

Good News  
*for the*  
Daughters of Ishmael

**Lessons for Witness & Discipling**  
**By Annette Hall**

Note:

The following lessons are being developed and edited for publication. These may be used freely but not republished without permission. Annette hopes to release the published lessons later under her own title. The title “Good News for the Daughters of Ismael” is a working title for use in Asia. Address any comments, suggestions or corrections to: [jot2@pacific.net.sg](mailto:jot2@pacific.net.sg)

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**HOW TO PRAY FOR MUSLIMS**

Annette Hall  
1994

Luke 18:1-6. I have been asked many times how to pray for a Muslim. Based on personal experience, I believe that we should use the following list as a guide while praying that God will open the heart of the Muslim to accept Christ.

1. Acts 16:14. Recognize that it is the Holy Spirit who opens the hearts of men and women to accept Christ. The Christian has the responsibility of presenting the gospel in a manner that can be understood by the person receiving the explanation.

2. Acts 26:19. Pray for Christ to reveal Himself in a miraculous way to the Muslim. Pray that the Holy Spirit will prepare the way so that the Muslim will believe what he sees and hears in this vision or dream.

3. Acts 9:10-19. Pray for an Ananias. The Muslim who has seen Jesus in a vision will need someone to explain what has happened and to help him understand what he should now do. We should pray that God will prepare the Ananias at the same time as He is preparing the Muslim to accept Christ. We should pray that God will arrange for the two to meet together and that He will direct the Ananias in what to say.

4. II Timothy 2:2. Pray for a Paul. Evidence is throughout the New Testament that Paul and others spent time discipling new believers. Jesus taught the 12. They in turn taught others who taught others. Pray that the convert will have someone to teach him the spiritual things that he needs to know in order to mature in his faith and to witness to and teach others.

5. Acts 16:15, 31-34. Pray for the convert's family and friends. Pray that they will also hear and accept Christ. The Bible gives us many examples of whole families or households coming to Christ.

6. I Corinthians 10:13. Pray for protection from persecution. Most Muslims who accept Christ will face persecution in some form. Pray that this will be delayed until the convert has had time to grow in his faith and become strong as a Christian.

7. Acts 9:26-30; 11:19-26. Pray for a Barnabas to help encourage and show the way for the new convert in order that he will be able to share effectively his new faith and win others

to Christ. Pray that he will be accepted by a body of believers into a fellowship for nurturing.

8. Matthew 6:25-34. Pray that the new convert will have or find the resources necessary to live and support himself and his family. In many places, a Muslim converting to Christianity will lose his job and perhaps his home and his family. For women, this could be life threatening. Pray that other Christians will support and help in any way needed until the person is able to survive on his own.

## WITNESSING TO MUSLIM WOMEN

1. **PRAY:** BEFORE, DURING, AFTER. ASK THE HOLY SPIRIT TO OPEN HER HEART TO HEAR AND TO BELIEVE. (ACTS 16:14)
2. **MAKE FRIENDS:** VISIT OFTEN AND INVITE HER TO VISIT YOU.
3. **LISTEN AND THEN SHARE.**  
DO NOT DEBATE OR TRY TO CONVINCEN.
4. IDENTIFY AREAS OF **FELT NEEDS** WHICH SHE TRIES TO MEET WITH FOLK RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. SHARE EXPERIENCES OF HOW **GOD** HAS HELPED YOU IN THESE AREAS.
5. IDENTIFY COMMON BELIEFS AND SHARE YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY OF **YOUR CURRENT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** AS IT RELATES TO THESE AREAS.  
  
EXAMPLES: PRAYER, DAY OF JUDGMENT
6. SUGGEST STUDYING **OLD TESTAMENT STORIES** THAT REVEAL THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD. THEN ADVANCE TO THE LIFE OF JESUS.
7. SHARE APPROPRIATE CASSETTES, FILMS AND BOOKS.
8. AVOID DIFFICULT SUBJECTS UNTIL SHE IS READY TO DISCUSS THEM.
9. WHEN SHE IS READY TO MAKE A DECISION, USE THE **BRIDGE ILLUSTRATION**. (page 112)
10. **PRAY**

**Suggested Strategy for Evangelism among Muslim Women**  
1995

1. Meet and establish a friendship. This phase may take months or years and should include frequent visits involving listening, learning and sharing in ways that establish close friendships. When you share your faith, talk about your relationship with God and what He is personally doing for you right now as this relates to the general conversation and as a natural testimony not something you have memorized. This period of time is used to establish a common ground and to stimulate a desire to learn more about God. This is not a time to talk about Jesus.

2. Try to get your friend to study the Bible with you. Begin with Old Testament stories that reveal God's love and God's desire for a relationship with individuals. (Luke 24:25-27) Pray that these stories will create in your friend a desire to learn more about God and to have a relationship with Him.

Suggested sources: Storying materials on the Old Testament

Muslims A Bible correspondence course for

Appropriate cassettes, videos, etc.

3. When she is ready to talk about Jesus, begin a study of the life of Jesus using the Gospel of Luke. Keep your pastor informed and encourage the church to pray. Don't invite her to a church service until after this stage has been nearly completed. However, don't refuse to take her if she asks to go. I would suggest first introducing her into a small Christian women's group that meets regularly.

Suggested sources: Storying materials on the New Testament

Muslims A Bible correspondence course for

Film: Jesus

Audio cassettes

Gospel of Luke

Prepared Bible study on the life of Christ for Muslim women

4. When decision time seems near, use the Bridge Illustration.

5. After a decision to accept Christ has been made, ask her to give her testimony to the pastor. Try to integrate her into a small church group that meets when she can attend and that you have prepared to receive her. It will be very important for her to find

caring friends who accept her as part of the group.

6. Begin discipleship which should continue at least a year and probably longer. Use a guide such as the Navigator's Design for Discipleship series to be sure that important subjects aren't being missed. Keep the studies Bible based. Use other Bible studies for special issues not covered by the guide such as folk religion, sin, repentance, etc. Encourage memorization of scripture.

7. Pray and ask other Christians to pray for you as you reach out to your Muslim friend.

#### **Helpful Suggestions**

1. Don't try to advance too quickly.  
Be prepared for a lack of interest in spiritual things.  
Be prepared for her to miss scheduled appointments.  
Don't drop contact unless she specifically asks you to stop.
2. Listen and then share personal experiences.  
Do not debate. It is better to let a controversy drop and return to the subject another time.
3. Present the Word of God.  
Do not discuss the Koran or Mohammed.  
If she wants to talk about them, listen respectfully but you should only talk about God and the Bible.
4. Initially avoid difficult subjects such as:  
Jesus as the Son of God  
the Cross  
the Trinity  
the Death and Resurrection of Christ.  
These can be presented after a foundation has been laid.
5. Help her to keep her faith secret as long as necessary but also help her to learn to use wisdom in sharing her faith with her family and friends.
6. Have a prayer support system for yourself to help you avoid discouragement.
7. Prepare a support system of Christian people who will befriend her, pray for her, love her and accept her into their fellowship as a full member of a Christian group.
8. Continue a program of personal discipleship even after she is well integrated into a Christian group.
9. Remember that you are trying to grow a mature Christian capable of leading others to Christ and then discipling them into mature believers.
10. Pray.



## Witnessing to Muslim Women

Annette Hall  
1996

I work with Muslim women immigrants in a city outside the United States of America. There are also many Muslim women immigrants in different cities in the United States. I would like to share with you how I have witnessed to one woman in the hopes that you will be able to use some of the same techniques with your neighbors and immigrant friends.

Fatima came to my city as an immigrant to marry and, as often happens, she lives with a mother-in-law who does not like her and who generally makes life miserable for her. Fatima was not a devout Muslim. Her form of Islam is much closer to Folk Islam which is the religion practiced by most of the women I meet. Because these women feel that God is far away and too powerful to be concerned about their daily lives, they have developed various practices of magic, sorcery and use of the evil eye, as well as practices to protect themselves from others who use this type of religion. It is important to learn about Folk Islam and why the women use it.

Fatima met a Christian woman who became her friend and eventually Fatima became interested in learning about God. The Christian woman had to move away from the city but before leaving, she introduced me to Fatima and we became friends. I listened to her and shared stories of myself with her. Because I've studied Folk Islam, I was able to share short testimonies of how God helps me and of what God is doing for me in my everyday life as it related to the subject we were discussing. I never argued or debated or tried to convince her. I went at her pace. When Fatima said that she wanted to learn more about God, I started with the Old Testament, with the story of the Creation and the story of Adam and Eve. Then we studied other Old Testament stories. Since Fatima could read, I used a guide book written for use with Muslims. If she had been unable to read, I would have told her the stories using a method we call "storying the Bible".

When she was ready to study the life of Jesus, I chose stories to help her understand Jesus as a person, his miracles, his power over evil spirits, and his love for women. I left the difficult subjects of his death and resurrection and the Trinity until the last. I also invited her to watch the Jesus film and discussed it with her.

Finally, after much prayer, I felt that it was time to approach her about accepting Jesus. I reviewed much of what we had discussed and I used the Bridge Illustration to help her understand that salvation comes only through Jesus. Fatima made her decision and she accepted Christ as her savior.

When a Muslim decides to accept Jesus, it is very important to have a long term discipleship plan that follows a planned program. It is also important to help a convert integrate into a body of believers. Because of her home situation, Fatima could not attend the Sunday worship service. For many Muslim converts, it seems to be better to start with smaller, more intimate groups for their first experiences with other Christians. After talking with a woman's group to prepare them, I invited Fatima to attend the women's meetings which I attend with her. This group has become her church. I also took her to visit the pastor so that she could tell him about her decision. When she decided that she wanted to be baptized, I took her to the preparation classes and helped her with the study material.

Fatima was baptized in secret because of her husband's opposition to her new faith.

My friendship with Fatima has continued. Recently, she had her third child by emergency C-section. While she was in the hospital, I did things for her that good friends do for each other. I visited often, I washed her clothes, I took her a baby blanket that I had made, and I gave her pictures that I took of her baby. These are all normal things that friends do for each other but her Muslim friends could not understand why I, a stranger in their eyes, would do these things for her. I did them because she is my friend and I love her. Fatima has talked about our friendship with them and now these other homes are becoming open to me for visits.

Fatima is one story of many. How do we witness to Muslims? First, we pray. Then we become friends—real friends, good friends and we spend lots of time doing things that build friendships. I listen for felt needs and share my testimony as it relates to those felt needs. I talk about the presence of God in my life on a daily basis. I never debate or try to convince. I leave that to the Holy Spirit. It takes time and love but there are lots of Fatimas out there who are worth that time and love. Is there a Fatima in your city? Will you take the time to meet her, to learn to love her, to share yourself with her and to help her to find Jesus?

**A Study Guide of the Message of Christ  
for Muslim Women**

1995

Annette Hall

These stories which have been selected for study by the Muslim woman who would like to learn about Jesus but who is not ready to believe in Him as her Savior. The stories not only teach essential truths about Jesus and His ministry but also help the woman to know that God loves her and seeks a relationship with her. The teacher may use the suggested questions as well as add others of her own. It is important to study one passage at the time to help the woman feel that she can read and understand the Bible for herself. All of the stories except one are found in the Gospel of Luke. The teacher must decide whether to study only Luke or to use the other gospels.

While Mark frequently gives more details, the decision of which account to use would be based on the woman and her reaction to using more than one gospel.

Objectives: Upon completion of these 9 Bible studies the woman should have learned that:

1. Jesus has the authority to forgive sin.
2. Jesus is more powerful than evil spirits.
3. Jesus know our thought and our actions. These cannot be hidden from Jesus.
4. Jesus accepts us as we are.
5. Jesus has compassion for women and cares about our welfare.
6. With Jesus, our lives are changed so that we have dignity and freedom from fear.
7. God loves us, wants a relationship with us and actively searches for those who are lost to Him.
8. The soul of each person is valuable in the eyes of God.
9. God rejoices when a sinner returns to Him.

General Suggestions:

Don't debate: drop the subject for another time.  
Don't try to prove that something is true.  
Let her discover the truth for herself with your help.  
Help her to read with comprehension.  
Don't discuss or compare the Bible with the Koran, Mohammed or Islam.  
Listen to her and talk about your experience with God.  
Read the Bible with her and clarify difficult points as necessary but don't spend a lot of time in explanations.  
Leave the difficult subjects until later.  
Follow the example of Jesus who revealed His power and His purpose gradually to the disciples.  
Prepare your questions ahead in order to be sure that you cover the essential truths of the story being studied.  
Don't get ahead of the story. Let the Holy Spirit work with the passage you are studying.

If she can't read, you can tell the story and then discuss the essential points with her.

Suggested responses that you will try to obtain are given in parenthesis.

### **1. Luke 5:17-26 Jesus heals a paralytic.**

Women who live in the Middle East would be familiar with houses that have flat roofs and stairways reaching them from the exterior. Other women may need to have this explained.

Central Truth: Jesus considered the pardon of sins more important than healing or physical health. By His own authority, Jesus forgave sins.

Note: You will need to have a definition of sin. Most Muslim women do not define sin as it is defined in the Bible. Romans 3:23 should help you explain this concept.

Suggested Questions:

Who were the teachers of the law and the Pharisees?

(You will probably need to explain this in a short summary.)

Do you know people like them? Give some examples.

What was the first thing that Jesus did?

Why do you think He did this?

Why did the Pharisees object?

What did Jesus say in reply to their objections?

Why did Jesus heal the paralyzed man?

What does this miracle teach us about Jesus?

(He had the authority to forgive sins.

He had authority over the spiritual domain.)

Verse 24: If she asks about the title that Jesus used in this verse, explain that is what Jesus usually called Himself.

### **2. Luke 7:11-17 Jesus raises a widow's son from the dead.**

The Muslim woman should be able to relate culturally with this story. You might want to find out what happens to widows in the country of origin of your friend before studying this story.

Central Truth: Jesus has compassion for women.

Jesus has power over death.

Suggested Questions:

What would probably be the future life of the mother?

Do you know any women in her situation. What happened to them?

When Jesus saw her, what were His feelings?

What did He do?

How did the people react?

Why do you think they were afraid?

What does this story tell us about Jesus?

### **3. Luke 7:36-50 Jesus is anointed by a sinful woman.**

Mention the cultural rules of the time. For example, women did not unbind their hair in public. Men lay down to eat with their feet away from the table. There were specific hospitality rules that the host followed for an honored guest. Help her to relate some of these rules to her own life and cultural background.

Note: She will need to be able to define sin. Review with her the discussion you have already had regarding this concept.

Central Truth: Jesus accepted the woman as she was and forgave her sins.

Jesus has the power to forgive sins.

Suggested Questions:

Why did Jesus go to Simon's house?

What rules of hospitality did Simon break?

What does this tell us about his opinion of Jesus?

What do you know about this woman?

What does the word "sinner" as used here mean?

Why do you think she was able to find the courage to come to Jesus?

What do you think she wanted from Jesus?

Why did Jesus tell a story?

What does the story mean?

What was Jesus' attitude towards the woman?

What do you think of her actions?

What did Jesus think of her actions?

Why did Jesus forgive the woman?

Explain verse 50?

What does this story teach us about Jesus?

### **4. Luke 8:40-56 (Mark 5:21-23) Jesus heals a woman and resurrects a little girl.**

**Leviticus 15:25-27**

This lesson involves two stories which need to be studied separately. Since most Muslim women use Folk Religion as a way to deal with life's daily problems, the story of the woman with the issue of blood for 12 years can be used to treat this subject which your friend probably practices to some degree. Islamic culture has many of the same rules regarding a woman's loss of blood as those found in Leviticus. Therefore, a Muslim woman usually can imagine what this woman's life would have been like and can relate to her feelings in a very personal way.

Note: It would be helpful to review some of the practices of Folk Religion as preparation for this lesson. For those who

do not live in an Islamic country, this information is available in many books that are written about a Christian witness to Muslims.

Central Truth: Faith in Jesus not Folk Religion healed the woman.

Jesus had compassion for the woman and for the little girl.

Suggested Questions:

What would the woman's life have been like during her 12 years of illness?

What were the religious rules that governed her life?

What rules would govern the life of a Muslim woman who had this same sickness?

What kinds of things do you think she would have tried in order to get well?

(The story does not mention Folk Practices but your friend probably will.)

Why did the woman touch Jesus' robe?

The power that healed her came from where?

What does this teach us about objects having power?

How did Jesus know that her touch was different from that of the others in the crowd?

Why did Jesus insist that she come forward and speak?

Why was she afraid?

What do you think she expected Jesus to do?

How did she get the courage to come forward and confess what she had done?

What was Jesus' response to her confession?

How do you think she felt when he called her "daughter?"

If you were in her place, what would be your emotions?

How did the father feel about his only daughter?

Why did he go to Jesus for help?

How do you think he felt when Jesus stopped to deal with the old woman?

How do you think he felt when he was told that his daughter had died?

What did Jesus tell him?

How did the people in the house react when Jesus came?

Why do you think that Jairus and his wife obeyed Jesus?

How do you think Jairus felt when he saw his daughter alive?

How do you know that the little girl was really alive?

In both stories Jesus referred to faith. Having read these stories, how would you define "faith?"

Why was faith important in these two healings?

From where did Jesus get His power that He used for these healings?

What do these stories tell us about Jesus' opinion of women?

What do these stories tell us about the character of Jesus?

## 5. Luke 8:26-39 (Mark 5:1-20) Jesus heals a man filled with

**evil spirits.**

Most Muslim women use Folk Religion to protect themselves from evil spirits. This story demonstrates that the evil spirits recognize and obey Jesus. It also show that Jesus is more powerful than a multitude of evil spirits. An essential demonstration of faith for the Muslim woman will be the ability to stop her folk practices and trust that Jesus will protect her from the evil spirits around her.

Central Truth: Evil spirits recognize and obey the authority of Jesus.

Suggested Questions:

- What was this man's general condition?
- Was Jesus afraid of the man? How do you know?
- Did the evil spirits recognize Jesus? How do you know?
- Did the evil spirits obey Jesus? How do you know?
- How many evil spirits lived in this man?
- Jesus is more powerful than how many evil spirits?
- How did the man change after the evil spirits left?
- What was the reaction of the people in the region?
- What does this story tell you about Jesus?

## **6. Luke 10:38-42 Jesus visits Mary and Martha.**

Family relationships where women live together often resemble the situation described here. In most Muslim countries and societies, unmarried women live together with their family. Therefore, a Muslim woman would be able to identify easily with this family situation. Normally during the time of Jesus, women did not study theology and rabbis did not teach women. Many Muslim women would face similar attitudes from their religious teachers.

