John 14:15

The Bible is made up of 66 books. 27 of these are in the New Testament and were originally written in Greek, while 39 of them are in the Old Testament and were originally written in Hebrew (mostly). Together these books make up the Word of God. In the last lesson, we looked at why the Bible is a special book.

God has given us this special book for a reason. In our memory verse for this lesson (John 14:15), Jesus is speaking. He tells us that if we love Him we will keep His _____. God's book should be our authority, our boss, as it were. Jesus gave us the great proofs of the Bible so that, seeing it is God's book, we would know the commandments in it are from Him. Notice two things about this verse:

- Jesus ***expects*** us to keep His commandments.
- Keeping His commandments is a ***sign*** of our ***love*** for Him. Many people say they love Jesus, but the proof of that is whether or not they obey the Bible.

The Bible Is Our Authority (Boss) Because It Is Inspired (God-breathed):

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
2 Peter 1:21

This one verse makes three things about the Bible very plain:

1. The Bible was not "made up" by men – "*…it came* _____ *by the will of man…"*
2. *God used special men that He could trust with this task – "…but* _____ *men of God…"*
3. The Bible comes from God – "*…spake as they were moved by the* _____*."*

If the Bible were just made up by a bunch of men who wrote whatever they wanted, we would do right to question it. Since men were used in its production, people will even use that as an excuse to disobey the Bible. However, God used special men that could be trusted with this important task. God gave us the Bible and He expects us to obey it!

All of the Bible is Inspired:

> *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"*
> 2 Timothy 3:16

According to this verse, how much of the Scripture is given by God? _____ It is popular in some Christian circles for people to accept only parts of the Bible. For example, a person might like the sections that tell him how to be saved, but might choose to ignore or to reject sections that "meddle" with his life. God gave us the entire Bible, and we should accept all of it as the authority in our lives.

Some might say that only parts of the Bible are inspired, but a Bible that is only partially inspired is of no use to anyone. If the entire Bible is not inspired, someone would have to be inspired by God to show us which portions of the Scriptures *are* inspired (and which could be ignored)! All of the Bible is inspired.

Of course, because it is given by God, it is _____ (it is a help and blessing to us).

The Words of the Bible are Inspired:

> "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."*
> Matthew 24:35

Jesus, speaking in this verse, says that His ***words*** shall not _____. The Bible is not inspired in merely a general sense. God very specifically gave us His words to follow.

Which Bible is Inspired?

While this is an important subject worthy of a separate lesson, the Bible that should be used is the King James Version, also known as the Authorized Version. The KJV is correctly translated from the correct manuscripts. The Greek text underlying the KJV is known as the *Textus Receptus (TR)* and is the textual line that has been used by Bible believers all throughout history. ALL other English Bibles not only use faulty translation methods, but are translated from a corrupted textual line.

The Bible Is Our Authority (Boss) Because It Is Needed for Success:

> *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."*
> Joshua 1:8

Some questions naturally come to mind when reading this text. This verse then answers them in order. According to Joshua 1:8, we should always be talking about God's law. How is that possible? The answer follows in the verse: we should meditate (think on it) all of the time. Why should we think about God's Word all the time? So that we can observe to do according to all that is written therein. But why should we do that? So that we can be _____ and have good _____.

Put simply, God expects us to be in His Word so that we can obey it because ***that*** is what will lead to us having a successful Christian life. Do not misunderstand this verse. Merely knowing God's Word or reading it will ***NOT*** lead to good success. We know God's Word and read it so that we can live it, and only living and obeying God's Word leads to good success.

> *"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"* 1 Peter 2:2

As a baby would desire his mother's _____, so we should desire

the Word of God. As a baby needs his mother's milk to _____, even so we need the Word of God in order to grow in the Lord.

God's Word is the lifeblood of a Christian. Yes, God can and does lead Christians, but He never does so contrary to His Word. God's Word is _____ (John 17:17) and it can be trusted (Psalm 119:42). God's Word gives life (Psalm 119:50), it gives strength (Psalm 119:28), it gives wisdom (Psalm 119:66), it helps in the time of need (Psalm 119:92), and it gives direction (Psalm 119:133).

Conclusion:

- God has given us His Word and all of it is from Him.
- He gave us His Word so that we would know His commandments and would obey them.
- It is through God's Word that we will grow and will have a successful Christian life.

Your success or failure as a Christian is tied directly to obeying or disobeying God's Word!

BONUSES FOR LESSON 2

☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.

☐ Attend a Sunday evening service.

☐ Read Psalm 19:7-11 and write about it in the notes section below. Discuss it with your teacher.

☐ Memorize John 14:15

LESSON 3
GOD

Theme: The Trinity

Memory Verse: John 1:1

> *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*
>
> John 1:1

Understanding who God is, is critical to Christianity. Specifically, realizing that Jesus was not a man or another created being, but God Himself come in the flesh, is the key to our salvation. It is Christ's deity that is most often attacked by the cults and a Christ that is not God CANNOT save us from our sins.

God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Spirit (the Holy Ghost) are the three parts of the Godhead. While God is one God, He is distinct in three persons.

Various illustrations have been used to explain this. Some have talked about an egg that is made up of the shell, the white, and the yoke, but is still just one egg. A better illustration is a glass of ice water. In the glass is ice (solid water) and liquid water, and above the water is water vapor. All three are states of water, but all three are distinct. These illustrations do not perfectly represent the Trinity, but they do give the general idea.

The "Word" in this lesson's memory verse starts with a capital letter and is one of the names of Christ (Revelation 19:13). Notice that it says that the Word was _____ God and that, at the same time, the Word _____ God. This verse clearly teaches that Jesus is God, yet distinct.

> *"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."* 1 John 5:7

This much attacked verse also illustrates the Trinity. They are three, yet they are one.

> *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the*

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"
Matthew 28:19

This verse says they are to be baptized in the _____ (singular). God is one, yet three.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9:6

This famous prophecy of the birth of Jesus Christ also calls Him the everlasting _____. Jesus is God.

In fact, the concept of the Trinity is found all throughout the Bible. Sometimes it is directly stated as in the verses above, and at other times the Bible implies it.