Central Truth: Jesus considered the needs of women.  
Jesus wants women to choose the right way.

Suggested Questions:

- What was happening in this home?
- Describe a home situation that you know that has similar problems among family members.
- Why was Mary sitting at Jesus' feet?
- What did Jesus say about what Martha was doing?
- Explain what Jesus meant in verse 42.
- How can Jesus help you choose the important thing?
- What does this story teach us about Jesus?

## **7. Luke 13:10-17 Jesus heals a crippled woman.**

The religious leaders were more interested in keeping the letter of the law than they were in the needs of one woman. In keeping their religion, they would have prevented the healing of this woman. Jesus, by His actions, demonstrated His love and care for the woman and the hypocrisy of the religious leaders. When teaching this story, be careful not to criticize Islam or the Islamic teachers. Allow the student to draw those parallels. You will need to explain what a synagogue is and briefly review the laws of work on the Sabbath.

Central Truth: Jesus has power over evil spirits.  
Jesus cares about the needs of women.

Suggested Questions:

- Where was Jesus?



What was He doing there?  
What did Jesus do when He saw the woman?  
What was her reaction?  
Who received the credit for her healing?  
Why did Jesus call the religious teachers "hypocrites?"  
What was the reaction of the crowd to this miracle?  
What does this teach us about Jesus?

#### **8. John 4:3-43 Jesus meets a Samaritan woman.**

You will need to explain a little about the Samaritans and their relationships with the Jews at this period in time. If you think it is appropriate, you could show her a map explaining the route usually taken by the Jews and help her to understand that going through Samaria would have been unusual for Jesus and the disciples.

Central Truth: Jesus is the Living Water.

Jesus knows what we think and what we have done.

Suggested Questions:

Why would a woman go alone and in the middle of the day to get water?

What would be the usual custom for women who must get water from a well?

What does this tell you about her personal life?

How did Jesus know these personal details about her life?

Why did this woman try to change the subject?

Which is more comfortable to discuss with someone, personal things or non personal things? Why?

Why didn't Jesus allow her to change the subject?

Explain the meaning of verses 25-26.

What did the woman do when she returned to her village?

Why do you think the people accept her testimony?

What happened?

What does this story teach us about Jesus?

#### **9. Luke 15:1-24 Jesus tells stories about things that have been lost.**

These parables tell us what it is like when a sinner repents.

A Muslim woman would be able to relate culturally to each story. In addition story telling is a culturally accepted way to communicate with groups. She will need to know the definition of the word "parable."

Plan to review the definition of sin that you have already studied in lesson one.

Central Truth: Sin causes a person to be lost from God.

God actively seeks the lost person.

God rejoices when a lost person returns to Him.

Suggested Questions:

What type of person does the sheep represent?

Who does the shepherd represent?

Why is the lost sheep valuable in the eyes of the shepherd?

What does the shepherd do when a sheep is lost?

What does he do when he finds the lost sheep?

What does the lost coin represent?

Who does the woman represent?

What happens when the lost coin is found?

How does the value of a coin relate to the value of a soul?

What type of person does the younger son represent?

Who does the father represent?

What do you think of his attitude in verse 12?

Does the Father continue to love his son? How do you know?

Who cut the relationship, the father or the son?

What was the son's attitude when he decided to return?

How did the father receive him?

How was this reception different from the reception he deserved?

Why did Jesus tell these stories?

What do these 3 stories tell us about God?

Through prayer and the leading of the Holy Spirit, decide whether to continue with other stories from the life of Jesus using the same format or to advance to the stories of His death on the cross and His resurrection. You are trying to bring her to accept these stories as truth. Therefore, you don't want to advance faster than she is ready to go.

Choose a time to suggest viewing the film "Jesus."

When she seems ready to make a decision for Christ, use the Bridge Illustration.

After accepting Christ as her Savior, she will need to be disciplined for at least a year and probably longer. Try to integrate her into a church and prepare her for baptism.

## Introduction To Lessons

This study guide, which is designed to be used as a supplement to a basic discipleship course, treats the issues which are frequently found to be problems for Muslim women who have accepted Christ, but which are not included in most discipleship materials. The teacher would choose and follow a course of discipleship, adding these lessons as necessary when the problem arises. The topics, which may be used in any order, should be introduced as supplemental material to cover questions as they arise which are not covered in the basic discipleship program. Since these are supplemental Bible studies, the lessons will not be numbered. While these lessons are designed for use with women, with minimal changes they can be used with men.

In order to aid the new Christian to begin to find the answers for her problems in the Bible and not in the thoughts of humans, this study is designed for using the Bible as the only resource. After forming the habit of getting answers from the Bible, the new Christian can be encouraged to use other Christian literature to expand her thoughts and to encourage further growth. She should always be encouraged to compare other literature with the Bible and to follow the Bible when teachings differ.

The leader's guide has real life examples of women who have confronted each of the issues presented. Their stories are included to aid the teacher in deciding when to use these Bible studies.

The following are suggestions for using this study guide.

1. A teacher would work with one or two disciples at the time. The teacher and the student should each have a copy of the lesson in hand with a pencil for writing in the answers.
2. Read the scripture aloud before dealing with the question.
3. Follow the questions in order. Questions which may seem repetitious are for placing emphasis on essential points that need to be learned for changing behavior. The questions are provided as a guide. While occasionally the teacher may need to ask further questions, she may find that it is not necessary to ask every question provided. When the questions stimulate discussion, the teacher, while encouraging this, will need to guide it so as not to stray too far from biblical principles as well as the lesson being studied. The goal of any discussion should always be to arrive at biblically based conclusions.

4. Help the student find the answer for herself by rephrasing the questions if necessary.

Provide the answer for the student only after it becomes evident that she can't discover it for herself.

5. Occasionally the student will pose questions that need further Bible study before giving an answer. It is good to let the student see that the teacher doesn't always know the response but must study the Bible in order to find solutions to problems. A suggested response would be: "I don't know the answer to that. Let's study the Bible together to find it." In order to keep the lesson focused on the basic Christian principles being studied, the teacher will need to postpone discussion of non crucial questions to a later time.

6. Cover only as much material in each session as the student can absorb. It may be necessary to divide some of the lessons.

7. It would be good to have some blank paper or a drawing board for making simple illustrations as you talk together. Where available, a white board with erasable pens is very useful.

8. The personal application quiz at the end of each lesson is designed to help the student apply the studied material to her own life. After working on the quiz, the teacher may find that some review of the lesson is necessary.

9. As the student progresses, she could be given the lesson in advance to prepare for the next session before coming to the teacher. This would encourage her to search the Bible and find solutions to problems for herself. The sessions would then be spent in discussing answers found and making sure that they are biblically based.

10. The teacher should have and use a copy of the lesson that would be given to the student. Occasionally when a specific point needs to be made, the desired answers are give in the teacher's guide.

11. Try to keep the discussion as culturally based for the student as possible. She is trying to learn how to apply biblical truths to her daily life as she learns to walk with God in faith.

12. The student lessons may be photocopied for distribution. The teacher should keep the original for making further copies to use with other disciples.
13. Prayer should be an important part of each study session. The new convert should learn to pray for God's guidance as she studies His Word. By setting the example at each study session, the teacher is helping the disciple learn the importance of prayer.
14. Most lessons have two or more Bible studies. The teacher will decide how many of the prepared studies under each topic need to be studied in order for the new Christian to comprehend adequately the topic. It may not be necessary to complete all the lessons under each topic.
15. With minimal modification, these lessons can be used with illiterate believers. For example, the teacher would tell the story being studied and then discuss with the student the points to be learned. Questions could be simplified when necessary.
16. The teacher will need to evaluate the learning needs of the disciple. While some will need to study all the lessons provided under the topic, others may grasp the point after one lesson and others may need further study on the topic.

## Folk Islam

Noura and her daughter Sabrina were new believers who had not yet learned to let go of some of their folk religion practices. Noura frequently used short phrases as she talked that were meant to evoke God's blessing or to have a magical effect. Noura also had dreams in which she felt that Satan was trying to attack her or direct her life. In addition, Noura was worried about the effects of the evil eye which she knew had been placed on her before she became a Christian. Sabrina's husband demanded that pictures of Islamic holy sites and verses from the Koran which he believes keep the evil spirits away be displayed in their home. Selma, another new convert, always wore a cross which she believed protected her from evil as the amulet which she had worn as a Muslim had done. Yamina, a young unmarried woman, is concerned about the many folk practices that occur regularly in her home. She says, "I go to my room and pray when my mother does this." Yamina believes that her health problems are related to these folk practices of her mother.

Folk religious beliefs and practices have developed through the centuries as women who believe that God doesn't intervene in their problems, have tried to deal with the felt needs, cares and concerns of daily living. One individual stated, "God is just a spectator. He doesn't get involved in the everyday life of individuals. He created us and has left us alone to get by as best we can." It is a major step in faith for a woman to abandon her folk practices and trust that God will protect her without the special aids that she has used all her life. Many Muslims, after believing in Jesus as their Savior and after abandoning the practice of Folk Islam, have later returned to their Folk Practices during a time of difficulty. While on an intellectual level she may realize that she should no longer use these measures, she may find it difficult to abandon all that she has previously used with the confidence that God is sufficient for all her needs and fears. Fear of the spirit world and a strong need to protect herself from the evil spirits around her have been at the base of her folk practices. The observant teacher will see and should question any rituals or any jewelry. While some may simply be cultural expressions such as wearing gold bracelets or the tea ritual, others may relate to folk religious practices.

The following series of Bible studies were developed to help women like Noura, Sabrina, Yamina and Selma have a biblical basis for remaining true to their new faith and for being able to withstand the temptation to return to Folk Islam when it comes. As the new Christian works through these lessons, she will be able to explain God's teachings on the use of folk practices. Scriptures were chosen that demonstrate God's power over evil. Case studies were chosen that show 1) how Jesus Himself dealt with Satan and evil spirits, 2) that individuals came to trust in the supreme power of Jesus, and 3) that God gives stumblers the opportunity to turn aside and stop their evil practices.

After studying these scriptures, the new convert will be able to follow the example of Jesus in using God's word to defend herself against the attacks of Satan. She will stop and not resume her folk religion practices.

These Bible studies will work best when the teacher follows the order given. Pray before beginning each study.

### **Lesson One: God's Laws Regarding Folk Practices**

Exodus 20:3-6, I Timothy 2:5, Matthew 6:24  
Leviticus 19:31, 20:6, Deuteronomy 18:10-12  
Galatians 5:19-15

Some of the folk practices that a Muslim woman would have seen and may have used include:

using the evil eye, practicing sorcery, wearing amulets, going to a medium, *marabout* or *spiritist*, visiting a saint's tomb and praying there, visiting special shrines, trying to divine the future through the use of certain objects or rituals, the use of special charms or specific actions to provide personal protection from evil spirits, etc. The teacher will need to have these practices in mind as she works with her disciple during this lesson. It would be rare to find a Muslim woman who has not used several of these folk practices. She might need a guided discussion to help her recognize what has been an accepted part of her culture/religion but which has been forbidden by God. Occasionally the student will need evidence that the teacher knows about these practices before she feels free to talk about them.

The child learns his religious practices by observing those around him, especially his mother. In most households, the mother is the one who spends the most time with the child and models for him the accepted behavior of his culture. In this way, folk practices are passed without special teaching to the next generations. The Christian will need to develop some self awareness of her behavior and actions at home and the testimony that these give to others including her children.

The teacher should be careful to ensure that her own jewelry doesn't give a false idea of protection. For example, wearing a cross continuously may be perceived by others as being worn for protection.

### **Lesson Two: Christian Armor and How It Works**

Ephesians 6:10-20

In Genesis 3, we meet the serpent who personifies evil. It is the serpent who tempts Eve to disobey God. Later in the Bible, evil is identified by names such as Satan or the Devil and terms such as evil spirits. We continue to use these names today to identify the presence of evil forces around us. The

individual faces a continual battle within herself to follow God or to follow the forces of evil. (Romans 7:15-20)

Just as physical armor protects a soldier going into war, the spiritual armor protects the Christian who is engaged in a spiritual battle. The new Christian needs to understand the purpose of each piece of armor. With her armor in place, she can protect herself from the enemy and with her weapons she can defend herself when attack comes.

A soldier seldom goes into battle alone. He stands with other soldiers to make a strong army capable of defeating the enemy. However, the strength of the army is based on each soldier being responsible for putting on his own armor and taking his position as a prepared and fit soldier ready for the battle. The new Christian should understand that while she is one of many fighting in the battle, she alone has responsibility for ensuring that her armor is in place and intact. God has provided the weapons and defense needed. It is the Christian's choice to use what has been provided.

The study of this lesson would be greatly enhanced by the use of a simple drawing of a soldier wearing the armor described. The soldier could be surrounded by other figures similarly dressed but his armor should be clearly defined. Simple line drawings using stick figures would be sufficient.

After having completed this lesson, the student should be able to describe each piece of armor including its proper use. She should be counseled to practice putting on her armor each morning as a part of her devotional time. An individual troubled by bad dreams could try putting on her armor before sleeping. The image of a prepared soldier ready for battle or a surprise attack at every minute of the day or night is a powerful one.

### **Lesson Three: The Power of Jesus Over Evil**

Matthew 4:1-11  
Mark 5:1-20  
Acts 16:16-18

Most of the religious life of the Muslim has been spent in trying to protect herself and her loved ones from the influence of the evil spirits which are a real force in the world around her. Since her view of God has been that of a disinterested person who is far away, she will need help in understanding that Jesus is more powerful than the evil spirits and that they will obey His authority. The teacher will want to use this Bible study to show that Jesus overcame evil in His own life when He was tempted and that He overcame the evil in the lives of others.

In studying Matthew 4:1-11, try to get the student to recognize that temptation came when Jesus was in a difficult



place, and was tired, hungry and alone. Help her to use this in identifying when she is most likely to be tempted by Satan.

Satan attacked Jesus through several different domains. Knowing this should help the Christian be more alert to temptation coming from more than one direction. Satan will tempt the Christian just as he tempted Jesus. He will know and use the Christian's personal weak areas and will tempt her during difficult circumstances. A Christian who has memorized scripture would be "carrying her sword with her at all times" and would be able with the help of the Holy Spirit to use this scripture in defeating Satan.

#### **Lesson Four: The Power of Jesus Over Physical Illness**

Mark 5:25-34 (Leviticus 15:25-30)

This lesson becomes even more powerful when the student understands what this woman's life would have been like for the 12 years of her illness. Islam has the same laws regarding menstrual impurity as those given in the Old Testament. Help the student to imagine the difficulties of this woman's life. This review should also help the student to understand the courage needed for this woman to come forward and confess what she had done.

There is no evidence in this story that the woman used any folk practices for healing during the years of her illness. However, it would be good to discuss what practices a Muslim woman would have used before reaching the point that it was this woman's faith that healed her and not her touching the robe. It is also important to note that while no cause for the illness is given, the woman does not seem to think that it was caused by the "evil eye" or other folk causes.

Jesus took the time to be sure that the woman understood that her faith and not His garment had healed her. The new Christian who has converted from Islam will be tempted again and again to use amulets and charms for protection of herself and her family. Plan to spend enough time on this lesson to make sure that she understands that healing comes from God without the aid of any object or substance or magic.

God created medicine and medical treatment. God guides doctors and nurses in their care. Most people who are sick are healed through the use of medicine and procedures created by God. While occasionally God heals someone miraculously (cannot be explained medically), He expects His people to use what He has provided. We cannot find in the scriptures that He wants us to deny ourselves medical treatment while asking for a miracle. It will be important for the new Christian to understand that Satan may tempt her to refuse medical treatment.

A secondary teaching found in this lesson is the value of women in God's eyes. The New Testament teaches us that Jesus

cares for women and considers women to be persons of worth. This lesson also helps her to understand that women are loved and valued in God's kingdom. For many new Christians, this will be a new concept and very different from what was taught in their previous religion.

### **Lesson Five: King Saul Returns to Forbidden Practices**

I Samuel 28:3-25

The woman who has abandoned her folk practices to follow Jesus needs to understand that she will frequently be tempted to return to those practices. This lesson is a case study of an individual who had obeyed God and gotten rid of all practices forbidden by God. There was nothing left in his whole kingdom. However, he had disobeyed God and had not repented of his sin. Therefore, when he needed a communication from God, he could not receive it. Instead of looking at the source of his problem, he went back into his old practices. Even so, in the story, we find that God gave him the opportunity to stop and return to being faithful.

It probably will be necessary for the teacher to review the life of Saul and be able to explain in a few sentences what had happened to him before this lesson starts. I Samuel 13 and 15 explain his disobedience of God's commands. The Christian may enjoy reading this story at home but there will not be time during the lesson session to review all of the past history that makes this story so important. Satan knew Saul's weakness and he tempted Saul at a time when he was tired and hungry and had allowed himself to be separated from God. It is important for the new Christian to identify the reasons for Saul's vulnerability as well as to recognize that God provided Saul with several opportunities to repent and stop his evil practice before he went too far.

The concept of shame and bringing shame on oneself or one's family is important for the Muslim. Most have been taught that honor is very important and the worst thing that can be done is to bring shame onto the family name. For this reason, the Muslim convert will be able to understand why Saul tried to disguise himself so that he would not be recognized. However, this lesson demonstrates that one cannot hide from God and the shame of having disobeyed God.

### **Lesson Six: God Helps the Christian Who Faces Temptation**

Matthew 6:25-34  
I Corinthians 10:13  
Romans 8:26  
I John 1:9  
Galatians 5:22-26

The previous lessons have explained why the Christian is not to use magic, charms or sorcery, etc. The primary defense of

the Christian which is the Armor of God was presented. Lessons covered the personal experience of Jesus with temptation, Jesus' power over evil spirits and the example that Jesus has the power of healing but objects do not. The experience of Saul demonstrates that temptation comes to someone who has tried to be obedient. As with Jesus, the temptation came at a time when Saul was physically tired and hungry. The Christian needs to be aware of her vulnerable times.

This last lesson in this series studies scriptures that give promise and guidance to the Christian. She is directed toward spiritual things. She has the promise that God will help her.

By learning that everyone is tempted, she can gain strength for standing firm. She also learns what to do when she does fall into temptation. Through confession, repentance, and cleansing, she keeps her vital, close and growing relationship with God. She also develops into a more mature Christian with a testimony that brings others to Christ.