Often, cults that would attack the Trinity do so by attacking the deity of Christ. You do not have to look up all of these verses (and there are many more), but the following table illustrates how Jesus and Jehovah (God, the Father) are one.

JESUS IS JEHOVAH

Of Jehovah	***Mutual Title or Act***	**Of Jesus**
Isaiah 40:28	*Creator*	John 1:3
Isaiah 45:22; 43:11	*Savior*	John 4:42
1 Samuel 2:6	*Raise dead*	John 5:21
Joe1 3:12	*Judge*	John 5:27
Isaiah 60:19-20	*Light*	John 8:12
Exodus 3:14	*I Am*	John 8:58
Psalm 23:1	*Shepherd*	John 10:11
Isaiah 42:8; ct. 48:11	*Glory of God*	John 17:1, 5
Isaiah 41:4; 44: 6	*First and Last*	Rev. 1:17; 2:8
Hosea 13:14	*Redeemer*	Rev. 5:9
Psalm 18:2	*Rock*	1 Cor. 10:4
Jeremiah 31:34	*Forgiver of Sins*	Mark 2:7, 10
Psalm 148:2	*Worshipped by Angels*	Heb. 1:6
Throughout O.T.	*Addressed in Prayer*	Acts 7:59
Psalm 148:2-5	*Creator of Angels*	Col. 1:16
Isaiah 45:23-24	*Confessed as Lord*	Phil. 2:11
Malachi 3:6	*Immutability*	Heb. 13:8

Although God is one and united in all things, let us briefly look at each individual member of the Trinity.

God the Father:

God the Father is also known as Jehovah and as the great "I Am." He is supreme in all things, and Jesus and the Holy Spirit are both subject to His will.

> *"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."* John 5:30

Jesus as God came to do the will of God. There is an important example in this for Christians today. Jesus did things in His life as an _____ unto us (John 13:15). Just as Jesus was in all ways submitted unto God, we also should submit our lives.

God the Son:

> *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."* John 1:14

Jesus (the Word) was made _____. Jesus is God come in the flesh. He was born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23) and He was without sin

(Hebrews 4:15).

> *"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."*
> John 1:29

Jesus is the _____ of God. Just as they offered sacrifices of animals in the Old Testament, Jesus came so that He could be a sacrifice. This sacrifice was to take away the _____ of the world. More than just being an example unto us, Jesus came to earth to offer a sacrifice for our sin so that we could go to heaven.

Christians often refer to Jesus' *precious* blood. That is because it is essential for our salvation. It cleanses us from sin (Revelation 7:14), justifies us (Romans 5:9), and redeems us (Ephesians 1:7). People who think that good works will get someone to heaven do not understand how much God hates sin. God hates sin so much that He would shed His own blood to pay for our sin.

After His sacrifice, Jesus rose from the dead. He demonstrated that He truly is the *"the Way, the Truth, and the Life"* (John 14:6). He has power over death and has become the "firstfruits" (1 Corinthians 15:20). In harvest time, there are some fruits that come in before the rest and these are a sign that there will be more fruits coming. Just like that, Jesus' resurrection is a sign that all Christians will also be resurrected to eternal life one day.

God the Holy Spirit:

> *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*
> John 14:26

The names Holy Ghost and Holy Spirit are used interchangeably.

In the above verse, the Holy Ghost is called the _____. He brings comfort and God's peace to Christians.

The verse also says that He shall _____ you all things. The Holy Spirit communicates with us and accomplishes the work of God in our lives.

> *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."* Romans 8:9

Today, all Christians are given the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. He is the seal (Ephesians 1:13) of our salvation. Although some people teach that the Holy Spirit is only received after salvation when speaking in tongues or through some second work of grace, the above verse ***clearly*** says that if someone does not have the Holy Spirit, he is _____ _____ _____ (he is not a child of God).

> *"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:"* John 16:8

Speaking of the Holy Spirit, this verse explains that He reproves the world of what three things? _____ _____.
Some Christian denominations make much of a claim that they have the Holy Spirit in a special way. Many times this is truly ironic since, while making this claim, they abound in sin, downplay the need for a righteous life, and condemn those who would judge sin.

Conclusion:

- God is one God in three distinct persons. We call this the Trinity.
- Cults vehemently attack the Trinity and the deity of Christ. It is one of the marks of the devil (2 John 1:7).
- We should be in submission to God. Jesus, our example, was.
- Jesus was born in the flesh to pay for our sins through His blood.
- The Holy Spirit is given to all Christians. He convicts and comforts as He does God's work in our lives.

Bonuses for Lesson 3

☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.

☐ Attend a Wednesday service.

☐ Read 1 Timothy 3:16 and write about it in the notes section below. Discuss it with your teacher.

☐ Memorize John 1:1

LESSON 4
SALVATION

Theme: Your Eternity

Memory Verse: John 14:6

> *"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* John 14:6

No man can be saved except by coming to Jesus Christ, and Him alone. Some are uncomfortable with that thought, but Jesus says this very explicitly in the above verse. Why is Christ the only way of salvation? This is a critical question because every individual's "eternity" is at stake. Every human being on this planet will spend either an eternity in heaven or an eternity in hell.

The plan of salvation is a good news/bad news story. The bad news helps us understand why we can only be saved by Christ and helps us appreciate the good news.

Everyone Is a Sinner:

> *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"* Romans 3:23

The Bible teaches that _____ have sinned. We have all done something wrong at one time. I have sinned, you have sinned, and your pastor has sinned. No one in the human race is perfect. It is not just that we have sinned, but that we have fallen short of the glory of God. We have fallen short of God's holiness and the standard set for the human race.

The Penalty for Our Sin Is Hell:

> *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Romans 6:23

This is the bad news. While most people will admit that they have sinned, it is

more important to understand that the wages of sin is _____. "Wages" is what we earn for an action. We might earn $10 per hour on a job. That is our wage. For the action of working one hour, we earn $10. God says that for our sin we earn death. At this point it is crucial to understand what God means by death.

> *"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."*
>
> Revelation 21:8

This verse explains that the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone is the _____. While the term death certainly includes physical death, it also includes a spiritual death of an eternity in a lake of fire.

Some will protest that their sin is not bad enough to deserve that punishment, but notice in the verse that even someone who tells a lie goes to this lake of fire. Some will protest that their good works should cancel out their sin, but God says that good works cannot save us (Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5).

The best way to illustrate this is with a trial. If you were on trial for stealing, would you be set free because of your good works? No, you would get the punishment for your crime. The same is true for sin. Jesus Christ is called the righteous judge. One day the unsaved will be on trial for their sin. On that day, no one will be able to point to his good works. Instead, he will be put on trial for his sin. All those who have sinned will receive the punishment for sin which is the second death, an eternity in the lake of fire.

> *"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."*
>
> Revelation 21:27

This verse speaks of heaven and God says that not one lie, not one sin, will enter into heaven. That's how much God hates sin! It is an offense against His holy nature. Even just one sin will keep you out of heaven. If all 6 billion people in this world sinned only once (and they all sin a lot more than that), that would be 6 billion sins in heaven. God cannot and will not allow that.

You can't get to heaven by your good works, because, no matter how many good things you do, you will still suffer the punishment for your sin. Only those who are written in the _____ (Jesus') book of life can go to heaven.

Jesus Died for Our Sin So That We Could Go to Heaven:

> *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Romans 6:23

This is the good news. This verse, which tells us that the wages of sin is death, does not stop there. God is just and must punish sin, yet God is also love and does not desire that any should go to hell (2 Peter 3:9). This is God's problem. He solved it by dying on the cross so that He could purchase for us the gift of eternal life.

Jesus died, was buried, and rose from the dead to purchase our salvation. Just like Jesus rose from the grave, we will be raised unto eternal life. Those who are written in the Lamb's book of life, those who are saved, can go to heaven because Jesus paid for their sin. They do not have to suffer the punishment for their sins in a devil's hell. God has paid for their sins Himself.

You Can Have This Gift if You Turn from Your Sin and Accept It:

> *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."* Romans 10:13

> *"And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."* Mark 1:15

The term *gift* is used in Romans 6:23, and like any other gift, one just has to receive it. God says that whosoever shall _____ upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. God says that we must _____ and believe the Gospel. Repentance is a turning away from sin and accepting God as your Savior. This is a gift, and God is offering it to everyone. Unfortunately, many people refuse to accept it. They will instead reject Christ because of their pride or because they think their good works will save them and they will instead spend an eternity in hell. How sad! How tragic! The work has been done and the gift has been purchased. Accept Christ today!

> *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."* Romans 10:9

A word of caution is needed. To be saved we must call upon God for salvation. Of course, the way we talk to the Lord is through prayer. It has become common to lead people in a prayer for salvation. While there is nothing wrong with that (since we must confess with our mouth), the Bible also says that we need to believe "*in thine* _____." Repeating a prayer is not a magic formula. It is not some sort of spell that magically gets us to heaven. The words of a prayer need to reflect what is going on in our heart – a sorrow for sin and a realization of our need for salvation.

According to the above verse, if you do this, "*thou* _____ *be saved.*" There is no guesswork. God is not playing a trick on us. He desires us to go to heaven and ***EVERYONE*** who asks Christ for salvation receives it.

Eternal Security:

> *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* John 6:37

This gift that God gives us lasts forever, and we can never lose it.

- Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (Romans 8:38-39).
- No man (including ourselves) can cause us to lose our salvation (John 10:27-29).
- Since it is by Christ's righteousness that we are saved, Christ keeps our salvation and not we ourselves (2 Timothy 1:12).
- If we had to do works to keep our salvation, our salvation would be by works and we could brag about it (Ephesians 2:8-9)!
- God calls people "fools" if they believe that they need Christ for salvation (because they are not good enough), but then believe that they have to keep their salvation by their actions (which were not good enough to begin with) (Galatians 3:3)!

Conclusion:

Jesus Christ is the ONLY way to heaven. There is nothing else more important than the answer to the question, "Are you saved?" An eternity hangs in the balance.

Bonuses for Lesson 4

☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.

☐ Attend all of the church services this week.

☐ Read Acts 4:10-12 (especially verse 12) and write about it in the notes section below. Discuss it with your teacher.

☐ Memorize John 14:6

LESSON 5
PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

Theme: Your Responsibility

Memory Verse: Luke 9:23

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
Luke 9:23

Those who choose to follow Christ must take up their cross _____ and follow Him. Some people mistake this cross for a burden or perhaps a physical ailment that they have in their life, but that is not the case. The cross was for death. It was for crucifying people. God wants us to crucify our selfish desires.

"I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." 1 Corinthians 15:31

This verse reiterates this thought when Paul says, *"I _____ daily."* This verse obviously is not speaking of a physical death. When we are saved, we still have some of the same selfish desires that we had before we were saved. God wants us to put those desires to "death." Every day of our Christian lives, we have to choose whether we will live according to our own desires or whether we will let God guide us. Put another way: will we sit on the throne of our life or will God?

God says that we need to do this daily. In fact, taking up your cross - putting your selfish desires to death - is a prerequisite for following God (Luke 9:23).

How Do I Die Daily?

A great tool for yielding control of your life to the Lord on a daily basis is through the use of personal devotions. This is a private time of daily prayer and Bible reading. It is something that God commands in our lives. That is why the

theme for this lesson is your "_____." Personal devotions are not an option. God commands them and expects them, and therefore we have a responsibility to do them.

This is incredibly important. Those who do not have devotions tend to live selfish lives that are without fruit. Many Christians needlessly struggle in their lives because they have not developed this walk with the Lord. Living the Christian life is a daily thing. It cannot be limited to the service times at your church!

Prayer:

> *"Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:"*
> 1 Samuel 12:23

In this great verse on prayer, Samuel said it would be a _____ to stop praying for the people. Truly we have a ***responsibility*** to pray.

> *"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice."*
> Psalms 55:17

> *"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;"*
> Luke 18:1

> *"Pray without ceasing."* 1 Thessalonians 5:17

The Psalmist said that he would pray _____ times a day. Jesus wanted men to pray constantly. The Bible says that we are to pray without _____. The idea is that we are to have a constant attitude of prayer.