## Lesson One

### God's Laws Regarding Folk Practices

#### Exodus 20:3-6

These are the first two of the Ten Commandments.

Why does God want His people to worship only Him?

How does one serve someone other than God? What actions would be observed?

Verse 5: How do your actions influence the next generations?

How does a child learn his religious practices and observances?

Describe some actions that would be considered to be serving Satan.

Read I Timothy 2:5. What would God say about praying before any image or a person or the tomb of a saint?

What would God say about going to someone who claims special powers of intercession?

Who is the only person who can intercede on our behalf before God?

Read Matthew 6:24

How does this verse fit with the first two commandments?

Why is it impossible to serve two masters at the same time?

Why does God want the Christian to serve only Him?

#### Leviticus 19:31; 20:6; Deuteronomy 18:10-12

What are some of the ways in which people seek to know the future?

What are some of the things that people have been doing to seek help for problems, sickness or fear of the unknown?

When someone goes to a medium or uses a magic charm, what does this indicate

about her belief in God?

What does God say about these actions?

Why does He want these things totally removed from the person's life?

Review the story of Eve and the Serpent where Eve was tempted to disobey God.

(Genesis 3:1-7)

What would Satan say to a woman who no longer follows the folk practices that she used before becoming a Christian?

(Use the story of Eve and the Serpent as your example?)

How does use a medium, *marabout* or *spiritist* defile a person?

What does this reveal about one's faith?

The punishment according to Leviticus 20:6 is severe.

What does it mean to have God set His face against someone?

Deuteronomy lists specific practices to be avoided.

What would be some common practices today that would fit this list?

### **Galatians 5:19-25**

Why does God want Christians to avoid idolatry, sorcery, etc.?

How does Satan use enmity, jealousy and disputes to tempt the Christian to return to the use of magic, sorcery, the evil eye, etc.?

Why do these things hurt the Christian?

How can you avoid being caught by the deeds of the Flesh?

Verse 16. What does it mean to live by the Spirit?

What is the evidence of living by the Spirit?

Why can't a person live by the Flesh and the Spirit at the same time?

Why does God want the Christian to have the Fruit of the Spirit?

What kind of testimony would the Christian who has the Fruit of the Spirit have?

### **Personal Application:**

1. God's first commandment is . . .

2. As evidence that I worship only God I will . . .

3. Imagine the circumstances and a conversation in which Satan would tempt you to resume a particular practice. Use the story of Eve and the Serpent as an example. How would your answer as a Christian be different from that of Eve?

4. I will not wear anything or have anything in my home that is believed by others to have magical powers because . . .

5. The Fruit of Spirit which can be seen as a testimony of my

faith by others is:

## Lesson Two

### Christian Armor and How It Works

#### Ephesians 6:10-20

Verses 10-13

What form of verbs is used and why?

Why does Paul want the Christian to use the armor?

Why is it necessary to use the full armor?

What happens when one piece is left off?

Whom are we as Christians fighting against?

Is the fight constant or temporary?

What happens when a soldier disobeys his commander and doesn't put on his armor?

The soldier usually enters a battle in the company of many other soldiers.

How does this image help the individual Christian in her battle with Satan?

Verses 14-17

What is the purpose of each piece of armor both physically and spiritually?

**Belt:** Why is it important to hold the clothing close to the body during a battle?

John 8:31-32 Where does truth come from?

Why is truth important?

**Breast Plate:** What vital organs would be protected by the breast plate?

The heart is the center of our emotions: love, hate, jealousy, envy, happiness, etc.

Why is it important for the Christian to protect her heart?

What happens if she has a heart filled with hate or envy or jealousy?

Matthew 5:6 What is righteousness?

How does the Christian obtain righteousness?

How does a heart protected by righteousness protect the Christian from evil?

**Shoes:** What happens to an army that has no shoes?

Isaiah 52:7 What is the definition of the word "gospel?"

What would be different about a soldier wearing the "Shoes of the Gospel of Peace?"

How would wearing these shoes affect the relationships of the Christian?

**Shield:** The shield is moved around and used to deflect incoming arrows. It would also be used to protect

vulnerable body parts not covered by the fixed armor.

Hebrews 11:1, 6 What is faith?

Name some of the flaming arrows that Satan might use in attacking the Christian.

Why does Satan attack (tempt the Christian) from more than one direction?

How can the shield of faith put out these arrows (attacks)?

How does faith help the individual learn to depend on God?

**Helmet:** Many countries a person defines death as when there is no longer any brain activity. Thoughts and beliefs come from the brain.

Why does a dictator try to get control of any news media?

Why does he want to control all information received by the individual?

II Timothy 3:15 Where do we find wisdom?

How does wisdom help the individual find salvation?

How would wisdom protect the individual from misinformation?

**Sword:** The sword is both an offensive and a defensive weapon.

Read Hebrews 4:12

What does the Word of God do for the Christian?

How would having memorized scripture help you when Satan attacks?

Why do dictators and certain religious rulers want to prevent the reading of the Bible?

Verses 18-20

What does Paul say should be done in addition to wearing the armor?

For whom should you pray? (Verse 18)

What type of prayer should you pray for someone who has the opportunity to give a testimony for Jesus?

Note: The soldier puts on his own armor before going out to meet the enemy. It is an action done by the individual and not by others for that individual. Putting on the armor is an act of obedience and is a choice. The armor is worn anytime that a spiritual battle/attack is anticipated. Thus if Satan attacks through dreams during the night, the individual would wear her armor to bed. The prepared soldier wins the battle.

The enemy wins when soldiers are unprepared and caught off guard. The good soldier keeps his weapons both offensive and defensive in good working order. The Christian as a soldier of Christ would work to keep her spiritual armor in perfect order.

### **Personal Application:**

1. Write Hebrews 4:12 without looking at it.

2. To protect myself from the evil one I will;
  - A. Study the teachings of Jesus
  - B.
  - C.
  - D.
  - E.
  - F. Pray

3. Explain how each of the following protects the Christian.

Truth

Righteousness

The Gospel of Peace

Faith

Salvation

The Word of God



## Lesson Three

### The Power of Jesus Over Evil

#### Matthew 4:1-11

What were Jesus' physical circumstances?

Why does Satan attack when we are physically or emotionally vulnerable?

Look at verses 4, 5, 8-9. What kinds of temptations did Satan use?

How does Satan tempt the Christian in the same way today?

What are some examples of recent temptations that you have had?

How did Jesus respond to His temptations?

What did Satan do each time Jesus quoted a verse from the Bible?

How do you think Jesus was able to quote Scripture with each temptation?

(Remember that the entire Old Testament was available to Jesus.)

How can memorized scripture verses help you when Satan tempts you?

Look again at verse 6. Satan misused a verse from the Scripture as a part of the temptation. How can you be sure that you are using the verses as God intended and not out of context?

#### Matthew 28:18

What had Jesus received?

Who gave this to Him?

Jesus resisted the temptation of Satan and received the power being offered by Satan (Matt 4:9) as a gift from God. How can this thought help you resist temptation?

#### Mark 5:1-20

Describe the scene.

What was wrong with the man?

Where did he live?

Why were the people afraid of him?

Why wasn't Jesus afraid of him? (Verses 2, 8)

Who was living in the man?

How do you know that they recognized Jesus? (Verse 7)

How did the evil spirits acknowledge that Jesus had authority over them?

(Verses 7, 10, 12)

Who was more powerful, Jesus or the evil spirits? (Verse 13)

Jesus was more powerful than how many evil spirits together?

What happened to the man?

How did the people in the village react?

Why do you think that Jesus told the man to testify among his own people about what had happened to him?

### **Acts 16:16-18**

Describe the scene.

We have already studied that God forbids the use of divination.

What kind of spirit was living in this woman?

How do you know that the spirit recognized Paul?

Who had power over the evil spirit?

Where was Jesus when this miracle occurred?

What does this tell you about Jesus' power over the evil in the world today?

### **Personal Application:**

1. Jesus quoted verses from Deuteronomy when tempted. Write Deuteronomy 6:13 without looking at it.

2. Satan is most likely to tempt me when I am . . .

3. When I feel tempted to use magic or a charm as a defense against evil, I will do as Jesus did and . . .

4. What would God say to someone who used a verse of scripture or God's name as a form of magic?

## Lesson Four

### The Power of Jesus Over Physical Illness

#### Mark 5:22-34

What is the setting of this story?

Who is the woman with the bleeding?

Describe her life during the past 12 years. (Leviticus 15:19-27)

How was her life similar to that of a Muslim woman today?

What did she do during the 12 years to be healed? (Verse 26)

What would a Muslim woman do to be healed in a similar situation?

Why didn't this woman stop Jesus and ask to be healed?

(Think of her status as a woman, the crowd, and the religious laws in Leviticus.)

Why did she touch the garment of Jesus? (Verses 27-28)

What happened? (Verse 29)

Where did the power come from that healed her? (Verse 30)

Was the power in the robe or in Jesus Himself?

Can a piece of material or any object carry power?

Why do you think Jesus stopped and talked with the woman?

Why did Jesus have her come forward and tell her story in public? (Verses 32-33)

How did Jesus address the woman? (Verse 34)

What does this title signify to you?

How does knowing the law in Leviticus make His acceptance even more powerful?

(What would any other man have done if she had touched him?)

How was this woman healed?

What caused her to be healed?

Did Jesus need the help of any object, substance or person to heal this woman?

Does Jesus ever need this kind of help?

In today's world, we have medicine, doctors and hospitals.

How is using medicine different from using magic, charms, and objects?

Look back at the beginning of the story. Jesus was in a hurry.

What does His stopping to take care of this woman tell you about Jesus?

What did the people around Him think of his stopping? (Verse 31)

How does knowing that Jesus takes care of the individual

help you?

**Practical Application:**

1. Write Mark 10:27 without looking at it.
  
2. When I am tempted to use magic, or an object or a substance to heal me from an illness, I  
will . . .
  
3. When my family or my friends give me or my children an amulet to wear, I will . . .
  
4. Imagine that you are this woman. Describe how you feel when Jesus says, "daughter."

## Lesson Five

### King Saul Returns to Forbidden Practices

#### I Samuel 28:3-35

Review: Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, Deuteronomy 18:10-12

Verse 3 How had Saul obeyed God?

Verses 4-6 Imagine the scene and describe it.

Why was Saul afraid?

How big was this army?

What did Saul do?

Why didn't God answer Saul? (Review the story in I Samuel 15:1-35)

If a Christian prays and doesn't receive an answer, according to I John 1:9, what should she do?

Verse 7 What did Saul do when he didn't receive an answer from God?

What did his friends do in this situation?

What does this tell the Christian about what kind of friends to choose to go to for advice during difficult times?

Verse 8 Why did Saul disguise himself?

How can you tell that Saul knew that he was doing something wrong?

Psalm 139 will help explain why an individual can't hide from God.

Verses 9, 12 What did God do to provide Saul with opportunities to stop his sin?

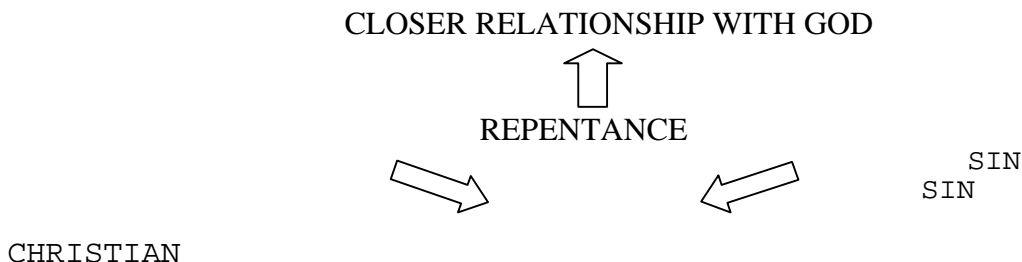
The woman recognized Saul. How does someone seeing you disobey God help you be more obedient?

Verses 10, 13-14 What did Saul do with his God given opportunities to return to avoid this sin of disobedience?

Why do you think that Saul rejected these opportunities?

Use the following diagram to help explain what happens to the Christian who does not repent but lets himself be led further and further away from God until he can no longer

hear God calling him to come back.



## LACK OF REPENTANCE



### LOSS OF FELLOWSHIP/COMMUNICATION WITH GOD

Verses 15-25 What happened when Saul persisted in his sin?

Satan provided the temptation but it was not Satan who told Saul of the consequences of his sin.

Why doesn't Satan tell the consequences when he tempts someone?

What do you think Saul would have done if he had known the consequences of this visit to the medium?

Why is the Christian tempted to return to folk practices?

What types of temptation would Satan use?

Why should the Christian avoid using the horoscope, wearing charms, etc.?

How can the Christian defend herself when tempted?

What did Jesus do when He was tempted? (Matthew 4:1-11)

I John 1:9 does not set a time limit on when the Christian should confess her sins and be restored to righteousness. However, the longer she waits the more difficult it becomes to return to a right relationship with God. How does Satan use the waiting time to make it more difficult to repent?

### **Practical Application:**

1. Write I John 1:9 without looking at it.
2. Once I have resisted a temptation I will not have that temptation again. True . . . False . . .
3. How can I be sure that the advice of my friends is not in conflict with God's word?
4. When I seek God's direction but don't seem to receive an answer from Him, I will . . .

## Lesson Six

### Jesus Helps the Christian Have Victory Over Evil

#### Matthew 6:25-34

How does this passage relate to the use of magic and charms?

What should the Christian be doing?

Verse 33 How can the Christian learn to depend on God?

Why should the Christian seek God's kingdom and righteousness?

Why is this important?

#### I Corinthians 10:13

Who is tempted to disobey God?

What are the promises given in this verse?

How does this verse relate to the use of magic, sorcery, or charms?

Can you remember some biblical examples of when God provided opportunities to escape temptation?

Jesus: Matthew 4:1-11

Saul: I Samuel 28:3-35

Did each person use his God provided way of escape?

What happened to each person?

Describe a time when God provided you with a way to escape temptation.

#### Romans 8:26

How does the Holy Spirit help the Christian?

Satan knows our weaknesses. Who else knows them?

How does this verse relate to I Corinthians 10:13?

#### I John 1:9

When the Christian disobeys God, what should she do?

Why is this important?

What happens to the Christian who does not confess and repent?

What promise from God is found in this verse?

#### Galatians 5:22-26

Search the definition of each fruit in a dictionary.

How can you tell when a Christian is living by the Spirit?

What happens to the testimony of a Christian who lives by





## Introduction

In discipleship sessions with Noura and her daughter Sabrina, we frequently talked about their family and friends. It became clear that each woman had had encounters with family members that had resulted in bitterness and continued anger. When I suggested forgiveness, their reply was that this would be impossible. Noura would say, "I know that I should but you don't know what that person did to me." Sabrina would say, "I try but my sister-in-law continues to do the same things. I can't keep forgiving her for repeated misdeeds against me, can I?" It became increasingly clear that we needed to do some intense Bible study on this subject. This is a lesson that has needed to be repeated several times as new problems have occurred. Both women have made efforts to follow Jesus' teachings regarding forgiveness.

By presenting the biblical concept of forgiveness, we can, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, create a desire to follow Christ's teachings regarding the forgiving of those who have harmed us in some way. Biblical examples of forgiveness demonstrate that even in very difficult circumstances, ordinary people can forgive.

Three lessons on forgiveness are provided. Occasionally it may be necessary to do further study on one point that seems to do give difficulty. It will be important for the teacher to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in deciding when to advance and when to rest longer with one point. The teacher should also help the new Christian understand that every Christian has a problem with forgiveness at some point in her life. Hopefully she will have the examples around her of Christians who have successfully forgiven others as well as those who are in the process of forgiving. She may also see who are ignoring this teaching of the Bible. Encourage her to pray for these individuals rather than judge them. She will also need to learn that forgiveness is a life long struggle for the Christian. This study provides the biblical teachings on forgiveness as well as the consequences of an unforgiving spirit. By studying both, the new Christian will be better able to choose for herself the way that God would have her choose.

Forgiveness: 1) To give up resentment against or the desire to punish; stop being angry with; pardon 2) To give up all claim to punish or exact penalty for (an offense); overlook.

Webster's New World Dictionary, 3rd College Edition, 1988

## Lesson One: The Teachings of Jesus Regarding Forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-35 (Matthew 5:7, 6:12)

Matthew 5:38-48 (Luke 6:27-38)

Luke 6:27-38 includes the Golden Rule. However, Matthew 5:38-48 was chosen for the study by the Muslim convert

because it includes the ancient laws in verses 38 and 43. These laws are very much a part of the Islamic culture and would be part of the new Christian's former lifestyle. You may suggest that she study the Luke passage at home and you may also want to discuss the implications of Luke 6:31.

## Lesson Two: The Teachings of the Early Church

Romans 12:14-21  
Ephesians 4:25-32  
Hebrews 12:14-15

Bless: 1) to make happy; confer prosperity or happiness upon.  
2) to pray for the happiness of; invoke or confer beneficial attributes upon. 3) to guard; keep; protect; as, God bless me. 4) to praise, or glorify.

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 5th Edition 1942

Curse: 1) A prayer or invocation for harm or injury to come upon one; an imprecation; oath. 2) Evil that comes as if in response to imprecation, or as retribution. 3) the cause of great harm or misfortune; torment.

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 5th Edition, 1942

According to the above definitions, a blessing is the opposite of a curse. When the Old Testament laws or "an eye for an eye" are being used, a blessing will stop the process. The Muslim convert will be familiar with "baraka" or blessing. The power of God is a blessing power. The teachings in this passage will be contrary to any previous teachings in her past religion. The teacher will need to move slowly enough to allow the new Christian to begin to comprehend the significance of the change in her way of thinking that is being asked of her.

The Ephesians passage also deals with the tongue. If the believer has a major problem with her tongue, the teacher may want to add a study of James 3:1-12 to this lesson. A study guide is not included for that passage but the teacher could follow the guide given to formulate similar questions that would enable the believer to discover the truth for herself.

## Lesson Three: Biblical Examples of Forgiveness

- A. Jesus: Luke 23:34 (Luke 22:54-23:37)
- B. Stephen: Acts 7:60 (Acts 6:3-5; 8-15; 7:51-60)
- C. Joseph: Genesis 45:1-15 (Genesis 37)
- D. David: II Samuel 18:32-33 (II Samuel 15:1-12; 16:20-23)
- E. Slave Girl: II Kings 5:1-5
- F. Hannah: I Samuel 1:1-28
- G. Euodia and Syntyche: Philippians 4:2-3

These reference passages which are too long to read during one

study session are provided as background material to allow the student to discover for herself the issues that needed forgiving. If possible, she should do this background reading before coming for the lesson. As needed, the teacher may add other examples of biblical characters who forgave or did not forgive and the consequences of their actions.