> *"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*
> Philippians 4:6-7

This verse sheds much light on the role of prayer in times of difficulty. We should not be "full of care" (careful) about anything. Instead, we should bring

our burdens to the Lord with a thankful heart. As we do so, we not only give these problems to the One who can do something about them (Ephesians 3:20), but the burden is lifted from us. Instead of worrying and being full of care, we can have the _____ of God. In fact, worry is a sign that we need to pray more!

This is perhaps the most amazing thing about prayer. Not only does God intervene on our behalf, but ***prayer changes us.*** We are able to walk at peace with God, and we are drawn closer to God. Answers to prayer are wonderful, but ***more important*** than that is the change in our own lives as we develop a walk with God. Of course, this takes time. No one instantly becomes "best friends" with God, but each time we kneel to pray we get to know Him better. Day by day, year by year, we grow closer to Him. Our goal is to *"Pray without _____."* (1 Thessalonians 5:17). This merely means that we have an attitude of prayer, going to God constantly throughout the day.

One last important suggestion about prayer - have a list. It is natural for our minds to sometimes wander during prayer, but having a list in front of us makes it easy for us to rein in our thoughts if they begin to drift. A prayer journal, where we write down requests (so we do not forget), is a wonderful tool. It not only acts as a list during prayer, but it also allows us to write down answers to prayer and can be a great encouragement.

Bible Reading:

> *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."*
>
> Joshua 1:8

As talked about in the lesson on the role of the Bible in our lives, we should always be talking about God's law. How is that possible? The answer follows in the verse: we should meditate (think on it) all of the time. But why should we think about God's Word all the time? So that we can observe to do according to all that is written therein. But why should we do that? So that we can be _____ and have good _____.

Although this good success is the direct result of obedience to God's Word, the whole process starts with meditating on it _____. God

has given us a wonderful gift in His Word and He wants us to be in it daily. It is essential for our growth (1 Peter 2:2).

> *"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,"*
>
> Luke 24:45

The Bible is not like a novel. It is a spiritual book, a living book. To get anything from it, we should read it prayerfully, asking the Lord who wrote it to open it to us that we might _____ the Scriptures (2 Peter 1:21, 1 Corinthians 2:10).

Also, when reading the Bible, do not expect to understand everything the first time through. It is an amazingly deep book containing the truths of God. Christian after Christian has attested to how they learn and understand more every time they go through their Bible. Do not let the devil discourage you because you do not understand everything in your Bible. Time in the Bible is never wasted. Just the very act of reading the Bible cleanses us (Ephesians 5:26) and draws us closer to Him.

Have a Dedicated Time:

> *"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour."*
>
> Acts 3:1

This last point is crucial. This verse mentions the _____ of prayer. This refers to a specific time that people had set aside to pray. As Christians, this time does not have to be the same for everyone, but it is important for everyone to have a set time for his personal devotions (prayer and Bible reading).

Human beings are naturally lazy and easily distracted. However, we are also creatures of habit. While it is common for people to develop bad habits, the child of God should strive to develop Godly habits. Just as we brush our teeth at the same time every day, out of habit, we need to develop a habit of having our devotions. If we do not set aside a specific time, it is far too easy for us to become distracted and to put it off.

> *"O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;"*
>
> Psalms 63:1

The Psalmist thirsted for God and decided to seek God _____. The best time, if at all possible, is to give God the first portion of your day and to seek Him early. Some Christians do both Bible reading and prayer in the morning. Others will pray in the morning and read the Bible at lunch. Others will pray and read the Bible immediately upon coming home from school or work. Others pray in the morning and read the Bible before bed. As Christians, we have some liberty in this matter, but, whatever your plan is, make sure you do it!

Starting Slow:

It is okay to start slow, if the Lord so leads you. The Bible does not definitively declare that you should spend a specific length of time in prayer or should read a certain amount daily. That is between you and God. In fact, the amount of time you spend with Him will likely increase as you grow and develop in your Christian life. If you are new to daily devotions, perhaps shooting for 5-10 minutes of prayer and a chapter or two of the New Testament is a good place to start.

Conclusion:

Developing a daily walk with God is one of the most important things a Christian can do. Decide to die to self daily, to set aside a specific time for Bible reading and prayer, and to look forward to a long life of walking and growing with God.

Bonuses for Lesson 5

☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.

☐ Attend all of the church services this week.

☐ Read a chapter of the Bible and pray for 5 minutes each day this week.

☐ Read Hebrews 4:12 and write about it in the notes section below. Discuss it with your teacher.

☐ Memorize Luke 9:23

LESSON 6
DEALING WITH OUR SIN NATURE

Theme: Your Ability

Memory Verse: Romans 6:14

> *"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."*
>
> Romans 6:14

The Bible says that sin shall not have _____ over you. This word has to do with power and authority. As Christians, we may still have a sin nature (1 John 1:8-9), but it should not have power over us. As our theme for this lesson says, we have an _____ to deal with sin.

The last part of the above verse is often quoted. Some Christian groups have quoted the fact that we are *"under grace"* to somehow "prove" that God does not care how we live. They say that it is okay for Christians to sin. This is not only sad, but tragically ironic. When God says that we are *"under grace,"* He is saying that sin has no power over us! Truly, we have been given an ability to deal with sin!

> *"What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."*
>
> Romans 6:15

The next few verses continue with this theme. Is it okay to sin because we are under grace? Paul's answer is _____ _____. It is difficult to imagine a way that God could have phrased this answer to be more emphatic.

> *"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"*
>
> Romans 6:16

This verse is written to the Christian. Even for a Christian, sin leads to _____. Sin enslaves and brings into bondage. The liberty (freedom) that we have in Christ is a liberty to NOT sin. We do not have to be a slave to sin.

Personal Holiness:

> *"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."*
> 1 Peter 1:15-16

God's desire is for us to be holy (set apart and without sin). In this verse we find that God wants us to be holy because _____. God has even given us the ***Holy*** Spirit because He wants us to be holy like Him.

> *"And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."*
> Titus 3:14

Another reason why God desires for us to be holy is so that we do not become _____. Sinful Christians are selfish Christians. They live for themselves and not others so they are not nearly as fruitful for God as they could be. It is difficult for our holy God to use us if we do not try to be holy. If you want to be used of God, you must strive for personal holiness.

Confess Your Sin:

> *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*
> 1 John 1:8-9

Since we have a sin nature, there will be times when we sin. If we don't think that is the case we are _____ ourselves. When we do stumble, we should immediately go to God, confess it, and ask for forgiveness. If we do, God is faithful and just to _____ our sins.

Keep a short account with God! Unconfessed sin breaks your fellowship with the Savior and hinders your walk. To have success dealing with sin, every

Christian needs to be quick to confess.

Avoid Temptation:

> *"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*
>
> Matthew 26:41

Another key to dealing with sin is avoiding temptation. Jesus, knowing how we are made, told us that we should even ***pray*** that we would not enter into temptation. Most people don't realize it, but this is even part of the Lord's Model Prayer (Matthew 6:13)!

The reason Jesus gives in this verse is very enlightening. He says that our spirit may be _____ to do right, but, because of our flesh, we are _____.

The easiest way to illustrate this is by thinking of people who are on a diet. They may desire to stay on their diet, but if they are constantly being tempted by the sweets in their house, eventually they will have a moment of weakness and give in to the temptation. The smart dieter gets the junk food out of the house and avoids temptation. We need to treat sin the same way. We may desire in our spirit to do right, but if we constantly put ourselves into temptation, it is easy for us to succumb.

> *"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."*
>
> 2 Timothy 2:22

This concept is repeated often in the Bible. In this example, we are told to _____ youthful lusts. Some Christians make the mistake of thinking that they can handle temptation, but God tells us to run away from it.

Here are just a few practical examples of this concept:

- Christians should obviously not go to bars or drinking parties. Much sin occurs in this environment, and it is nearly impossible for a Christian to be in that environment and consistently stay free from sin.
- Christians should not be alone with a member of the opposite gender

who is not family. It is easy to think that a Christian would be above this type of sin, but that is a trap of the enemy. This is a youthful lust that must be fled from! Too many Christians have already fallen in this area.

- We should not watch things on television that tempt us to have lustful thoughts.
- We should not have close fellowship with people who do not love the Lord. The Bible teaches that people affect us and that certain ones are to be avoided (Proverbs 22:24-25, Proverbs 27:17, 2 Thessalonians 3:6).

Again, these are just simple examples. Now, pause for a moment and think of temptations in your own life that God would want you to avoid. List a few:

This is critical to dealing with sin in your life and being all that God would have you to be!

Scripture & Your Walk with God:

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."
Psalms 119:11

God's Word was hid in the Psalmist's heart so that he would not _____ against God. Someone rightfully said that sin will keep you from God's Word, and God's Word will keep you from your sin. God's Word is a powerful tool in avoiding sin, especially when tempted. Even Jesus, as an example to us, quoted Scripture to defeat the temptation of the devil (Matthew 4:1-11).

This topic emphasizes the importance of our walk with the Lord. The more we are faithful in our personal devotions, the more God's Word will be in our heart, and the more likely we will be to use it to defeat temptation. If you are having trouble dealing with sin, spend more time with the God who hates sin and is holy!

Conclusion:

God desires us to strive to be holy like Him. Although we have a sin nature, sin does not have to have any power over us. To successfully deal with sin we need to:

- Confess and forsake our sin quickly. Allowing sin to build up makes it easier to sin the next time.
- Avoid temptation. Our sin nature makes it too easy for us to stumble.
- Get in God's Word and strengthen our walk with God.

We have the ability to deal with sin!

BONUSES FOR LESSON 6

☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.

☐ List a temptation that you have decided to avoid:

☐ List a sin that you have decided to give up:

☐ Read Romans 6:1-2 and write about it in the notes section below. Discuss it with your teacher.

☐ Memorize Romans 6:14.

LESSON 7
THE CHURCH AND YOUR PASTOR

Theme: Your Stability

Memory Verse: Psalm 84:4

"Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah."

Psalms 84:4

In modern Christianity, much is made of a universal church. Some people, when they refer to the "church", actually are referring to all believers everywhere. This concept is not emphasized in Scripture. The word "church" actually means "a called out assembly," and the Bible talks about the church coming together. Obviously, a universal church cannot "assemble" or come together, at least not yet.

What ***is*** emphasized in Scripture is local bodies of believers. When the Bible talks about a church, it is almost always talking about a local church. Christians who do not join a local church because they are part of the "invisible church" are not following God's plan.

The most compelling proof of God's emphasis on the local church can be seen in the address of the books of the Bible. Many New Testament books were letters written to groups. When they were written to a specific church, they are addressed as being to the church in a specific locality (1 Corinthians 1:2, 1 Thessalonians 1:1, etc.). Sometimes, epistles were written to more than one church, and then they were addressed to the ***churches*** (Revelation 1:4, Galatians 1:2). There are also "general" epistles. These were written to many believers scattered over a large area or to all believers everywhere. Yet these epistles are ***never*** addressed to the invisible "church". Those epistles may be addressed to those of *"like precious faith"*, but God does not use the word "church" in writing to these scattered believers (1 Peter 1:1, 2 Peter 1:1, Jude 1:1, James 1:1). If God's emphasis was not on local bodies of believers, He could have addressed every epistle to simply "the church." Instead, God was very careful in how He used that word.

This point is emphasized at the start of this lesson because so many people are confused on this subject, yet it is crucial to your life as a Christian. God wants you to be part of a local church!

God Commands Us to be in Church!

> *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."*
>
> Hebrews 10:25

We are told by God not to forsake the _____ of ourselves together. It is interesting that the Bible adds the phrase, "as the manner of _____ is." It was the manner of life of some people to skip church. God says that we shouldn't skip church like some people do! Even more so, we are told to _____ one another on this subject. We're supposed to bug, encourage, and remind people to be in church!

The last part of this verse is almost prophetic. As we see the day of Christ's return approaching, it is going to be more and more important to exhort one another to be in church. Even just one hundred or two hundred years ago, it was natural for Christians to be faithful to church. In today's entertainment society, however, it is more and more necessary to encourage people to forgo some of the distractions of the day and to be in church.

Stability:

Psalm 84 paints a beautiful word picture regarding the importance of God's house. In these Old Testament verses, the Bible was referring to God's temple, but they still highlight the importance of the church today and the need to assemble together. The church, which was purchased with Jesus' blood (Acts 20:28), is just as important (if not more important) as the temple.