## Lesson One: The Teachings of Jesus Regarding Forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-35

How many times does Jesus say to forgive?

If a person keeps count of the times, is it forgiveness?

The term used by Jesus is "brother". Which person would be more difficult to forgive: a stranger, a brother or close relative, a friend?

What conditions did Jesus give for forgiving a person?

Why doesn't Jesus tell us to wait until the person who did something against us confesses and asks for forgiveness?

Suppose someone repeats the act many times. What does Jesus say to do?

Why is it more difficult to forgive someone who doesn't ask for it?

According to this passage, Jesus seems to indicate that it might be necessary to forgive a person for his action many times. Thus each time you remember the action, you should again forgive until you no longer have any anger or bitterness left in you. Then it is truly forgiven.

Before studying the parable in verses 23-35, read Matthew 6:12 and Matthew 5:7.

Why does Jesus insist that our being forgiven is linked to forgiving others?

Why do you think that God considers forgiving others so important?

Give several physical and emotional changes that develop in a person who has bitterness and/or hate in her heart.

How does a small root of bitterness grow and change the life of the person in whom it is rooted?

Do you know someone whose life is consumed by bitterness and hate?

How can you keep your life from becoming like hers?

What help is available to you?

Study the parable in Matthew 18:23-35.

Notice the difference in the size of the debts owed by the two men.

Which man represents God's forgiveness of our sins?

Which man represents forgiving a close friend or relative or neighbor for something she has done?

Matthew 5:38-48 (Luke 6:27-38 includes the Golden Rule)

What is the ancient law? (Verses 38, 43)  
Give some examples of when you have practiced this law.  
How does Jesus change the law?  
Why is it difficult to follow Jesus' teachings?  
Look at verse 44.  
What happens in your heart when you pray for someone?  
How does the Holy Spirit help the Christian to do this?

Look at verse 48.  
Why is it important for the Christian to try to accomplish this?  
What happens in the heart of the Christian who tries to follow the teachings given in this passage?  
What would happen to the testimony of a Christian who follows the teachings given by Jesus in this passage? How would the Christian's life be different from those around her?

Personal Application:

1. What would happen in my relationships if I refused to quarrel with someone but instead responded with forgiveness and love?

2. What would happen to my Christian testimony in the above situation?

3. I have tried to forgive.....  
.....but I find that I still have angry feelings towards him/her. According to Jesus, I should...

4. Write Luke 6:31 from memory.

## Lesson Two: The Teachings of the Early Church

Romans 12:14-21

How is this teaching similar to what Jesus taught in Matthew?

How does this passage relate to forgiveness?

Look at verse 14.

Define "Blessing." The Power of God is a blessing power.

What happens to your life when you bless an enemy.

How does this relate to verse 17?

How does giving a blessing stop a curse?

Read verse 18.

Notice the emphasis on **your** actions.

Have you asked God to show you what you might be doing that causes a problem to occur or to continue?

What behavior or thought might you need to try to change with God's help?

Verse 19

Remember that God's time is not your time. It will be necessary to leave the problem, forgive the actions, and move on with your Christian life. God will take care of any necessary punishment in His time.

Can you trust God to take care of the problem?

Verses 20-21

Imagine yourself doing exactly as these verses instruct.

Think of a current problem that you have with someone.

What specific actions can you do that would "overcome evil with good?"

Ephesians 4:25-32

Anger is a normal, healthy human emotion.

God created us and He gave us our emotions.

How does anger become a sin?

How can you be angry and sin not?

Look closely at verses 29 and 31.

How do these verses relate to verse 27 (giving the Devil an opportunity) and sin?

Verse 30

What can grieve the Holy Spirit?

Verse 29 tells you to control your tongue.  
How can the tongue cause harm to someone?  
How can the use of the tongue in anger become a sin?

Verse 31

This verse lists some of the problems that result from anger with sin and a lack of forgiveness. We studied in Romans 12:19 that we should leave vengeance to God.  
How to do clamor, slander and malice relate to vengeance?  
Why does God want you to put these away?

Verse 32

What is the command?  
What example are we to follow as we forgive?

Hebrews 12:14-15

How do these verses relate to those you studied in Romans 12?

How would a root of bitterness defile many?

Think of a small plant or seed that grows into a large plant or tree that produces fruit.

Give some examples. How does this demonstrate what happens when a root of bitterness takes hold in a believer's life?

Personal Application:

1. Think of the last time you had a problem with someone. How did you behave?

If the same situation were to occur again, how would you behave differently as a believer?  
(Romans 12:18)

2. I know that I have not completely forgiven.....  
.....

To keep a root of bitterness out of my heart I will...

3. Write Ephesians 4:32 without looking at it.

4. Knowing that I have difficulty in controlling my tongue, I will...

### Lesson Three: Biblical Examples of Forgiveness

Jesus: Luke 23:34 (Luke 22:54-23:37)

Whom did Jesus forgive?  
What had they done?  
Did they ask to be forgiven?

Stephen: Acts 7:60 (Acts 6:3-5; 8-15; 7:51-60)

Whom did Stephen forgive?  
What had they done?  
Did they ask to be forgiven?

Joseph: Genesis 45:1-15 (Genesis 37)

Whom did Joseph forgive?  
What had they done?  
Did they ask to be forgiven?

David: II Samuel 18:32-33 (II Samuel 15:1-12; 16:20-23)

Whom did David forgive?  
What was his relationship to David?  
Did he ask to be forgiven?  
How do you know that David forgave him?

Slave girl: II Kings 5:1-5

Where was the little slave girl?  
What happened to her?  
How do her actions relate to Romans 12:21?  
Do her actions and words reflect forgiveness or bitterness?

Hannah: I Samuel 1:1-28

What were Hannah's circumstances?  
What was her position in the family?  
How did she react to provocation?  
Do you see any evidence of bitterness or malice or slander?  
Where did she seek help and guidance? (Verse 10)

Euodia and Syntyche: Philippians 4:2-3

Who were these two women?  
Do we know the problem?

What do you think was happening?  
Had each forgiven the other? How do you know?  
Why did Paul write these two verses?  
What effect would their problem have on the church at Philippi?

Personal Application:

1. Write the name of a person whom you have not yet forgiven.....
2. Imagine that Paul is writing you a letter. Write in this space what he would tell you to do.

3. What is the next step that you should follow in forgiving this person?

4. Who will help you to do what is necessary?

5. What will happen to you if you refuse to forgive this person?

6. Take time now to pray and ask God to help you forgive this person.

7. Write Philippians 4:13 from memory

**Prayer**

In our first Bible study session after Fatima's conversion, I



asked her to pray with me before beginning the lesson. Fatima looked at me and said, "I don't know how to pray. I don't know what to say. Will God hear me if I say it wrong?" In the past Fatima had asked that I pray for her and for her family.

Fatima knew how to pray as a Muslim. Islamic prayer is a ritual that involves specific times, ritual cleansing, using a prayer rug, facing a specified direction (Mecca) and reciting memorized prayers while kneeling and bowing. She knew that Christians didn't follow these rituals but had not learned that prayer as a Christian means talking with God in any time, place or manner.

Selma has been a Christian for several years. Selma loves to pray. She spends a great deal of time telling God what she wants Him to do for her, her family and her friends. However, Selma doesn't appear to listen to what God is telling her. To her, prayer is repeating requests until God grants them. Both Fatima and Selma have a great deal to learn about prayer.

By studying the teachings of Jesus and the examples given of His prayers, the Christian can begin to develop an understanding of how to communicate with God. Prayers of the early church as well as prayers from the Old Testament provide examples of individuals coming to God for many different reasons but always with the assurance of being heard.

This series of lessons is designed to help a new Christian to start praying. By reading examples of prayers from both the Old and the New Testaments, she should learn that prayer is a personal conversation with God about many different subjects. She can use these as models or create her own. Hopefully she will come to realize that God is her Father and that she can tell Him anything in her heart with the assurance that He will listen and answer. As she grows in her daily walk with God, her prayer life will also grow. Following the example of her teacher, the new Christian will pray regularly in private and will talk about her prayer life with her teacher.

### **Lesson One: Jesus Shows Us How to Pray**

Matthew 6:5-8; 18:19-20  
Luke 18:9-14; Matthew 6:9-13  
Luke 11:5-13, 18:1-8  
Mark 14:22; Matthew 14:9  
Luke 5:16; 6:12  
John 17; Luke 22:39-46

Jesus tells us to avoid meaningless repetitions. One form of that the new Christian might have seen would be some Muslims repeating the name of God until they fall into a trance. Others will repeat the name of God or some other religious word or phrase as a means of divining the future or finding the answer to a question. While the new Christian may not herself have practiced this, she probably knows someone who does. Help her to understand why God isn't pleased with these

actions.

Lesson One deals with the teachings of Jesus regarding prayer. Some of the public prayers of Jesus are included for study. The student is then asked to apply what Jesus taught and His example to her own life. Although she was uncomfortable with this at first, I encouraged Fatima to pray aloud with me. She prayed in her own language and gradually grew more at ease with public prayer.

If the time is short, the teacher may ask the disciple to read the prayers in Part 4 at home. These prayers could then be discussed at the next session.

### **Lesson Two: Learning To Pray By Example**

Ephesians 3:14-21  
I Samuel 1:9-13  
Psalm 51  
II Kings 19:14-20  
I Kings 3:5-14  
Romans 8:26-27

During this lesson, the student will read selected prayers from the Bible. These prayers demonstrate that individuals can come to God with any type of prayer with the assurance of being heard. Studying these prayers should help the new Christian to begin to understand that God is involved directly in her life and that He cares about the most minute details of her concerns.

These prayers need to be placed in context. The teacher should read the related story and be prepared to explain briefly the circumstances surrounding the prayer. Since the passages are too long to be used in a lesson setting, references are supplied for the new Christian to read at home as time permits.

Encourage the new Christian to read one prayer each day. Ask her to think about the prayer, the circumstances in which it was prayed, and how it can be used as a model for her prayer life. When she comes for the next lesson, discuss her reactions and thoughts regarding each prayer read.

These prayers were chosen for study together to illustrate the many different situations that arise that need prayer. Help your new convert to find other prayers in the Bible and encourage her to read them.

### **Lesson Three: Learning to Listen to God**

Acts 9:10-17  
Psalm 1:1-3; 119:9-16  
Proverbs 3:1-12

Prayer is dialogue with God. A dialogue means that two people are talking and listening to each other. The new Christian needs to learn to listen to what God is telling her.

Many times God uses His Word to help us know His will. Therefore, prayer time included with a devotional time of reading and meditating on God's Word is important. God's answer is always consistent with His written Word. The Christian needs to learn to compare what she believes God is telling her to do with the Bible. However, the teacher should explain the danger of proof-texting: selecting a verse out of context to prove a point.

The study section of this lesson is purposefully short. The teacher should plan to spend at least half of this study session as a model of prayer, Bible study, meditation and prayer. Help the new Christian to understand that meditation on God's Word means trying to understand what God is saying to her. This is not going into a trance or a mystical experience but rather is a time of trying to apply God's Word to her own life.

You might also want to spend a few minutes helping your disciple prepare a prayer journal. You could suggest keeping a record of prayer requests, when each was prayed, and the answer from God. Remind her that God's answer may be "no" or maybe "not yet." Prayer is not bargaining or commanding. As Christians, we accept God's Will in faith.



## Lesson One

### Jesus Shows Us How to Pray

Jesus taught prayer by example and by the spoken word. In reading his instructions and in looking at his examples, we can learn how to pray effectively.

#### 1. Where to pray

##### Matthew 6:5-8

Who likes to pray in public? Why?  
Where did Jesus say to pray?  
Why does Jesus say to pray in secret?  
When no human can hear you, how does your prayer change?  
What are meaningless repetitions?  
Why does Jesus tell us not to use them?

##### Matthew 18:19-20

What is the promise in these verses?  
Can two or three pray together?  
How can they do this without becoming like the Pharisee in the above passage?

#### 2. How to Pray

##### Luke 18:9-14

What was the Pharisee telling God?  
What was the tax-collector telling God?  
Which prayer did God accept?  
What does this tell us about how to pray?

##### Matthew 6:9-13

How does this prayer start?  
Who has the right to call God Father?  
Which verses use words of praise or adoration?  
Which verse deals with personal or physical needs?  
Which verse deals with confession?  
Which verse includes a prayer for others?  
Which verse includes requests for leading a Christian life?

Did Jesus say that every prayer has to be like this one?

If you follow this example, your prayer would be organized like this:

Praise/adoration  
Prayer for others/intercession  
Personal confession of sins  
Prayer for physical and spiritual needs for yourself  
Praise/adoration.

#### 3. How Long to Pray

**Luke 11:5-13**

How does this story relate to prayer?  
What is the promise given?  
What does this tell you about continuing to pray for one subject or problem?  
How can you pray about one subject over a long period of time and avoid meaningless repetitions?  
What is the difference between repeating a prayer and meaningless repetitions?

**Luke 18:1-8**

What did the widow do?  
What does this story teach us about prayer?  
What is the promise in this story?

**4. Examples of Jesus Praying**

For each of the following passages, consider the situation in which Jesus prayed.

**Mark 14:22; Matthew 14:9**

When did Jesus pray? Why?  
Why did Jesus pray before a group of people?

**Luke 5:16; 6:12**

Where and when did Jesus pray?  
Why do you think that Jesus went off alone to pray?

**John 17**

Where was Jesus? (John 13:1-2)  
For whom was He praying?  
Who heard his prayer?  
Look at verses 15-26 and find three specific requests that Jesus made for those who follow him.

**Luke 22:39-46**

Where was Jesus?  
For whom was He praying?  
How did God answer this prayer?  
Look at verse 42. Jesus was willing to follow God's will even to a painful death. Was it easy for him to make this decision?  
How did He phrase his prayer?

**Personal Application**

1. A place and a time where I can be alone to pray without interruption are:

2. According to the model prayer that Jesus gave, I should try to include in my prayers:

- a. Praise/adoration
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e. Praise/adoration

3. I John 1:9 can be a guide for confession. Write this verse without looking at it.

4. I can pray and avoid using meaningless repetitions by...

5. In Matthew 6:5-8, Jesus tells us to pray in secret. Some types of prayers that I would pray in secret are:

6. In Matthew 18:19-20, Jesus tells us to pray in groups. Some types of prayers that I would pray in groups are:

7. Jesus prayed public prayers. Following his example, some types of prayers that I would pray in public are:

## **Lesson Two**

### **Learning to Pray by Example**

We can learn much about prayer by reading the prayers included in the Bible. Read these prayers and think about why each one was prayed. What can you learn from these prayers?

**1. Ephesians 3:14-21**

Who was praying?

For whom was he praying?

What type of prayer would this be?

Paul wrote his prayer and sent it to a church. How does it help you to know what someone is praying for you?

**2. I Samuel 1:9-13**

Who was praying? (I Samuel 1:1-20)

What was her home situation?

Where did she go to pray?

Describe her manner of praying. What was she doing?

How did God answer her prayer?

**3. Psalm 51**

Why was David praying? (Review II Samuel 12)

What type of prayer is this?

For whom was David praying?

**4. II Kings 19:14-20**

Who was praying?

Why was he praying? (II Kings 18-19)

For whom was he praying?

How did God answer his prayer? (19:35-37)

**5. I Kings 3:5-14 (or I Chronicles 1:7-12)**

Who was praying?

For whom was he praying?

What type of prayer is this?

How did God answer this prayer?

**6. Romans 8:26-27**

Who has the help of the Holy Spirit?

What is the promise given in this verse?

How can this promise help you when you are sad or frightened?

Explain why this verse doesn't mean that Christians need to pray?

When she was seven months pregnant, the doctor called Fatima to tell her that she had eaten something which had caused a problem in her blood that could harm her baby. Fatima was devastated. She cried for two hours. Then she remembered that she could pray. After praying for a time, she felt the desire to read her Bible. She began to read some of the



promises of God. Late in the afternoon, she decided to call a Christian friend to ask for prayer for herself. The next day Fatima was still concerned about her baby but had decided to leave this problem with God. (I Peter 5:7)

According to Romans 8:26 who do you think prayed for Fatima during those first \_\_\_\_\_ hours?

Who gave Fatima the desire to pray?

Who gave Fatima the desire to read her Bible?

Who helped her remember some promises to read?

Who reminded her to call her friend?

How did God keep his promise to Fatima?

Try to describe a time when the Holy Spirit helped you with a problem.

### Personal Application

1. Write Romans 8:26 without looking at it.

2. According to the examples of prayer studied in this lesson, I can pray for:

3. I will read one of the following psalms as a prayer each day of this coming week.

Psalm 56

Psalm 27

Psalm 103

Psalm 139

Psalm 121

Psalm 92

Psalm 138

## **Lesson Three**

### **Learning to Listen to God**

**1. Acts 9:10-17**

Who are the persons in this passage?

How does Ananias react to God?

How does Ananias express his feelings about what God is asking him to do?

Does God criticize Ananias for having these feelings?

What did Ananias do after talking with God?

How does the word "dialogue" fit this passage?

2. Define the word "meditate."

Read the following verses and explain the importance of

meditation on God and His Word.

**Psalm 1:1-3**

**Psalm 119:9-16**

3. With your teacher use the following guide for a prayer/meditation time.

Spend a few minutes in prayer asking that God prepare your heart to listen to his message. If something in your life is blocking your communication with God, follow the directions in I John 1:9 before continuing.

**Read Proverbs 3:1-12**

Discuss together each verse.

Ask questions to help you discover the meaning of each truth.

Use the dictionary for words that are not clear.

Meditate on verses 5-6

How can you do what God is asking in these verses?

How does God help you?

What will happen in your life if you follow faithfully these verses?

Be quiet and listen to what God might be telling you as you read this passage again.

Write in a notebook what God has taught you.

Share this with each other if you wish.

Spend time in prayer together.

Thank God for what you have learned.

Ask God to help you apply in your life the things that He has taught you today.

Spend some time in intercessory prayer.

### Personal Application

1. Write Proverbs 3:5-6 without looking at your Bible.

2. I will try to have a time of prayer, Bible reading and meditation each day. Yes.....No.....

3. When I pray today I will make the following requests for

Myself

1.

My family

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

My friends

1.

2.

3.

My country/leaders

1.

2.

3.