> *"My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."*
>
> Psalms 84:2

This is the desire of the Psalmist, and it should be the desire of every Christian.

"Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah."

Psalms 84:4

This is the memory verse for this chapter, and it highlights the theme of "stability" that goes with the local church. It says that those who are in God's house will be _____ praising God.

"Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;"

Psalms 92:13-14

This verse carries a similar sentiment. The ones who are in God's house are the ones that will _____ in the courts of our God. Those who are ***planted in*** God's house (the ones who are always there) are the ones who will do well. They shall _____ bring forth fruit in _____.

Those who are in God's house are the ones who are going to last! They are not only going to flourish and bear fruit, but they will ***still*** be successfully serving God in old age! The average Christian today, by the statistics, serves God for only five to seven years. That is tragic! And it is definitely related to the forsaking of the local church that is prevalent today.

We need the church for so many reasons. We are encouraged there, we fellowship there, we are taught there, and we are rebuked there. So many Christians are unstable in their personal lives. ***The Christian that is planted in the church, and is faithful to all the services, is the one that is stable and lasts!*** God designed the church to meet that need.

Your Pastor:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Acts 20:28

Every organization needs someone in charge. While Christ is ultimately the head of the church (Colossians 1:18), He has appointed pastors to be head over

local churches. Notice that in the above verse, in speaking to pastors, it says that the Holy Ghost has made them _____. This word is used in a similar way to how we would use the term "supervisor." It is the person who is in charge.

> *"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."*
>
> Hebrews 13:7

This verse is more emphatic in that it speaks of them which have the _____ you. We know that this verse is speaking of pastors because it refers to them speaking the Word of God.

The verse also says that we are to follow our pastor's _____. This is a point that was often emphasized by the Apostle Paul. While we should never follow a man over God, Paul sometimes begged the Christians of his day to follow him as he followed Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1, 1 Corinthians 4:16, Philippians 3:17).

> *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."*
>
> Hebrews 13:17

This verse from the same passage also uses the term "rule" and this time adds the word "obey." It should be remembered that God has placed these pastors to _____ for your souls. One day every pastor is going to have to give an _____ to God for each individual in his church. Unfortunately, many pastors will give this account with grief because the sheep in their church refused to follow the shepherd that God had placed there.

> *"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"*
>
> Ephesians 4:11-12

Pastors and other church leaders are given by God. They are gifts! The process of growing in grace is not always easy. Knowing this, God gave His children

pastors (shepherds) to help them. They are to help _____ the saints. Their job is to help Christians become more like Christ.

Christian, follow your pastor as he follows Christ, and allow him to help you grow in grace. Seek his counsel in important decisions, apply his preaching to your life, and get behind the program that God has given him in your church.

Conclusion:

God has given us the wonderful gift of the local church as a place where we can hear His Word and can unite to serve Him. God is dealing with the local church today and not some mystical, universal church. Join your church and support it.

Each church has been given a pastor to lead the church and to tend the flock. Follow your pastor as he follows Christ.

Bonuses for Lesson 7

☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.

☐ Attend all of the church services this week.

☐ Read a chapter of the Bible and pray for 5 minutes each day this week.

☐ Read 2 Timothy 4:2-3 and write about it in the notes section below. Discuss it with your teacher.

☐ Memorize Psalm 84:4.

LESSON 8
BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Theme: Your Scrutiny

Memory Verse: Romans 6:4

> *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."*
>
> Romans 6:4

Both baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances (ceremonies) of the local church. Although most denominations that call themselves Christian practice these ordinances in one form or another, there are many misunderstandings about their purpose and about the way they are to be administered.

Baptism:

Although God commands us to be baptized (Matthew 28:19), it has nothing to do with salvation. Many verses in the Bible make it exceedingly clear that works (which includes baptism) have nothing to do with salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). The Bible makes it clear that baptism is "not the putting away of the _____ of the _____ (1 Peter 3:21)." It is a figure, a picture, of our salvation.

> *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."*
>
> Romans 6:3-4

The above verses emphasize how baptism pictures our salvation. As Jesus died and was buried, so the one being baptized is put completely under the water. As Jesus was raised from the dead, so the one being baptized is brought up out of the water. Baptism pictures that our old unsaved life is gone and that we are going to live our lives like Jesus. It has nothing to do with salvation.

How should we be baptized?

Obviously, this picture means that baptism cannot be by sprinkling or pouring. Immersion pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. In fact, the word *baptism* comes from a Greek word which means to immerse and then bring back up. Many verses in the Bible (Matthew 3:16, Acts 8:38-39, etc.) make it plain that immersion was the method used in Bible times.

Who should be baptized?

> *"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."*
>
> Act 8:36-37

Since baptism is a picture of our salvation, only those who are saved should be baptized. In the above verses, the eunuch asks if he can be baptized. The one condition that Philip placed on his baptism is that he _____ with all his heart. The one condition for baptism is salvation. ***EVERY*** time someone is baptized in the Bible it comes after he is saved.

Notice also that the only condition placed on baptism was salvation. Some churches mistakenly require candidates for baptism to take a course or pass review by a board, but that is not biblical.

What about baptizing babies?

While many Christian denominations baptize babies, it should now be apparent that this is an unscriptural practice.

First, baptizing babies in unnecessary. Since baptism has nothing to do with salvation, there is no need to baptize a baby.

Second, since the only requirement for baptism is salvation, a baby cannot be baptized. It is impossible for a baby to believe with all his heart.

If you were sprinkled as a baby, it is important that you be Scripturally baptized after salvation. It is through this practice that Baptists originally received their name. They were called "re-baptizers" by other denominations. It appeared to the other denominations that Baptists were re-baptizing converts when they were really baptizing them for the first time.

Instead of sprinkling babies, some Baptist churches will do a "baby dedication." This is a ceremony that is more meaningful for the parents. In it, the parents covenant to raise their children for the Lord as described in Deuteronomy 6.

Why is baptism important?

The first reason to be baptized is that Jesus commands it (Matthew 28:19). Even Jesus, as an example to us, was baptized and said that baptism was necessary to fulfill all righteousness (Matthew 3:13-15). No Christian can consider himself completely right with God if he remains unbaptized. Another reason is that baptism is a public profession of Christ, and it is important for us not to be _____ of Christ (Romans 10:11).