**Sin**

As an immigrant living with her husband and children in a large city, Selma was separated from the rest of her family. When her father died she was unable to go to his funeral but vowed to honor his memory by becoming a more devout Muslim. Then her father appeared to her in a dream. He told her that her only hope for eternal life was through Jesus, not through Islam as she had been taught. He urged her to seek someone who could help her find out how to believe in Jesus. Selma believed that the dream was a real message from her father and went searching for someone to help her. Selma now believes that the only way to have a relationship with God is through Jesus. She believes that He is the Son of God and that through this belief she has eternal life.

Selma also believes that certain acts are sins and that if she does these things, she must ask for God's forgiveness. However, she does not have a clear understanding of her sin nature nor of sin as being disobedience to God. She thinks of herself as basically a good person. Even though her pride and her self image keep her from recognizing things in her life that hinder her ongoing growth as a Christian and interfere with her communication with God, Selma truly wants to have a growing relationship with her Heavenly Father. She also wants her life to be a testimony to others.

As we read the New Testament, we find that belief in Jesus as the Son of God results in salvation. We also learn that the early Christians needed further teaching in how to live a Christlike life. Many Muslim converts come to Jesus as Paul did in Acts 9 and, like Paul, they need an Ananias and a Barnabas to help them grow in their faith and in their relationship with God. Others come to Jesus through a belief in his power to save them from evil spirits and that through Him they can have eternal life. Few seem to come with an understanding of themselves as sinners needing forgiveness.

As a new believer, Imaan understood that she had been a sinner and needed salvation from her sins. However, she had developed the concept that she as a Christian could not sin. She believed that the Holy Spirit would prevent her from sinning and that she was leading a sinless life. She believed that the passages she read in the New Testament were referring to non Christians and not to herself. Imaan needed to understand that as a Christian, she still had her sin nature which battled with her new nature in Christ for control of her life.

Jesus and the early church taught that sin is a continuing problem for the Christian. Sin interferes with Christian growth. It also hinders the Christian testimony. The Christian who does not recognize the sin in her life does not confess it and, therefore, does not have the vital, growing relationship with God that is available to her. Her lifestyle doesn't reflect a testimony that would draw others to Christ. She has salvation but her growth as a child of God is stunted and her Christian life is empty. Because of unconfessed sin, she lacks the vital, direct communication with God that enables her to bear fruit in her life.

Confession of sin and repentance are closely related. The teacher may want to follow these lessons with those on repentance.

This series of Bible studies is designed to help Christians like Selma and Imaan realize that Christian growth should occur in all aspects of a Christian's life. The Christian will be able to define sin as disobedience to God. Disobedience may occur by an action or failure to act or by an attitude. The Christian will describe herself as having a sin nature. She will be able to explain the importance of confession of sin to her growth into a mature Christian and to her Christian testimony.

**Lesson One:      What is sin?**

Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-20; 6:5-7; 11:1-8  
Matthew 15:1-20  
Romans 3:23  
Romans 5:8-9

These passages review the origins of sin and its consequences. Help the new Christian to discover that on each occasion God gave instructions and then allowed the individual free choice regarding obedience. God came and saw what was happening and then punished the individuals involved. The sinner did not escape punishment. The desire to disobey came from within the individual and each person bore responsibility for his attitudes and actions.

Depending on the individual involved, it may be necessary to add some of the Old Testament stories that describe sin and its consequences. For example a comparison between Joseph and Potiphar's wife and David and Bathsheba may help the new Christian to understand that obedience is a choice. The number of stories read and discussed would depend on the ability of the new Christian to grasp the concept of the sin nature of mankind.

### **Lesson Two: Jesus Anointed by a Sinful Woman**

Luke 7: 36-50

Many aspects of this story are similar to present day Islamic culture. A practicing Muslim like the Pharisee won't touch anyone or anything unclean. To do so renders him unclean and he must undergo a ritual purification before being able to pray. Women in many Islamic countries and cultures keep their hair hidden from all men except those in the immediate family. The rules of hospitality are strict and are designed to honor the guest. To ignore these rules shows disrespect and a lack of honor.

This story shows us what is required for salvation:

1. Approach Jesus with an attitude of repentance for sin.
2. Have faith that Jesus can and will forgive those sins.

In discussing this story with the new Christian, try to relate this concept of sin as being something done with the previous lesson which talks about attitudes as well as actions. Hopefully, she will come to understand that sin is disobedience whether in actions or attitudes to God.

Try to help the new Christian recognize the difference in the attitudes of Simon and Jesus towards the woman. Simon was unwilling to accept her or to touch her. He was condemning of her and saw her as unworthy and a nuisance. Jesus was loving, kind and accepted her as she was. He recognized her value as a person. He did not condemn her but helped her to find salvation.

### **Lesson Three: Using God's Word to Help Identify Problems in the Christian Life**

I John 1:5-2:6  
Colossians 3:1-17

This lesson is more abstract and may need some illustrations to help clarify for the student the role of "light" in the Christian's life. John 1:1-18 refers to Jesus as the Light. John 3:16-21 explains why those who sin love the darkness. These passages can also be studied as a part of this lesson if needed for further explanation. It might be helpful to use some practical illustrations from everyday living that show how dust and dirt are hidden in darkness but easily seen in the light. She can then compare this to the way that sin is hidden when not compared with Jesus.

During this lesson, the teacher will be helping the new Christian to learn to compare her own thought, attitudes and actions to Christ. As she prayerfully reads and meditates on the scriptures, God will show her where she needs to confess, repent and grow as a Christian. She needs to understand that as an individual, God will deal with her differently from others. However, God will always expect obedience. Failure to obey God is sin. Try to help the new Christian to understand that her growth will be a life-long process.

As the new Christian has studied these three lessons, her definition of sin has hopefully grown from that of doing certain forbidden things to include anything that is disobedience of God. Eventually she will need to understand that she has a sin nature that makes her want to disobey and put self first. This sin nature is in constant battle with the new nature that she has in Christ. Romans 7:16-25 explains this concept. However, this lesson would probably be better left for a more mature Christian.

## **Lesson One**

### **What is Sin?**

#### **Genesis 2:16-17**

What did God tell Adam?

### **Genesis 3:1-24**

How did the serpent tempt Eve? What did he say and do?

Who made the decision to disobey God?

Notice that Adam and Eve each made their own decision.  
Neither was forced to disobey.

How did Adam and Eve sin in verses 12-13?

Describe an incidence where you recently tried to deny your responsibility for something that occurred either at home or at work.

Why does Satan tempt the individual to deny responsibility for his actions?

What happened after Adam and Eve disobeyed God?

What did God do?

### **Genesis 6:5-7**

How is sin defined in these verses?

What did God decide to do?

The story of Noah which you may want to read later explains the consequences of sin.

### **Genesis 11:1-9**

What did the people do?

Who made the decision to do this?

What was their attitude?

Why was this sin?

What did God do?

When someone disobeys God, what are the consequences?

Based on these passages, how would you define sin?

Notice that in each story, God sees and knows what is happening. God leaves the choice to man but God punishes disobedience every time.

### **Matthew 15:1-20**

Verses 3-7 What were the Pharisees trying to do?

Why does Jesus say that their actions and attitudes were wrong?

Verses 16-20 Where does sin originate?

What is the difference here between attitudes and actions?

What is Jesus' teaching about sin in this passage?

### **Romans 3:23**

Repeat this verse using your name instead of "all."

Explain the meaning of this verse.

### **Romans 5:8-9**

What happened to the sins of someone who believes in Jesus?

How is the Christian justified or made clean?

What is the Christian saved from?

How does verse 9 relate to the stories you read from the Old Testament?

**Practical Application:**

1. Write Romans 3:23 without looking at it.

2. Sin is...

3. Explain why we as humans have difficulty accepting personal responsibility for choices we make. (Review Genesis 3:12-13)

4. Jesus said that my sin originates within me. As a part of my daily prayer time, I will examine my inner thoughts and.....

**Lesson Two**

**Jesus Anointed by a Sinful Woman**

**Luke 7:36-50**

Explanation of the circumstances: Pharisees were religious leaders who strictly, outwardly at least, observed all points of the law and watched to see that others did also. The polite host would do three things for his guest: have his feet washed, greet him with a kiss, and anoint him with oil. Simon did not do any of these. It was the custom to eat while lying on couches with the head towards the table and the feet away.

Jesus would have been in this position giving the woman access only to his feet.



After reading the story, imagine the scene. Picture the room, the people present, their activities and their reactions.

#### Verses 37-38

What does it mean when this woman is described as a sinner?

Why did she come to Jesus?

What is the significance of the ointment or "anointing?" (In the Old Testament the king was anointed by a prophet.

Ex. Saul, David)

Why did she cry?

What do tears usually symbolize?

Women did not usually unbind their hair in public. Why do you think that this woman unbound her hair before Jesus?

#### Verse 39

What did Simon think about this woman?

What do you think he would have done as a Pharisee if she had touched him?

What did Simon think about Jesus?

#### Verses 40-43

How did Jesus know Simon's thoughts?

Why did Jesus tell Simon a story?

Explain how this story relates to the forgiveness of sin. (A denarius was a day's wages. Debtors were put into prison until debts were paid.) How does this information help your understanding of the story that Jesus told?

#### Verses 44-47

What does Jesus say about the woman's actions?

Why did Jesus allow the woman to anoint his feet?

#### Verses 48-50

What do these verses tell us about Jesus' power and who He is?

What did the people who were present think about what Jesus said?

How did this woman's faith save her?

How did she show her faith?

How do you think this woman felt after her encounter with Jesus?

If this woman had changed her behavior and stopped her immoral way of living without coming to Jesus, what would have happened to her relationship with God?

Who can forgive sins?

How can someone obtain forgiveness for sins?

The sin referred to in this story is probably immoral behavior. What other kinds of sin were present in this situation? How can attitudes be sin? How can neglecting to do what God has asked us to do be sin?

Look again at the story.

What was Simon's attitude towards this woman?

What was Simon's attitude towards Jesus?

What was Jesus' attitude towards the woman?

What would be Jesus' attitude towards any woman? Why?

### Personal Application

1. Write your definition of sin. How has it changed from that of the previous lesson?

2. In order to grow as a Christian, it is important for me to confess my sin because...

3. Anointing someone as king means giving him the absolute power over that person's life. I  
am willing to anoint Jesus as king and give Him....

4. Write Romans 6:23 without looking at the words.

### **Lesson Three**

#### **Using God's Word to Help Identify Problems in the Christian Life**

##### **I John 1:5-2:6**

Light reveals what is hidden. In every day life light is very important.

Describe some of the benefits of light.

Darkness hides things.

What does darkness represent in this passage?

Who lives in the darkness?

What does light represent in this passage?

Who lives in the light?

Who said, "I am the light of the world?" (John 8:12)

If I compare my life to the Light (Jesus) what will be

revealed?

What does verse 1:8 say about sin and the Christian?

How can the Christian know when she has sinned?

What does God want the Christian who has sinned to do?

(Verse 9)

Look at verses 2:3-6

How can the Christian walk as Jesus did?

Where in the Bible would you find the directions for this kind of walk?

Why is it important for the Christian to obey God's word?

Where in the Bible would you find God's instructions for daily living?

How does reading and meditating on God's Word help the Christian walk in the light?

What is the evidence that I know God and have the love of God in me?

### **Colossians 3:1-17**

Read this passage and compare it to your own life.

Ask God to help you identify areas where you have sinned and need to repent.

Confess and ask God's forgiveness.

Verses 5-9 refer to negative actions while verses 12-17 refer to positive actions.

Neglecting to follow God's instructions is disobedience to His will.

### **Practical application:**

1. Write Colossians 3:1 without looking at it.

2. Colossians 3:16 says to "let the word of Christ dwell in you..." As a Christian, I will follow these instructions by....

3. According to I John 2:5-6, my family and friends will recognize that I am a Christian because I...

4. Having studied these lessons, my definition of sin is...

## **The Church**

Fatima had never attended a church service. As a Muslim she had not attended services at a Mosque. She talked about some of her folk practices with her Muslim friends and she fasted during Ramadan with the others. After accepting Christ as her Savior, she had a hunger for reading the Bible and she wanted to meet other Christians. However, she had no concept of what the church was nor why she needed to affiliate with a body of believers. Although Fatima lives outside the Muslim world, her family circumstances prevented her attending regular church service. Eventually, she was able to find a small group of Christian women who met during the week on a regular basis for Bible study and prayer. She joined this group and gradually this group became her church. After 1 and ½ years, her family circumstances changed and she was able to attend Sunday worship services. Now that she has seen and experienced the fellowship of other believers, Fatima does not want to miss any occasion to be with the other believers in Christ.

Converts who live in Muslim countries would not have the same opportunities that Fatima had for worship with others. However, they would have the same needs that Fatima had of learning the importance of having corporate worship and fellowship. Rather than imposing a form of worship on people who come from other cultural backgrounds, this study is intended to present the early Christian church and its members in such a way that the believers can develop their own culturally appropriate forms of worship. The believer would learn the foundation of the church, the tasks assigned to the church, and the different ways that the early members served God. Examples of early believers who accepted the task assigned by God are provided for study. Hopefully the new believer will be able to determine her gifts and her assigned tasks and will willingly accept and carry out what God has asked her to do. In order to keep them at the center of this study the student should review the foundation and the assigned tasks as a part of each lesson.

This study was initially used with a group of Muslim converts who needed to form themselves into a church. Before the lesson, a designated student leader met with the teacher to prepare the part of the lesson that he then directed. After having prepared the lesson the student was thus able to lead the others in a discussion of the material. This method of teaching the group was used to develop the teaching skills of the members and to help them learn that they could lead Bible study. The teacher may choose to use these lessons with a group of converts or may incorporate them into a basic discipleship program with one individual.

### **Lesson One: The Church Founded by Jesus**

Matthew 16:13-18 (Matthew 7:24-29)  
Matthew 28:19-20

It is important that the student recognize that Jesus is building His church on the firm foundation of the faith of those who believe in Him. Jesus has given the church three important tasks, each one of which is to be carried out by the members of the church.

## **Lesson Two: Examples of Early Church Members**

Review Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20  
Ananias: Acts 9:10-22  
Philip: Acts 6:2-6; 8:26-40  
Barnabas: Acts 4:36-37; 9:26-27; 11:22-30; 13:1-3; 15:35-39; Colossians 4:10  
Dorcas: Acts 9:32-41  
Priscilla and Aquila: Acts 18:2-3; 18:18-19, 24-28; I Corinthians 16:19

These persons were chosen because they reflect a variety of responses and activities for the church. Since the list is probably too long to study in one session, the student may be asked to read some of these passages before the lesson and to give a resume of the person's life and work for the church. Another approach when studying this lesson with a group would be to assign a different character to each member of the group who would then present this person and his activities to the group.

Through these character studies, the new Christian can learn how God uses individuals to build His local church. She also learns that each person has a unique, God given role that is important to the whole body of believers. While studying the lives and contributions of the following individuals, help the student to discover for herself what role God is asking her to play in the building of His church in her area.

## **Lesson Three: The Beginning of the Church at Philippi**

Review Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20  
Acts 16:9-40

Paul went to Philippi at the direction of the Holy Spirit. The first members of this church were from different social, cultural, and religious backgrounds. The student can learn about methods of evangelism, reactions to adverse circumstances, and the importance of baptism and instruction for new believers.

## **Lesson Four: Characteristics of Early Church Members**

Review Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20  
I Thessalonians 1:1-2 (Acts 17:1-10); 2:13; 5:12-22  
Ephesians 4:11-16; I Corinthians 12:4-11; Romans 12:4-8

After having studied the contributions of some of the early church members and the beginning of one of the churches, the student is now encouraged to look at the instructions given to all church members. Some of Paul's instructions were for the leaders and others were for all

members. The entire church knew the responsibilities of each person. The spiritual gifts are introduced in this lesson. The teacher will need to help the student distinguish between a spiritual gift and a talent.

### **Lesson Five: Letter to the Church at Philippi: Part I**

Review Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20  
Philippians 1:1-11, 12-14, 19-26

Because the beginnings of the church at Philippi have been studied in detail, this letter has been selected for an in-depth study. Briefly review the beginning of this church in Acts 16. The more advanced student may read these verses at home as part of the preparation for the class. If you have been studying these passages as a group, try working with different ones to lead the discussion. Remember that most good teachers have been taught how to teach.

This first lesson in Philippians teaches the Christian how to pray for others. As you study Paul's prayer, try to help the new Christian to work on her own prayers for those believers she knows or has heard about. While most new Christians will face some opposition, hopefully, their situation won't be as difficult as Paul's. This testimony in Chapter One shows him putting into practice his teaching from Romans 8:28. Try to help the new Christian follow Paul's example and find positive things to use for testimony in her own life's situation.

### **Lesson Six: Letter to the Church at Philippi: Part II**

Review Matthew 16:18, 28:19-20  
Philippians 1:27-2:11 (Romans 10:13-15)

The idea of being a servant or of having a servant attitude is often difficult for new believers to comprehend. It is also contrary to all that they have been taught. Plan enough time to thoroughly discuss this concept. Persecution usually comes in one form or another to most Muslims who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. This passage can help the new believer to prepare herself for it. This lesson finishes with an emphasis on the responsibility of each believer for evangelism of the world.

### **Lesson Seven: Letter to the Church at Philippi: Part III**

Review Matthew 16:18, 28:19-20  
Philippians 3:1-16 (Genesis 17:1-14; Ephesians 2:8-9;  
Romans 12:17-21; Luke 9:62; I John  
2:9-11)



Paul gives an example of how to write a testimony which can be followed by the new Christian. The concept of forgetting the past and beginning a new life which is central

to Paul's testimony is often difficult for those from a Muslim background where the importance of forgiveness was not a part of their value system. When forgetting the past also involves forgiving, it is difficult for many Christians to really understand and to follow this teaching faithfully. If you discover that your student needs further study on this issue, it is recommended that you refer to the Bible study on forgiveness.

Additional scripture passages are given here for further clarification of the points raised by Paul in this chapter. Reading these passages will help the student to understand those points being raised by Paul.

### **Lesson Eight: Letter to the Church at Philippi: Part IV**

Review Matthew 16:18, 28:19-20  
Philippians 4:4-19 (Acts 16:22-26; Matthew 6:25-34; I Peter 5:7; Acts 28:16-31)

This passage deals more specifically with the life and work of the church as well as the attitudes of the members. It is important to explain that living a Christlike life does not affect salvation. It does, however, have an important influence on the general health and happiness of the individual. Paul teaches also that the church is to look outward and not inward. Having finished these studies, the student should be prepared to be a healthy, growing member of the Church that Christ is in the process of building.

### **Lesson One**

### **The Church Founded by Jesus**

### **Matthew 16:13-18**

To whom was Jesus talking?  
Whom did the disciples think Jesus was?  
What did Peter think about Jesus?  
Who revealed this truth to Peter?  
What does the rock signify?  
How would you define the word "faith?"  
Where does faith come from?  
Why is faith important for the foundation of the church?

Jesus had already used the rock as an example of a foundation in the parable found in Matthew 7:24-29. How would you explain the relationship between this parable and what Jesus said to Peter?  
Why is the foundation of something so important?  
Give some examples of buildings that did not have a proper foundation. What happened.

Look again at Matthew 16:18  
Who is going to build the church?  
What kind of church is Jesus talking about in this verse?  
Can this church be destroyed?  
What is the foundation of the church today?

### **Matthew 28:18-20**

To whom was Jesus talking?  
When did he speak these words?  
When we realize that these were Jesus' last words to his disciples, how does this influence their importance?  
Whose authority was Jesus using when he spoke?  
What were the three tasks that Jesus gave to the disciples?  
How does one "make disciples?"  
What is Jesus asking me to do as an expression of my Christian faith?  
Why does Jesus command baptism?  
What is the significance of baptism for the new Christian?

Look at verse 20. What is the responsibility of each Christian regarding teaching?  
What is the promise given here?

### **Practical Application:**

1. Write Matthew 28:19-20 without looking at it.

2. As a believer in Jesus, my foundation is based on...

3. As a believer in Jesus, I will carry out the tasks assigned to me by:

A.

B.

C.

## **Lesson Two**

### **Examples of Early Church Members**

#### **Review Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20**

We are going to study some of the members of the early church.

These are people who took the commandments of Christ seriously and tried to follow his teachings. As you study these individuals, try to think of yourself and other Christians you know. If a writer were to choose you as a model for others, what would he write about your relationship with God and your obedience to his commands?

## **Acts 9:10-22**

What do you know about Ananias as a person?

(Think of his religious background before becoming a Christian, his relationship with God, his role in the church, etc.)

Make a list of the things revealed about him in this scripture passage.

Why was Ananias afraid of Saul?

What do you think about the conversation that Ananias had with God?

What did Ananias do after he woke up?

What is the importance of the word "brother?"

Is there a situation where you would have difficulty in calling someone "brother" or

"sister?" What could you do in this situation?

Look again at verses 18-20

How did the disciples at Damascus follow the commandments of Jesus given in Matthew 28:19-20?

What do you think the disciples did during the days that Saul rested with them?

Saul became the greatest missionary who ever lived. What role did Ananias play in his life?

Because Ananias was faithful and did as asked by God, the gospel was spread all over the known world and many churches were planted. Think about your own situation.

What would God be asking of someone, maybe even you, in your community?

## **Acts 6:2-6**

How was Philip chosen as a leader?

What personal characteristics did he have?

What does it mean to be full of the Holy Spirit?

If you were to choose a leader for your group, according to these verses what qualifications should you look for?

## **Acts 8:26-40**

Why was Philip on the road to Gaza?

What does verse 27 tell you about obedience?

What was his approach to the Ethiopian?

Why was this an effective way to begin a presentation of the gospel?

In what way did Philip obey the command of Jesus given in Matthew 28:19-20?

Look back at Philip's church assigned task. Did it include witnessing to others?

What do these actions of Philip tell us about the responsibility of each person regarding witnessing to

others?

Barnabas was an important leader in the early church. We find references of him and his work throughout the book of Acts. The following verses are references of his life and work.

**Acts 4:36-37**

Why was Joseph's name changed to Barnabas?

What does Barnabas mean?

If your friends decided to change your name, what name would be chosen and why?

**Acts 9:26-27**

Why wouldn't the disciples associate with Paul?

What do you think would have happened if Barnabas had not acted as he did?

Do you have this kind of courage?

Name a person in your community who would cause fear or hesitation in the hearts and actions of your fellow Christians.

The disciples accepted Paul after the intervention of Barnabas. What does this tell you about his standing in the Christian community?

**Acts 11:22-30**

Why do you think the church at Jerusalem chose Barnabas to be the one to go and investigate what was happening in Antioch?

List the first three actions of Barnabas in order. Was this order important? Why?

What does verse 24 tell us about Barnabas?

Why do you think he went to get Saul?

Barnabas recognized his limitations and sought help.

Describe a circumstance in which you have needed to ask for help from someone better qualified.

Look at verses 28-30. How did the church show their trust in Barnabas and Saul?

**Acts 13:1-3**

How did the church choose Barnabas and Saul?

What was the response of these two men to God's call?

**Acts 15:35-39 (Acts 13:13)**

What do we learn about Barnabas' character in these verses?

How do his actions fit with the meaning of his name?

What would God have us do when someone asks for a second chance?

Was Barnabas sure that Mark would stay with him for the journey this time?

Why were Barnabas' actions important?

Most church scholars believe that Mark was the author of the gospel of Mark. How does this change your feeling about the actions of Barnabas?

### **Colossians 4:10**

What were the results of Barnabas' actions with Mark?  
How did Paul's attitude towards Mark change?

Barnabas worked with two men. What were the results of his ministry?

Paul:

Mark:

Women were also important in the early church. Below are examples of two of these women and their roles in the church.

### **Acts 9:32-41**

What role did Dorcas have in the church?

What did the church members think about her?

In what way were her activities important for the early church?

### **Acts 18:2-3**

Why were Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth?

What did they do for Paul?

Why would it have taken courage for them to house Paul?

### **Acts 18:18-19, 24-28**

Where were Priscilla and Aquila?

Who came to Ephesus?

What was wrong with his teachings?

What action did Priscilla and Aquila take?

How did their action fit the commandment of Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20

What were the results of their actions?

They took Apollos aside to explain what he needed to learn. Why was this a good practice? What happens to someone who is corrected publicly?

### **I Corinthians 16:19**

What did Priscilla and Aquila start in their home?

Why do you think Paul always mentioned Priscilla's name?

According to the verses you have read, what most likely was her role in the church?

### **Practical Application:**

1. Write Matthew 16:16 from memory.
  
2. What service did each of the following do for the church?  
Ananias  
Philip  
Barnabas  
Dorcas  
Priscilla and Aquila
  
3. List three characteristics of Ananias that would describe the kind of follower of Jesus that you would want to be.
  - A.
  - B.
  - C.
  
4. My service for my church is....

### **Lesson Three**

#### **The Beginning of the Church at Philippi**

##### **Review Matthew 16:13-18, 28:19-20**

This lesson looks at the beginnings of one early church. As you study this passage of scripture, keep in mind the three tasks assigned by Jesus.

##### **Acts 16:9-15**

Why did Paul go to Philippi?

Describe Paul's manner of accepting God's will.

When Paul arrived in Philippi, whom did he seek out first?

Look at verse 14. Who are the three persons mentioned in this verse?



What did each one of them do?

How does a shared responsibility help you tell others about Jesus?

After reading this passage, what do you know about Lydia, her background, her religion, her family, and her role in the community?

### **Acts 16:16-19**

Whom was Paul annoyed with: the girl, the spirit, or the owners?

From where did Paul get his power over the evil spirit?

We don't know what happened to this girl. However, if you had been in her place, after being healed, what would you do?

### **Acts 16:19-40**

Why were the slave girl's owners angry with Paul?

Notice that they used untrue statements to incite a riot.

How can Christians avoid being tricked into such behavior by someone who wants to have power?

Verses 23-25 Had Paul and Silas done anything to deserve such treatment as they received?

What was their response to this treatment?

Why do you think they were able to have such an attitude at this time?

Verses 26-28 Earthquakes were a common occurrence. What was the miracle in this one?

Verses 27-34 What was the jailer's reaction to these events?

Why do you think he asked Paul the question he asked in verse 30?

What was Paul's reply?

How many people accepted Christ as a result of this experience?

Verses 35-39 Why did Paul wait until this moment to announce that he was a Roman citizen?

What effect do you think this had on his testimony to the others?

How do you think the magistrates felt?

What would have been the effect of Paul's testimony on them?

Verse 40 Where was the first gathering of the church?

How many believers does this verse seem to indicate?

When he was in Philippi, how did Paul follow the command given by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20?

What evidence did you find that he made disciples, baptized, taught believers?

The first members of the church at Philippi seemed to be:  
1) a rich Jewish woman and her household.  
2) a poor slave girl (assumed)  
3) a Roman jailer and his household  
These were different social and cultural and religious backgrounds. Who do you think helped this group to come together as a church?

**Practical Application:**

1. Write Acts 16:31 without looking at it.
2. How did Paul witness in Philippi?
  - A. He went to where he could find the people.
  - B.
  - C.
  - D.
3. As a believer I can follow the example of Lydia and the Roman jailer by telling others in my family about Jesus. Yes.....No.....

**Lesson Four**

**Characteristics of Early Church Members**

**Review Matthew 16:18 and Matthew 28:19-20**

Paul wrote letters giving instructions to the new church. Study these instructions and then apply them to your situation.

**I Thessalonians 1:2-3**

1. Read Acts 17:1-10 for the beginnings of the church at Thessalonica.
2. Why did Paul give thanks for this church?
3. What were the characteristics of the church at Thessalonica?
4. Why would these characteristics be important?
5. Who had these characteristics?

### **I Thessalonians 2:13**

1. What did the people of this church do?
2. How does the Word of God perform its work in the believer?

### **I Thessalonians 5:12-22**

1. How are the members to treat the leaders of the church?
2. What is the role of the church leaders?
3. To whom is Paul speaking in verse 14?
4. What would be the testimony of a group that had the characteristics found in verses 15-18?
5. Why would these instructions be important for a Christian?
6. How can the Spirit be quenched? (Verse 19)
7. In verses 21-22, what is the responsibility of each Christian with regard to what he hears or reads?
8. If you compare each statement with God's written word, what should you do when something is in disagreement with God's word?

### **Ephesians 4:11-16; I Corinthians 12:4-11; Romans 12:4-8**

1. Who gives the gifts to the church members?
2. What is the purpose of these gifts? (Eph. 4:12-13)
3. What is the result for the church when the gifts are used as intended? (Eph. 4:14-16)
4. Discuss each of the gifts listed in the 3 passages of scripture?  
How does each gift help the church?
5. What is each church member to do with his gift? (Romans 12:6)
6. Why is each gift important?

### **Practical Application:**

1. Write I Thessalonians 5:15 without looking at it.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. My gift from the Holy Spirit is...
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. I will use my Spiritual Gift in the church in the

following ways:

A.

B.

C.

4. By comparing what I hear with the Bible, I can determine whether or not the message is from God. True.....False.....

## Lesson Five

### Letter to the Church at Philippi: Part I

#### Review Matthew 16:18 and Matthew 28:19-20

Having studied the beginning of the church at Philippi, we will now begin an in-depth study of the directions given to this body of believers.

#### Philippians 1:1-11

1. Who is writing this letter?
2. To whom is it being written?
3. Verse 2 Define *peace*.

How is the peace that comes from God different from other types of peace?

If you lose this peace, how can you get it back? (I John 1:9)

4. Verse 3 What memories would Paul have of Philippi? (Acts 16)

Why would he be thankful for the jail experience? (Romans 8:28)

5. Verse 4 Paul prayed for the church members.  
Why should we pray for other church members?  
Ephesians 3:14-19 is an example of a prayer for others.
6. What is the good work begun in the Christian?  
How does this verse explain Paul's confidence in the faithfulness of God?
7. Verses 7-11 When Paul wrote this letter, he was in prison in Rome.  
What is Paul's prayer for the church at Phillipi?  
What does it mean to be sincere and blameless?  
What is the fruit of righteousness?  
How does the Christian bear this fruit? (John 15:1-5)

**Philippians 1:12-14**

1. How has Paul's being in prison turned out for the good?
2. What do you think Paul did regularly?
3. What gave the other Christians the courage to testify for Christ?
4. What would give you the courage to tell others around you about Jesus?

**Philippians 1:19-26**

1. Explain Paul's two desires.
2. What are his reasons for wanting to live?
3. What are his reasons for wanting to die?
4. Which does he choose and why?

**Practical Application:**

1. Write Philippians 1:21 without looking at it.
2. Following the example given by Paul, write a short prayer that you could use in praying for your church.

3. Look at Philippians 1:12 Describe a situation in your life which seemed bad at the time but turned out to have good consequences. Take time to thank God for the good things He accomplished.

## Lesson Six

### Letter to the Church at Philippi: Part II

**Review Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20**

**Philippians 1:27-2:11**

1. What is a servant?  
Why do most people think that being a servant is not desirable?
2. Verse 27 What is conduct worthy of the gospel?  
(Colossians 3:12-17)  
What does it mean to be in one spirit?  
How can you disagree with your Christian brothers and sisters and remain in one spirit?
3. Verse 29 When persecution comes, what should be the Christian's reaction?
4. Verses 3-4 What happens in a group when each member considers the others as more important than himself?  
How can Jesus help the Christian have this attitude?
5. Verses 5-8 What was Jesus' attitude?  
Why did Jesus choose to have this attitude?
6. Verses 9-11 What is the promise given here?  
What has God asked the Christian to do in order to fulfill this promise?

(Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 10:13-15)  
Are you doing what God has asked you to do?

**Practical Application:**

1. Write Philippians 2:3 without looking at it.
  
2. To have the same attitude that Jesus had, I will...
  
3. To help fulfil the promise of Philippians 2:9-11, God is asking me to:
  - A.
  - B.
  - C.

**Lesson Seven**

**Letter to the Church at Philippi: Part III**

**Review Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20**

**Philippians 3:1-16**

1. Circumcision is a symbol of what? (Genesis 17:1-14)
2. What does Paul mean when he says that Christians are the true circumcision?
3. Why does Paul tell his life story?
4. Can works or outward signs such as circumcision result in salvation?  
(Ephesians 2:8-9)
5. Why does Paul compare his seeking to live the Christian life to a race?  
How does this image help you to understand what Paul is trying to teach?
6. Verse 13 How can you forget the past?  
Why is forgetting the past important?  
What kinds of things should be forgotten? (Romans 12:17-21; Luke 9:62)  
How do these passages fit what Paul is describing?
7. Verse 15 How will God tell you that you have erred?  
Read I John 2:9-11. What does light do?  
Who provides the light?  
How can you remain in the light?  
How does God's Word act as a light?

### **Practical Application:**

1. Write Philippians 4:13 without looking at it.
2. Using Paul as an example write a short testimony that you could share with your friends.  
Include the things that gave you confidence in the past but now are counted as having no value. (Philippians 3:4-8)

## **Lesson Eight**

### **Letter to the Church at Philippi: Part IV**

#### **Review Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20**

#### **Philippians 4:4-19**

1. Verse 4 What does the word *rejoice* mean?  
Did Paul follow his own advice? (Acts 16:22-26)
2. Verse 6 How does this verse relate to the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 6:24-25?  
What would you say to a Christian who refuses to work for his living?  
What should the Christian do with his anxieties? (I Peter 5:7)
3. Verse 7 How does this verse relate to verse 6?  
Look at the definition of *peace* you gave for 1:2  
How has your definition changed as you have studied these verses?
4. Verse 8 Why is it important to keep your mind on good things?  
How does this verse relate to books, movies, songs, television, gossip, etc?  
How does hearing/seeing impure things influence the Christian?
5. Verse 9 Paul says to follow his example as a Christian.  
What would happen if you suggested that someone use you as an example of how a Christian should live?



6. Verse 11 What were Paul's circumstances when he wrote this verse?

(Acts 28:16-31)

How can a Christian be content in difficult circumstances?

What role do faith and prayer play in this attitude?

7. Verses 14-18 These verses talk about giving a gift to Paul.

Why is it important to give money to the church?

What do these verses tell us that the church in Philippi did with the money given to

church? Why didn't the church keep all of it for themselves?

How can you follow the example of the church at Philippi?

8. Verse 19 What is the promise given in this verse?

Read through the verse several times placing the emphasis on a different word each time.

*My* God shall supply...

*My God* shall supply...

*My God shall* supply... etc.

### **Practical Application:**

1. Write these verses without looking at them:

Philippians 4:4

Philippians 4:19

2. Philippians 4:9 In order to be able to tell someone to use me as an example of how a

Christian should live, I should first of all....

3. Many verses from Philippians have been used as songs of praise during a church service.

Pick a passage that has touched your heart and try to sing it. Teach it to someone else.

4. The letter to the Church at Philippi is also a letter to me. Some specific ways in which I will try to practice what Paul was teaching are:

A.

B.

C.

D.

## **Fasting**

Sabrina, a new Christian faced a dilemma during Ramadan. Her husband who did not know that she was a believer in Jesus wanted her to keep the fast with him. She wondered how she could obey her husband and not disobey God. Iman is the only Christian in her family. During Ramadan, she said, "My mother doesn't believe in Jesus. She is purifying herself by fasting. Since I have accepted Jesus, I don't need to fast in order to be accepted by God." Fatima's father-in-law was critically ill. She asked if fasting would help him be healed. Each of these women had as adults faithfully followed the rules of Ramadan even when they had not practiced the other pillars of Islam. Now as Christians, each woman needed to understand fasting from a biblical perspective.

Fasting was a common occurrence during Bible times. No rules for fasting were given in the Old Testament. However, the Old Testament includes many stories of fasts which were done for different reasons and in different ways. Since His rules were only for the procedure, Jesus seemed to assume that His followers would fast. There are also many stories in the New Testament regarding the fasting of Jesus and later the Christians. The question for the Muslim convert often seems to revolve around how to fast in a manner pleasing to God.

The Old Testament lesson provides a list of fasts that seem to have been performed around three different purposes. Examples of fasts that support each purpose have been selected for study. There are many other stories of fasts in the Old Testament. A concordance will provide references for those who wish to have more examples. The New Testament lesson focuses on the teachings of Jesus and the examples of fasts by Jesus and the early church. These are intended to be a guide to help the Christian decide when, how and for what purpose to fast. The teacher should keep in mind that neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament commands fasting.

Fast: 1) To abstain from all or certain foods as in observing a holy day, 2) to eat very little or nothing.

Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition,  
1988

### **Lesson One: The Old Testament Teachings Regarding Fasting**

Nehemiah 1:1-4; Daniel 10:1-9  
Ezra 8:21-23; Esther 4:4-16; II Samuel 12:15-23  
Daniel 9:1-4 (9:4-19); Jonah 3:1-10

As she studies this lesson, the new Christian should begin to identify many differences in practice from the fasting she did as a Muslim. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help her clarify that which is pleasing to God. However, the teacher should not enter into a comparison with Islam nor should she critique the month of Ramadan. Leave this to the Holy Spirit as He works in the heart of the new believer.

## **Lesson Two: The New Testament Teachings.**

Luke 18:9-14; Matthew 6:16-18; Matthew 9:14-15  
Acts 13:1-4; Ephesians 2:8-9

The teachings of Jesus touch on the form or manner of fasting as well as the appropriate time. While there are no early church teachings regarding fasting in the New Testament, it does include examples of fasting being practiced. The teacher's goal is to help the new believer discover for herself when and how to fast in accordance with the teachings of Jesus.

**Summary:** According to the Bible, fasting can be done for several different reasons. All have the same common factor of drawing closer to God to hear His voice. There are no guidelines given in the Bible as to how often, how long, when or in what circumstances a person should fast. Jesus did give specific instructions regarding the behavior of a person during a fast. There is evidence that the New Testament church fasted to seek divine guidance for certain tasks. Fasting for the Christian, therefore, would be a personal decision done for a specific purpose and time and should follow the guidelines given by Jesus.

Biblical fasting is always combined with meditation and prayer. Fasting is an appropriate spiritual exercise when used in combination with meditation and prayer for the purpose of focusing the individual's total attention on God and His will. It should not become a ritual or a ceremony or be seen as a way of forcing God to take certain actions which would turn fasting into a form of magic. The challenge for the former Muslim who has experienced the Ramadan fast as a cultural/religious event will be to find an appropriate Christian way to participate with her family and friends in a cultural event. To fast or not to fast is a personal decision based on the individual's current desired relationship with God.

While most of Jesus' teaching seems to indicate that fasting is a personal and private experience, examples of large group fasting are found in the New Testament. This would seem to indicate that fasting to show solidarity with the poor or a day of fasting and prayer for a group of people are also appropriate. Church leaders may call for a period of fasting and prayer for a specific purpose but it would always be the individual's personal decision to participate or not to participate.

## **Lesson One: The Old Testament Teachings Regarding Fasting**

A. Fasting as a means of preparing oneself for the receiving of a divine communication from God.

### **1. Nehemiah 1:1-4**

Where was Nehemiah? Why was he there?  
What news did he hear? Why was this news disturbing?  
What did Nehemiah do?  
What was the purpose of his fast?  
What else did Nehemiah do?  
The remainder of Chapter One and Chapter Two give the results on this fast.

### **2. Daniel 10:1-9**

How long did Daniel fast?  
Describe his fast. What did he not do that you would have expected?  
What did he eat and drink? How does this fit the definition of fasting?  
Why did he fast? What happened?

B. Fasting as a means of seeking divine aid.

### **1. Ezra 8:21-23**

Where were the people?  
Where were they going?  
What were they asking God to do? Why?  
What does this passage tell us about the length or manner of fasting?

### **2. Esther 4:4-16**

What was happening? (See chapter 3)  
Why did Esther fast?  
Describe the fast? What did she do? How long did it last?  
How many people fasted?  
Notice that the fast included the nights also.  
Chapter 5 tells us what happened to Esther after the fast.

3. **II Samuel 12:15-23**

Describe David's fast.  
Why did David fast? What did he do while he fasted?  
What did God do?  
What was David's attitude when his child died?  
What does this story teach us about fasting?

C. Fasting as a means of expressing repentance: group or individual.

1. **Daniel 9:1-4** (also verses 5-18)

Why did Daniel fast?  
Describe his fast? How is it different from the others you have studied?  
What word would you use to describe his prayer which starts in verse 4?

2. **Jonah 3:1-10**

Who fasted?  
Who called for a fast and why?  
Describe the fast?  
What happened?

D. Compare the fasts.

Describe the different ways that the fasts were done.  
Why were they done? Give the different reasons for each.  
What usually accompanied each fast?  
During each fast, where was the emphasis placed?  
Why were the fasts so different as to length of time and manner?  
What seemed to be important to God as He responded to each fast?

**Personal Application:**

1. According to the Old Testament examples, reasons that I would choose to fast include

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. When I fast, I will also pray and.....  
.....

3. Write Daniel 9:4 from memory.

4. When I have fasted and prayed and God's reply is "no" I

will do as David in II Samuel  
12:20

and.....  
.....

## Lesson Two: New Testament Teachings

### A. Teachings of Jesus

#### 1. **Luke 18:9-14**

This is a parable told by Jesus.  
Who were the two men?  
What do you know about each one?

Pharisees fasted on market days when many people would see them. They wore special clothes and whitened their faces to make sure that all knew that they were fasting.

What does Jesus say about this type of behavior?  
Which action was pleasing to God? Why?

#### 2. **Matthew 6:16-18**

Jesus assumes that people will fast. How do you know that?

What rules does He give regarding fasting?

If you follow Jesus' rules regarding fasting, what effect will this have on your work and your study time?

Why do you think Jesus gave these rules?

How does Satan use what others see you do as a means to cause you to sin?

Explain the difference between the rewards mentioned by Jesus.

Which reward is the one to be desired by the Christian?

Why did Jesus discourage public recognition for a religious act?

#### 3. **Matthew 9: 14-15**

What does Jesus seem to assume about fasting by His followers?

What does Jesus say about choosing a time to fast?

### B. Examples of fasting and teachings of the early church.

#### 1. **Acts 13:1-4**

Why did the early church members fast?  
What did they do at the same time?  
What were the results of the fast?

2. **Ephesians 2:8-9**

Pharisees believed that they gained special favor from God by fasting.

What do these verses tell us about fasting or any other action that we might choose to do? Can fasting earn a relationship with God?

**Personal Application:**

1. When a Christian chooses to fast at the same time as another religious group, how would her manner of fasting be different from those around her regarding:

a. Reason

b. Attitude

c. Activity

d. Result

2. When I am fasting, I can keep my mind on my relationship with God and not on food or what I am planning to eat when I finish my fast by...

3. Ways that I can fast at the same time as my family and friends and at the same time follow the teachings and examples of the Bible are:

a. Keep my attention on prayer and not on the activities around me.

b. Use this time to pray for the salvation of specific family members and friends.

c.

d.



e.

4. Write Ephesians 2:8-9 from memory.

## Repentance

After watching children play in three different languages and cultures, I have found one phrase common to all in that it is used in exactly the same way and with the same meaning. When confronted with something that "someone" has done the child replies, "not me." Imaan is a young Christian single woman who lives with her family in a large city. She reads her Bible faithfully, she attends church regularly, and she has been eager to finish her discipleship classes. However, each time the lesson refers to an attitude or an action that would be disobedience to God, Imaan says, "not me." Imaan has found excuses on every occasion for her attitudes or behaviors that result in her not seeing herself as needing to repent. Her pride and her self image won't allow her to admit her fault.

Repent: to feel sorry or self-reproachful for what one has done or failed to do; be conscience-stricken or contrite: to feel so contrite over one's sins as to change, or decide to change one's ways; be penitent. (Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition, 1988)

Repentance is essential to a relationship with God. In the Old Testament story of Saul, God removed His Spirit when Saul refused to accept responsibility for his actions and repent. (I Samuel 16:14) David repented and asked that God not take His Spirit away (Psalms 51:11) David would have been aware of what had happened to Saul. Jesus included confession and asking for forgiveness in His model prayer. (Matthew 6:12) He told parables that emphasized the need for repentance and the rejoicing that occurs in heaven when someone repents. Even though a Christian's sins have been forgiven and she has assurance of salvation, God still expects the Christian to repent and to ask for forgiveness.

Repentance restores the Christian to fellowship with God. Repentance does not remove the physical consequences of disobedience. David's son died. The prodigal son's inheritance was gone.

Through the use of case studies, the Christian begins to understand that God wants each person to accept responsibility for her actions and to repent. The case studies illustrate the consequences of disobedience. They also illustrate the desire of each person to have God's Spirit within. God rejoices when one of His children repents. As a result of having studied these lessons, the Christian will recognize her disobedience and will confess it to God without offering excuses.

Because repentance is so closely linked with sin, the teacher may wish to study the lessons on sin before approaching the subject of repentance. Some of the questions in these lessons assume that the Christian understands sin as being disobedient to God in thoughts, attitudes or actions. Sin should not be understood to be simply breaking one of a list of cultural

rules.

### **Lesson One: A Study of Two Kings**

**I Samuel 15, 16:1, 14**

**II Samuel 11, 12:1-23, Psalm 51**

This lesson studies the lives of Saul and David. After reading the two stories, note the following similarities. Each was a king who was chosen by God and who knew the commandments of God. Each king had a personal relationship with God. Saul had received a specific order from God while David had the Ten Commandments to follow. Each king was disobedient. Each repented. Why was Saul's repentance rejected while David's was accepted? What was the difference?

What type of repentance does God desire? Note that even though God accepted David's repentance, God did not remove the consequences of David's sin.

While studying this lesson, the teacher should guide the Christian into thinking of various times that she might disobey God, repent and be forgiven, and yet the consequences remain. Some examples would include: gossip or slander, sexual sin, child abuse, substance abuse, breaking the laws of her country, etc. Attitudes that result in actions such as envy or jealousy, anger, resentment, etc. should also be explored. The teacher would desire to help the student apply this lesson to her own every day life.

### **Lesson Two: Stories Jesus Told**

**Luke 15:11-24**

**Luke 15:3-10**

There are several points about the story of the Prodigal Son that would be significant for a Muslim. Inheritance is given when the father dies. Therefore, to ask for the inheritance is the same as wanting the father to die and is, therefore, a dishonorable act. When a child dishonors the family, this child is usually cast out of the family and treated as dead. A human father would refuse to receive again a child who had dishonored the family. Therefore, most Muslims would see the father's actions in this story as humiliating and degrading both for himself and for the family. The then the son has disgraced the family and should not be welcomed again into the family circle. The contrast between the actions of a human father and the actions of our Heavenly Father has a powerful impact on the Muslim.

The new Christian would be aware of these cultural factors in her family background. Therefore, these stories of repentance and the rejoicing by God would be an important contrast to her own experience with her family and culture. She would have

learned as a small child not to admit wrong doing in order to avoid the disgrace that would come as a result of public admission of fault. Through the teachings of Jesus, she learns that God expects and rejoices when a different behavior is learned and practiced. These stories emphasize the importance of repentance.

The new Christian would also need to learn that God already knows her attitudes and actions. Through previous studies she would have learned that sin leads to a broken relationship with God. Repentance is necessary in order to restore the relationship. As she studies these stories, help her to understand that God truly wants the relationship with her and that rejoicing does occur when that happens.

### **Lesson One**

#### **A Study of Two Kings**

##### **I Samuel 15**

Verses 2-3           What was Saul commanded to do?  
Verses 8-9           Did he do exactly as he was commanded?  
Verse 11   Why was God displeased?  
Verses 12           How did Saul see his actions?  
Verses 14-15       When confronted, how did he react?  
Verses 20-22       What was Saul's offered excuse?  
Verse 22   Why wouldn't God accept these animals as a sacrifice?  
Verses 24-25       Saul asks for pardon for his sin.  
                          Has he truly recognized that he has disobeyed God?  
                          How do you know?  
Verses 15, 24   Why does Saul blame the soldiers each time he is confronted?  
  
Does God find Saul's excuses acceptable?  
Does God pardon Saul's sin?

##### **I Samuel 16:1, 14**

What happened to Saul?  
Take time to read the life of Saul and discover what happened to him when he no longer had the Spirit of God to guide him.

##### **II Samuel 11, 12:1-23**

How did David disobey God?  
Which of the Ten Commandments did he break? (Exodus 20:13,14,17)  
To human eyes, David's sin might seem worse than that of Saul.  
How did God react to David's sin?  
How does this compare with how God reacted to Saul's sin?  
Verse 12:15   What happened when Nathan confronted David

with his sin?

**Psalm 51** Did David offer any excuses?

Psalm 51:11 Why do you think David prayed in this way?

(What happened to Saul?)

Did God accept the repentance of David?

What happened to David and Bathsheba's son?

When you read the stories of David's family life, you will find that God did not remove the consequences of David's sin. Try to think of how such a sin would affect every member of the family. God did forgive David and restored fellowship with him.

If David and Saul had thought of the consequences of their disobedience, do you think they would have continued with their actions?

Explain why you think this.

If you were to consider the effects of disobeying God on your life for the rest of your life would you still disobey?

### **Personal application:**

1. Describe a situation in which the actions of one person has had consequences for others in your family.
2. If I were to consider the effects of a disobedient act on my life for the rest of my life, would I still commit that act? Why?
3. Even though the consequences of my actions remain, it is important for me to repent because...
4. Think of one time when you have disobeyed God. Using Psalm 51 as your model, write a prayer to God.

5. Write Luke 15:7 without looking at it.

## Lesson Two

### Stories Jesus Told

#### Luke 15:11-24

What is a parable?

What did the younger son do?

Why didn't he have a right to his inheritance at this time?

Why do you think the father gave the son what he had asked for?

What happened to the relationship between the father and the son after the son received his inheritance? Whose fault was the it?

Describe what the son did and what happened to him after he left home.

What did the son decide to do?

Did he offer excuses for his behavior?

What did he want from his father?

Did he repent? (Consider the definition of repentance.)

What did he say to his father?

How did his father receive him?

What happened to his relationship with his father?

Verse 31: The son had already had his inheritance.

Repentance did not gain him another. What did the son gain?

Whom does the father represent?

Whom does the son represent?

What would be God's reaction when one of His children repents and returns to Him?

#### Luke 15:3-10

These two stories are parables.

What does God do when one of His children is a sinner?

Can you think of a story from the Old Testament where God sought out the sinner to bring him to repentance? (Two examples can be found in Genesis 3-4)

What happens in heaven when someone repents?

What is repentance? (You might want to look in the dictionary.)

What do these three stories teach you about God?

Why does God allow the individual free choice? (The sheep chose to wander a way and the son chose to leave home)  
Whose choice is repentance?

**Practical Application:**

1. God accepts my excuses. True.....  
False.....

2. When I disobey God, I break the communication between us.  
True.....False.....

3. When I repent, the communication between God and me is restored. True.....False.....

4. Repentance is:

5. Meditate on Psalm 139. How do the words of this psalm help you with repentance?

6. Write Psalm 139:23-24 without looking at the words.





## **Being A Witness for Christ**

Jameela, a young Christian who has a job and a home of her own and who is an active member of her church, has a large family living in the same metropolitan area. Although they know that she is a Christian they have not rejected her. Jameela would like for her family to become Christian but she is very hesitant to talk with them about her faith in Jesus. She says, "they aren't like me. You didn't know me before. I was considered to be a bad girl. I was the black sheep of the family. My mother and sister are different. They are good people. I needed Jesus because I was so bad. They observe Ramadan and pray. I think God will accept them."

Islam did not teach Jameela that every person is separated from God. She believes that "good people" will go to heaven and that Jesus came for "bad people" like her. She truly believes that her only hope is through her belief in Jesus as her Savior. She needs to learn through Bible study that Jesus is the only way for each person. Working through this series of scriptures should help Jameela and others like her to understand that God has only one plan for salvation.

Converts from Islam, as new believers everywhere need to learn how to share their new faith with nonbelievers. Some are like Jameela. They have not yet learned the truth of John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life: no one comes to the Father but through me.'" Others are eager to share but don't know how or want a guide to help them. Others will share effectively from personal experience as the Woman at the Well in John 4 did. This lesson will provide each Christian with a biblical basis for the sharing of the gospel and give her a guide for that process.

Two verses from the New Testament are used to explain witness as used in this Bible study. Mark 5:19, "But He said to Him, 'Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you.'" John 4:29, "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done: this is not the Christ, is it?" In each verse the individual had a life changing encounter with Jesus and then went to share what had happened with others. That is being a witness.

Encourage the new Christian to begin memorizing selected verses that she can use for sharing the gospel with others. Encourage her to begin sharing her faith with her family and friends.

### **Lesson One: The Biblical Basis for Sharing the Gospel**

The verses selected for study are a brief outline that presents the lostness of man and the way to have salvation. Some of these may be selected for memorization and use in witnessing to others. In any case, the new believer can make a list of these verses in her Bible in order to be ready at

all times to share the plan of salvation with someone.

The story of Adam and Eve illustrates that only one act of disobedience separates forever man and woman from God. The story of Lazarus teaches that salvation must be obtained before death. Both of these are important concepts for the new Christian to understand as she tries to begin to tell others about her new faith. This lesson will help the new Christian to understand why she should witness to others and give her some of the basic tools necessary for such an endeavor.

In most cases it is better to avoid questions requiring a simple "yes" or "no" as the answer. This lesson, however, deliberately uses some questions of this type in order to emphasize the truth being taught in the verse.

### **Lesson Two: Three People Who Met Jesus**

**John 4:1-42**

**John 9:1-39**

**Mark 5:1-20**

These stories are long but tell of three encounters with Jesus and the witness that each gave afterwards. Encourage your new Christian to recognize that each person in the story who met Jesus gave testimony to what Jesus had done for him. Each had a life changing experience with Jesus and the testimony of this experience brought others to Jesus. Notice that the testimony was immediate, specific and stimulated others to want to know more. Those around the individual could readily see that a life changing experience had occurred. Encourage the new Christian to use these individuals as a model for developing her own testimony to be used with non Christians.

Many witness encounters with Muslims result in a debate. The Christian should avoid if possible debating with her Muslim friend. Once a debate has started, meaningful dialogue stops because the main purpose is to win the argument. Help the new Christian to see that Jesus did not debate and resisted the attempts by others to start one. The Samaritan woman is a perfect example of how He kept to the main issue and kept the conversation personal. Encourage the new Christian to follow Jesus' example.

In the story of the Jesus healing the blind man, Jesus tells us that a child born with a handicap is not the result of sin.

While this is an important concept, it is not the central point of this lesson. The lesson on sin deals with the consequences that may come as a result of a sin committed. If your Christian friend has difficulty with this idea, study the lessons on sin with her. During this lesson, your goal is to help her understand the importance of her testimony and to help her develop her own for sharing with others.