Perhaps the most important reason, however, is found in the meaning of baptism. Those being baptized are saying that their old life is dead and that they want to *"walk in newness of life"* like Christ. When someone is baptized, it should cause every Christian to examine his life. It reminds us of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and it should cause us to scrutinize ourselves to see if we too are really living like Christ.

Lord's Supper:

> *"And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."*
> 1 Corinthians 11:24

Some people call the Lord's Supper "communion," because they think that it brings salvation or allows one to connect to God in a special way. Jesus, however, clearly says that we are to eat the Lord's Supper *"in _____ of me (Christ)"*. In fact, this is repeated several times in 1 Corinthians 11. The Lord's Supper, like any other work of righteousness, has nothing to do with salvation (Titus 3:5). It does not convey forgiveness of sins or a special spiritual blessing merely for taking it. It is done in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice. Because of this, only Christians should take the Lord's Supper since they are the only ones who have accepted Christ's sacrifice.

The elements of the Lord's Supper provide a beautiful picture of Jesus. The bread is unleavened because Christ was without sin, and it is broken because Christ's body was broken for us. The grape juice pictures the blood that Christ shed for our salvation (Ephesians 1:7), and it is also without fermentation

because Christ was without sin.

> *"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."*
>
> 1 Corinthians 11:28

Before eating the bread and drinking of the cup of the Lord's Supper, the above verse says that we are to _____ ourselves. A Christian should never approach this ordinance flippantly, but should seriously scrutinize his life. The Bible even speaks of God afflicting those who take of the Lord's Supper unworthily (1 Corinthians 11:27-30).

> *"But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."*
>
> Matthew 26:29

Lastly, the Lord's Supper not only looks backward at Christ's sacrifice, but also looks forward to heaven. At the Supper with His apostles, Christ said that He would not drink of the vine again until He drank it with us at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9). This is a special celebration that Christ has with all those saved in the church age. When we take of the Lord's Supper, it should remind us of the supper we will have with Christ in heaven!

Conclusion:

Both of the ordinances that God has given to the church remind us of Christ's sacrifice. The theme for this lesson is "your scrutiny." Whenever we witness a baptism or take of the Lord's Supper, we should relive Christ's sacrifice, and we should examine our lives. If we are not walking in "newness of life" and if we are not worthy of the Lord's Supper, these ordinances prompt us to make changes. They challenge us to live for the Lord in the light of what He did for us.

Bonuses for Lesson 8

- ☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.
- ☐ Attend all of the church services this week.
- ☐ During your prayer time this week, spend a larger section of time

thinking about what God has done for you and praising Him for it.

☐ Read 1 Timothy 6:6-7 and write about it in the notes section below. Discuss it with your teacher.

☐ Memorize Romans 6:4.

LESSON 9
GIVING

Theme: Your Priority

Memory Verse: Matthew 6:21

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
Matthew 6:21

Giving is a charged and an emotional issue. People care much about their money and are careful with it. At the same time, many religious personalities on television and their money-grabbing antics have given true Bible believers a bad name. They have also promoted some unscriptural ideas about giving. Some good pastors have even avoided preaching about this issue because it is so sensitive. This is a terrible mistake because this area can be such a blessing to the lives of believers.

God Blesses Givers:

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."
Luke 6:38

Christians who do not give lose a fantastic blessing. _____, and it shall be given unto you. God has chosen to provide for His ministry through people (1 Corinthians 9:7), and God blesses those people who provide. As it has been said many times, you cannot "out-give" God.

Giving Affects Your Heart:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure

is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:19-21

We should not lay up for ourselves treasures upon _____, because they do not last. Instead, we should lay up treasures in _____, because they are eternal. These two excellent reasons to give are so poignantly true. So many of the earthly things that consume our money do not even last for a few years, much less eternity.

The last portion of this passage is our memory verse for this lesson and it supplies another reason to give. Where our _____ is there will our _____ be also. Those who do not give tend to grow cold toward the Lord. Those who lay up treasure in heaven grow closer to God.

Giving to God Should Come First:

"Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

Proverbs 3:9-10

Giving is so important in God's eyes that He asks for our _____fruits. This is a term that applied to the beginning part of the harvest and the very first part of a crop being reaped. God wants this to be a ***priority***. We attend church on the ***first*** day of the week, we should do our devotions in the ***first*** part of the day, and we should give to God out of the ***first*** part of our increase. A Christian that decides to give to God out of what is leftover from his paycheck is a Christian that will end up not giving to God.

Notice that the verse says that, if you give, your barns shall be filled with _____. Those who give are blessed. In the Bible, God often attaches a material blessing to those who give.

How Much Should I Give?

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."

Malachi 3:8-9

This is one of many verses in the Bible that uses the word "tithe." This word simply means a tenth. God's program is for every Christian to give a tenth of his

income to the Lord's work. This is something that is so important that it transcends dispensations. Abraham tithed before the law, the tithe was confirmed in the law, and Jesus approved the tithe after the law (Matthew 23:23, Luke 11:42). In fact, God expects us to go farther under grace than under the law (Matthew 5).

Recognizing that a tenth of your income belongs to God is a simple, yet tangible way of recognizing God's sovereignty over our lives. It is God who gave us the strength and ability to earn that money. It is God who redeemed us from the slave market of sin. It is God who has given us a home in heaven. Every time we give the tithe, we are recognizing all that God has done for us and His place as Lord of our lives.

God says that those who do not tithe have _____ Him. This is extreme language, but God uses the word four times in the above passage. The tithe belongs to the Lord, and Christians who do not tithe are robbing from God. Because they are robbing God, God pronounces that they are _____!

This passage speaks about tithes and _____. Strictly speaking, since the tithe belongs to God, a Christian is not giving when he tithes. He is merely returning to God only what is already His. The other 90% of a Christian's income belongs to the Christian, and he has liberty to do with it as he pleases. Of course, God expects the Christian to be a good steward over that money and to spend it wisely. From that remaining 90%, God also expects Christians to give offerings. In a church there are mission funds, building programs, offerings for the needy, special speakers, and all sorts of things related to God's work that require funding. There is no set amount that a Christian should give to these things, but he should give as he feels led of the Lord.