### **Lesson Three: The Bridge Illustration**

The "bridge" is a particularly useful tool in witnessing to Muslims. This tool visually illustrates that Jesus is the only way to a relationship with God. It effectively points out that mankind's efforts to bridge the chasm between God and mankind don't work. It works best when used in a one-on-one dialogue. The Christian should use pencil and paper or some available materials and while dialoguing with a friend draw and explain the bridge. Depending on the literacy level of the friends, the verses can be read or quoted. The Christian should be encouraged to carry a list of the suggested references with her. Having such a list will help reduce fear that she will forget essential points.

Before returning to visit her family in a Muslim country, Fatima memorized the verses used with the "Bridge." She practiced using it with a Christian friend until she felt that she had a good grasp of the truths being presented. Fatima wanted to be able to use this with her family and friends during her visit. She felt that she was safer carrying this illustration in her head than in carrying a Bible with her in her baggage.

During the study session, model using the Bridge by reading the verses, discussing each and drawing the diagram. Then encourage the new Christian to practice using you as a non-believer friend. Discuss reactions and feelings about the tool. You may need to repeat this lesson several times until your friend feels comfortable with the tool. Begin to memorize together one verse from the tool each week.

## Lesson One

### The Biblical Basis for Sharing the Gospel

#### Genesis 3:1-24

How many times did Adam and Eve disobey God?  
What were the consequences of their actions?  
What happened to their relationship with God?  
Did they get to return to the Garden?

#### Romans 1:18-23

Will God accept someone who says, "I didn't know."?  
What does this passage teach out mankind's relationship with God?

#### Romans 5:12

How did sin enter the world?  
What were the consequences for me and my family?

#### Romans 3:23

Is there anyone who is without sin?  
According to this verse I am...

#### Romans 5:8

How does God demonstrate His love for us?  
Why did Christ die?

#### Romans 6:23

What are the wages of sin?  
Explain the phrase, "free gift of God."

#### John 3:16

How does one obtain eternal life?  
Why did God give His only son?

#### John 3:36

What happens to the person who believes in Jesus?  
What happens to the person who does not believe in Jesus?

#### Ephesians 2:8-9

Can a person earn salvation by doing good works?  
How can a person have eternal life?

#### John 14:6

How many pathways are there to God?

**Revelations 3:20**

What is Jesus doing? Why?  
Who must open the door?  
What happens when the door is opened?  
If someone refuses to open the door, what happens?

**Luke 16:19-31**

What happens to the person who wants to believe in Jesus after death?  
What is between heaven and hell?  
What happens if a person who has died wants to tell family members about Jesus?

**Hebrews 9:27**

What comes after death for every person?

**Revelations 20:11-15**

Describe the scene.  
What happened to those whose names were not in the Book of Life?  
Did anyone escape?  
Based on what you have already studied, how does your name get into the Book of Life?

**Romans 10:9-15**

How does one become saved?  
Is salvation refused to anyone who asks for it?  
Explain verse 14.

**Matthew 28:19-20**

What is the Christian commanded to do?  
What is the promise given to the Christian who carries out this commandment?  
What is the difference between a command and a request?  
How do these verses apply to the Christian today?

**Personal Application:**

1. You have a friend who believes that she is pure in the eyes of God because she faithfully follows the five pillars of Islam and is a good person. Using the verses you have just studied, what could you say that would convince her that she is impure in the eyes of God?

2. Why doesn't God accept "good people" who fast and pray regularly?

3. According to the Bible, what is the only way to have eternal life?

4. Based on these scriptures, God is asking me to....

5. Write John 14:6 without looking at it.

## **Lesson Two**

### **Three People Who Met Jesus**

#### **John 4:4-42**

At this time, the Jews tried to avoid passing through Samaria. The religion practiced by the Samaritans was not the same as that practiced by the Jews which led to feelings of each group against the other. In addition, it was unusual for a Jewish man to stop and talk with an unaccompanied female. Notice that the disciples were surprised when they saw Jesus talking with the woman (verse 27).

Verse 7 What does the fact that the woman came to the well alone and at mid-day tell you about her

relationships in the village?

How did Jesus begin a conversation with the woman?

Why would it be important to start naturally?

Verses 8-15 How did Jesus get and keep her attention?

Verses 16-26 Why did the woman try to change the subject?

How did Jesus keep the conversation from changing into a debate on the merits of each religion?

Why is it important to avoid debating when presenting the gospel?

Verses 28-30 What did the woman do?

What did she say?

Why did the people go to see Jesus?

Verses 39-42 What caused the people to believe in Jesus at first?

After they met Jesus, what changed about their belief?

What about this woman's testimony was effective?

What did you learn from Jesus' approach?

### **John 9:1-38**

Verses 1-6 What did Jesus do for the man?

Verses 7-12 What happened to the man?

How did his neighbors react to the change in him?

What was this man's testimony?

How did the people react to the testimony?

Verses 13-34 The Pharisees cared more about the law than the individual.

Why did they question the man?

What was his testimony?

Why didn't they accept his testimony?

Did the man fully understand all about Jesus?

How did that affect his testimony?

Verses 35-38 What happened when the man fully understood?

Why didn't he wait until he had fully understood before talking?

Jesus saw a physical need and took care of it. How does this help with witnessing?

The neighbors saw that something was different in the man. How did that effect their questions?

The man had met Jesus. What does he tell in his testimony?

The rejection by the Pharisees did not stop the man from telling about Jesus.

How can you use this concept in giving your testimony?

### **Mark 5:1-20**

Jesus saw a physical need and met that need. How did that effect the man?

Verse 18 What did the man want to do? Why do you think he wanted to do that?

Verse 19 What did Jesus tell the man to do?  
Imagine that you are this man. What would you tell the people?

Verse 20 What did the man do?  
What was the people's reaction?  
To obey Jesus meant going to 10 large cities in the region and telling them about his experience with Jesus. These people probably did not meet Jesus in any other way. Why was it important for the man to obey Jesus?

### **Practical Application:**

1. Read this true story and then answer the questions.

Fatima, her three daughters and I went to a hamburger restaurant one afternoon. After we were seated and eating, a Muslim woman with her daughter came to sit at the next table. While the children played, Fatima and the woman began to talk. They discovered that they were not only from the same country but that their villages were near each other. As they talked about the families and their lives, the subject changed to religion. Fatima said, "I'm a Christian." The other woman was surprised and said, "I didn't know that there were any Christian families in that area." Fatima replied, "There aren't. I became a Christian after moving here." She then



began to share her reasons for deciding to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and her Savior. As she talked she included some of the things that God had done for her during the past several months. The woman asked many questions and finished by inviting Fatima and myself for a visit to her home. She said, "I would like to know more about this."

How did Fatima's testimony fit the models you have just studied?

Why is establishing a relationship before beginning to talk about Jesus important?

Imagine that you are Fatima. You have met a woman and want to tell her about your relationship with Jesus. Write a brief outline of the points that you would want to include. Then look at what you've written. Does it reflect your personal experience? Does it include specific things that God has done for you?

2. Write John 3:16 without looking at it.

## Opposition

Aisha and her daughter who live in a large metropolitan area became believers as the result of the testimony of Aisha's sister-in-law. Aisha loved to attend the weekly neighborhood Bible study that met near her place of business. However, she told her husband that she was attending a business meeting every week. Aisha particularly liked the praise and prayer part of the service. When she was approached about the idea of baptism, she said that she needed to wait longer because she needed to be really sure that Jesus was the Savior.

When Aisha's husband found out that she was attending Christian meetings he became very angry with her. When he threatened her with divorce if she continued to practice Christianity, Aisha immediately cut off all relationships with her Christian friends. She stopped reading her Bible and removed all her Christian literature from her home. When contacted by her pastor, she told him that she was doing what she needed to do at this time. Aisha's daughter, Samira, who is married and has her own home follows the leading of her mother. Both Aisha and Samira had been giving testimony of their faith in Jesus at their place of work. However, both stopped out of fear that someone would tell Aisha's husband.

Christians through the centuries have experienced opposition and persecution for their faith. For some, this has resulted in a stronger faith and growth as a Christian with a resulting testimony that helps lead others to Christ. For others, it has resulted in a falling away from their faith as a Christian. Jesus used the parable of the sower found in Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23 to explain that some would fall away during difficult times. According to Jesus, the person who falls away has no strong root that will help her rest firm in adversity. Proper preparation of the soil with good seed sowing practices and proper nourishment through Bible study can help the new Christian develop firm deep roots that will hold during difficult times. By studying about others who experienced opposition and continued in their faith, the new Christian can prepare herself for the opposition when it comes.

### **Lesson One: When Opposition Comes**

Matthew 9:1-8,  
Matthew 9:9-12  
Matthew 13:53-58  
Luke 10:38-41  
John 17:13-21  
Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23

The Gospels have many illustrations of people who faced opposition from family, friends, religious leaders and acquaintances when they followed Jesus. Since Jesus had not yet died and risen from the dead, these individuals did not have the full story. While they did not have the Holy Spirit

to help them in times of difficulty, they did have the physical presence of Jesus in their lives. In studying some of these examples, the new Christian can learn that others have faced opposition for their faith and rested firm. These studies can also help the new Christian to plant deeper roots that will help her when opposition comes. Note that usually the people opposed were either religious leaders from the old faith or family members or personal friends.

## Lesson Two: How To Take A Stand

Daniel 1:1-6; 6:1-28  
John 9:1-39

By using case studies the individual can see acted out the individual response to opposition. Two stories were chosen for study. The story of Daniel shows that one can be faithful to God in a difficult situation and even when the law of the land forbids it. Help the student to understand that laws should be obeyed in most circumstances. Daniel only broke a law that interfered with his worship of God and tried to compel him to worship a false god. Because of his high position in the government, we can assume that Daniel was normally a law abiding citizen. In addition, rather than cause a confrontation, he disobeyed in private. He did not go out actively seeking a confrontation with those opposing him. Be careful not to give the impression that God always saves the life of the individual as He saved Daniel's. Stephen is an example of one who gave his life rather than abandon his faith. If an additional example for study is needed, Daniel 3:1-30 may be added. The teacher would develop questions based on the format of the study.

The man born blind faced a very public confrontation with the religious leaders without the support of his family. When the leaders approached them the family sent them back to deal with the son. They offered no help or support. The man gave short factual answers. He told exactly what had happened to him. He avoided a debate on religion (v. 25) and did not get drawn into arguing. He eventually was totally rejected by the religious leaders who did not want to hear of his personal experiences with Jesus. This can also be a model for the Christian who faces opposition. She can plan to remain nonconfrontational, give factual answers of her own personal experience and, in doing so, present a testimony that can't be refuted by her hearers. While this man did not have the opportunity to plan his answers, the new Christian can learn from his experience and prepare herself for opposition when it comes.

If the teacher feels that an example using women would be helpful, she add or substitute the story of the Hebrew midwives found in Exodus 1:15-20. These disobeyed a law that broke God's law. Their answer in verse 19 is an example of how to reply to opposition without lying or denying their faith. The believer, using their reply as a model, could prepare simple answers to give when necessary.



### **Lesson Three: Peter's Example**

John 13:31-38  
John 18:1-27  
John 21:15-19  
Acts 4:1-31

Peter had followed Jesus throughout His ministry. Peter had declared that Jesus was the Messiah (Matthew 16:16). When facing opposition, Peter denied Christ even after being warned that he would do so. Peter learned from his experience and as a result became a leader in the church and boldly preached Christ even in the face of strong opposition. When Peter stumbled in his walk of faith, God did not abandon him. The Christian will stumble in her Christian walk. Hopefully, by studying Peter's example, she will find the courage to continue her walk of faith and will become a stronger believer as a result. This study is intended to help the Christian to know that one failure is not the end of her relationship with God. Rather it can be the beginning of a new and more fruitful ministry as she continues to serve God.

## Lesson One

### When Opposition Comes

#### Matthew 9:1-8

Describe the scene. Who were the people present and what were they doing?

Who was opposed to what Jesus had done for the paralyzed man?

Who did the man obey?

Why do you think he chose to follow Jesus' instructions in the face of opposition?

Imagine that you are this man. What would be your feelings?

#### Matthew 9:9-12

Describe the scene. Where was Jesus and who was there with Him?

Who was opposed to what Jesus was doing? Why were they opposed?

How long had Matthew known Jesus?

Why did Matthew follow Jesus in face of the opposition of the Pharisees?

Tax collectors were usually rich because they cheated the people.

What do you think happened to Matthew's income when he decided to follow Jesus?

#### Matthew 13:53-58

Where was Jesus and what was He doing?

Who was opposed to Him?

Jesus Himself experienced opposition from people He had known all His life.

How can this knowledge help you when you face opposition from family and friends?

#### Luke 10:38-41

Where was Jesus?

Describe what was happening.

Why was Martha opposed to Mary's listening to the teachings of Jesus at this time?

Note that the passage does not say that Martha gave opposition to Mary all the time.

Why did Jesus say that Mary had made the better choice?

This problem happened in a family where both persons loved and followed Jesus.

How can this knowledge help you when you face opposition in your family?

#### John 17:13-21

Where was Jesus and what was He doing?

Why does the world hate the followers of Jesus?  
Look at verse 15. What is Jesus' prayer for the disciples?

Why does Jesus want His disciples to remain in the world?  
Are you included in the prayer of Jesus? Find the verse that gives the answer.

Based on this passage, what does Jesus say about opposition that comes to those who follow Him?

**Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23**

Look at the seed that fell on the rocky ground. What happened to it?

What is Jesus' explanation regarding the seed that fell on the rocky ground?

How can you as a believer keep from being like the seed that fell on the rocky ground?

Jesus indicates that trouble or persecution will come.

How can the Christian prepare herself so that she remains firm in her faith?

**Practical Application:**

1. In my situation I am most likely to face opposition from...

(Make a list of people or groups of people who will oppose your faith in Jesus.)

2. Knowing that I will face opposition for my faith I can prepare myself for this by....

3. Read Matthew 5:14-16

How do these verses apply to the subject of opposition?



4. Write Matthew 5:14-16 without looking at the Bible.

## Lesson Two

### How To Take A Stand

#### Daniel 1:1-7; 6:1-28

- 1:1-7                   Where was Daniel?  
Why was he in a foreign country?
- 6:1-6                   Why were the leaders jealous of Daniel?  
Describe Daniel's character.
- 6:6-9                   What did the leaders do?  
What was their purpose?
- 6:10-11               How did Daniel react?  
Why did Daniel continue to pray when this act  
had been forbidden?  
When would a Christian be justified in  
disobeying the government?  
Why did Daniel choose to disobey in private?  
How do his actions relate to a Christian who  
faces opposition to her                   faith?
- 6:12-28               What happened to Daniel as a result of his  
actions?  
What had Daniel done to deserve such a  
punishment?  
How did Daniel react to his punishment?  
Describe what happened to Daniel and its impact  
on the king.  
What happened to the people who opposed Daniel?
- From where did Daniel draw his strength to continue to  
worship God in the face of           opposition?
- How can a Christian have the strength to face opposition  
as Daniel did?  
What do we learn from Daniel about how to face opposition  
from nonbelievers?

#### John 9:1-39

- Who was the man who met Jesus?  
What happened to him?  
Who was opposed to his healing by Jesus?  
How did the man respond when attacked by the religious  
leaders?
- Verse 9               How does his identifying himself affect  
his future testimony?
- Verse 10-12           Why is an answer that gives facts non  
threatening?
- Verses 13-24         Notice that the man kept silent until  
asked a question.

Characterize his response.

Verse 24-25 What were the religious leaders trying to get the man to do?

How did he reply?

Why didn't he answer as the leaders wanted?

Verses 26-34 What tactics did the leaders use to get the man to answer as they wanted?

Why would verses 30-33 be considered a testimony?

What eventually happened to the man?

Verses 35-39 What happened to this man's relationship with Jesus?

Make a comparison between these two men.

What did Daniel consider to be more important than his own life?

What did the former blind man consider to be more important than the religious leaders?

How did each man react when facing opposition?

What role did their belief play in helping them face opposition?

**Practical Application:**

1. When it is impossible to practice my faith in public I can do as Daniel did and...

2. In order to be prepared to give non confrontational answers that would be factual and yet give a testimony, write below several short statements that would describe your personal experience with Jesus. Use the man born blind as an example.

3. How can John 14:26 help you when you face opposition?

4. Write John 14:26 without looking at the words.

### **Lesson Three**

#### **Peter's Example**

##### **John 13:31-38**

The setting is the Last Supper just after Judas has left the group.

What does Peter promise to do?

What does Jesus say will happen to Peter?

##### **John 18:1-27**

How did Peter react when the soldiers came to arrest Jesus?

What did Jesus say about Peter's actions?

Describe the three denials Peter gave?

Peter had declared his faith in Jesus and he had seen the miracles and heard the teachings of Jesus. Why do you think he denied knowing Jesus?

When faced with opposition what did Peter do?

How do you think Peter felt when he heard the rooster crow?

##### **John 21:15-19**

Verse one of this chapter tells where Peter was.

Why was Peter still with the other disciples?

Why would the other disciples accept Peter as one of them after he had denied Jesus?

How can Peter's actions and reactions help the Christian who has faced opposition

and denied Jesus as Peter did?

What does Jesus tell Peter to do?

What does this tell you about forgiveness?

Why would Jesus give such an assignment to someone who had faced opposition once and failed to stand up for Jesus?

Why does God give another chance to those who stumble and fall?

##### **Acts 4:1-31**

What was Peter doing?

How did the religious leaders react?

What happened to Peter?

Who helped Peter reply to the religious leaders?

What does verse 13 tell us about Peter?

What kind of testimony did Peter give?

How did Peter respond when told not to talk about Jesus anymore? (Verses 18-19)

Peter's denial of Jesus seems to have resulted in a stronger faith and a willingness to talk about Jesus at any time and in any place. Why do you think this happened?

How did the other Christians respond when they heard of these events?

Verse 29: Why do you think they prayed this prayer?

From whom did they expect to get help when facing opposition?

What adjective describes their manner of speaking to others about Jesus?

How did knowing the truth of verse 12 help them to speak out to others?

In lesson one, we studied that the seed sown on rocky ground fell away when facing opposition. Peter faced opposition and denied Jesus. He did not lose his faith but became stronger and bolder in his testimony. Why do you think that Peter reacted in this way?

How can you become like Peter and grow stronger and bolder in your faith?

#### **Practical Application:**

1. Make a list of the characteristics of Peter that you find in yourself.

2. One lesson that I have learned from studying about Peter is....

4. When I am faced with opposition my help will come from...

5. Knowing that I will be faced with opposition, I will do as the early Christians and pray this prayer...

6. Write Acts 4:12 without looking at the words.



8. Ask for a decision. Help her to pray.

SEPARATION: GENESIS 3:1-24