> *"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."*
>
> Malachi 3:10

The passage in Malachi continues, and as is so often the case, God says that He wants to pour out a _____ on those who give. In fact, the Bible even says _____ me now herewith. God invites you to test Him in this matter. Give and God will bless you. While these verses do not guarantee that everything will go perfectly or that you will become a millionaire, things will go better for the one who tithes. This is the only place in the Bible where

God allows you to test Him in this manner. Christians down through the centuries have taken God up on this offer and have literally proven the Bible true.

To Whom Should I Give?

Reread Malachi 3:8-10. It is plain that the tithes were to be brought into the _____. They were brought in so *"that there may be meat in* _____ *(the Lord's) house."* The tithes were meant for providing for the needs of the Lord's house, His ministers, and the furtherance of His work.

Today the storehouse is the church. Jesus purchased the church with His blood, built His church, and is using the church in this age. God did not say to bring your tithe to the "Philistine Children's Fund." He said to bring it to His house. Jesus did not die for radio stations or other parachurch organizations. Jesus died for the church. The Lord may lead you to give offerings to those other organizations, but the tithe is brought to the church. The church should then use it to provide the needs of the Lord's house, His ministers, and the furtherance of His work.

Giving Means More than Money:

While this lesson has been primarily about finances, it is important to remember that money is but one part of a larger picture. God desires all of us to give our lives to Him (Romans 12:1-2). Give of your time, your talents, and your treasure to the Lord.

Conclusion:

Giving should be a ***priority*** in our lives. It should come first before entertainment and many other things.

- It is commanded by God.
- Giving unleashes God's blessings.
- Holding back risks God's cursing.
- Giving lays up eternal treasures in heaven.
- Your attitude towards giving affects the attitude of your heart toward God.
- Giving helps and advances God's work. It leads to people getting

saved and to churches going forward.

Bonuses for Lesson 9

☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.

☐ Attend all of the church services this week.

☐ Read a chapter of the Bible and pray for 5 minutes each day this week.

☐ Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 and write about it in the notes section below. Discuss it with your teacher.

☐ Memorize Matthew 6:21.

LESSON 10
EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS

Theme: Your Liability

Memory Verse: Romans 1:14

> *"I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise."*
>
> Romans 1:14

The theme of this lesson is "your liability." The word liability means a debt. Paul said that he was in debt to all those who had not heard the Gospel. Christ paid the price for our sin, and we have been given salvation freely. Because of this, God says we owe the Gospel to all who have not heard it. Since we were given the Gospel freely, we owe it to others to do the same. Evangelism is not an option! It is not something we do only when we feel like it! It is a debt we owe to others.

> *"So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."*
>
> Romans 1:15-16

Paul continues by saying that because of this debt he is ready to preach the Gospel. Why? Because he is not _____ of the Gospel of Christ. With all that Christ has done for us, we should boldly spread the good news to others.

> *"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."*
>
> Mark 16:15

Spreading the Gospel is a command given to us by Christ. This command is

often called the Great Commission because of how important it is. We should take advantage of every means possible to do this. We should talk to friends, family, and people we meet one on one. We should be part of our church's regular visitation and door to door soul winning program. We should carry tracts to hand out to others. It should be preached in our church. Bus ministries, radio ministries – all these things just scratch the surface.

God's Job Verses Our Job:

Young Christians who witness for the first time are sometimes discouraged if they receive a negative response. It is important to remember that God said we would be blessed if we suffer for His name's sake (Luke 6:23, etc.). It is also important to remember that it is God who does the saving. The Holy Spirit convicts of sin (John 16:8-9), the Father draws people to salvation (John 6:44), and the Son has paid for their sins (1 John 2:2).

> *"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"*
>
> Romans 10:14

The Christian's job is to spread the Word. How can they get saved without a _____, without someone to tell them about Jesus Christ? The Bible likens our job to that of a farmer sowing the seed (Matthew 13:3-8). We spread the Word of Christ in the same way that a farmer would spread seed. Of course, not all of the seed will grow, but that is up to God and to the person who received the seed. Our job is to spread the seed everywhere.

Missions:

> *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."*
>
> Acts 1:8

God's desire was for the disciples to witness everywhere, not just in their own community. God wants to save people who live in other countries just as much as He wants to save people in your country. While a local church witnesses in its own neighborhood, it also has a responsibility to reach those of other lands.

Sending missionaries is a way for a church to do that.

Discipleship:

> *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."*
>
> Matthew 28:19-20

In this giving of the Great Commission, Jesus commands us to do more than to teach people how to be saved. We are also supposed to see them baptized, and then we are to teach *"them to* _____ *whatsoever I have commanded you."*

God's desire is for us to reproduce ourselves. This is sometimes called discipleship. Your overall goal in evangelism is not just to lead people to Christ. Although this is the most important thing, God does not want us to stop there. We should teach them about baptism as well as the other things that Jesus wants us to do in our lives. The overall goal is for a Christian to reproduce himself. Not just that a person would accept Christ as Savior, but that, after salvation, he would be brought to the point where he would go out and bring others to Christ. It is in this way that Christianity is passed down from generation to generation.

Some Quick Suggestions:

Be bold! You will never see someone get saved if you do not give out the Gospel.

Prayer and yielding yourself to God is the most important part of soul winning. People cannot be saved apart from the Holy Spirit. Being "prayed up" will give you both power and boldness (Acts 4:31).

Remember the Gospel must also be taught (Matthew 28:19-20). If people do not understand, then the Word of God will not find permanent lodging in their hearts (Matthew 13:4, 19). If at all possible, do not rush through presenting the Gospel.

Carry and hand out Gospel tracts. They are an easy, quick, and powerful way to sow the Word of God.

Conclusion:

God has given us an awesome responsibility. After dying on the cross, He has entrusted us with telling others how to be saved. If we do not do it, no one else will.

Do not be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Evangelism and Missions are our ***liability***. This is not an option; we have a great debt to pay to the unsaved world.

Bonuses for Lesson 10

- ☐ Remember the theme and be able to explain it.
- ☐ Hand out a Gospel tract.
- ☐ Attend your church's organized soul-winning program.
- ☐ Memorize Romans 1:14.