

# **GROW - NEW BELIEVER STUDY COURSE**

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## Lesson I

# You're Ready for Heaven

You're a Christian Now! You have made some beautiful changes in your living. You used to live in a way that pleased yourself, doing what **you** wanted to do. That wasn't God's way and the Bible calls that sin. You sinned by failing to do what God wanted. Then you changed your mind and decided not to live that way any longer. When you changed your mind and changed your actions, you repented. You set your mind not to keep on sinning on purpose and this is the same as being dead to the practice of sin.

Dead to the practice of sin, you were buried in baptism and raised from that baptism to live a new life. In this you not only copied the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, but shared in a death and resurrection like His. As you live now with new aims and goals as God directs in the Bible, you continue to live for God and have fellowship (sharing) with other Christians (1 John 1:7).

Having trusted in Jesus and having obeyed Him, He assures you that your sins are forgiven and that the Holy Spirit is yours as a gift. Hebrews 5:9 says "And being made perfect He became the source of eternal salvation unto all who obey Him." As you continue to trust and follow Jesus your sins are continually forgiven. Living in this attitude is the same as continuing in the grace (favor) of God. Therefore, you are saved from eternal death by God's grace (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is not something you earn or merit, but is God's gift because you trust and obey Jesus.

Your feelings may confuse you. One day you feel great, another you are discouraged. One day you feel right with God, another you doubt you are even a Christian. If this happens to you, recall again the commands you have obeyed and claim the related promises of God. Mark 16:16 promises you are saved. Acts 2:38 says your past sins are forgiven and the Holy Spirit has been given to you. If you confess to God your present sins they will be forgiven (1 John 1:7-9). Romans 6:23 promises Eternal Life as a gift because of your trust and obedience to God. Claim God's promises daily as you live. They are for your benefit.

Also check your attitude toward Christian living so you know your life is honoring God and you are ready for Heaven. 1 John 3:9 says, "No one born of God commits sin; for God's nature abides in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God." God is not saying that a Christian never sins, but that he does not make a habit of sinning on purpose. You demonstrate this idea in life by how you treat your friends. Though you might occasionally hurt your friends, you will not continue hurting them on purpose because they are your friends. So it is that you will not practice sin, which hurts Jesus, because you love Him.

You are also anxious to find out God's direction for your life, so you are carefully studying the Bible to learn what God wants. God says that you are like a new-born baby who longs for pure milk (the simple message of the Bible) so that by it you may grow in your spiritual life (1 Peter 2:2).

Love should begin filling your life. You realize how much God loved you and you are quick to begin loving others about you. Jesus said, "This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you." Don't confuse this love with "romantic" love of the books and movies. This love sacrifices and gives freely even to those who don't deserve it.

It is also concern for the welfare of others. The Christian must reach out to those around him and give them the good news of Christ. He must help them when they need things like food or clothing. He will also encourage other Christians to have love and do good works (Hebrews 10:24).

A close family type love with fellow Christians is yours only through regular assembly with other Christians in sharing common activities such as prayer, study, recreation, work and eating. Loving God and loving man is living God's way. It is what keeps you through God's grace and continuing forgiveness, ready for Heaven.

### **Use your Bible to answer the following:**

1. The one who will enter the kingdom of is the one seeking the will of the Father (Matthew 7:21).

2. Jesus became the author of our salvation on the basis that we Him (Hebrews 5:9).
3. As long as we desire to remain Christians no one can separate us from the of Christ (Romans 8:35-39).
4. We can be sure that we know Jesus if we keep His (1 John 2:3).
5. We dwell in the Lord and He dwells in us because He has given us of His (I John 4:13).
6. The reality of life eternal is to know the true God and whom He has sent (John 17:3).

**Review questions (answers are in the material you studied)**

1. In becoming a Christian what events did you copy from the life of Jesus?
2. What, rather than feeling is the basis of knowing that you have become a Christian?
3. Why shouldn't a Christian continually sin on purpose?
4. How will love begin showing in your life?
5. What do you receive from regular assembly with other Christians?

MEMORIZE: Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 2:38; Hebrews 5:9

## Lesson 2

# A Body With Members

The day you became a Christian, by spiritual birth you also became a child in God's family. His family is called the body of Christ, or the Lord's church. The term "church" in the New Testament Scriptures never refers to a building, but shows personal relationship of people who are joined to Jesus. He is their Leader and Master.

These people (church) are under the authority of Jesus who said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my church." Just ten days after Jesus went back to Heaven the first people heard the apostles preach that Jesus is the Savior for all the world. In Acts 2:41 three thousand heard about Jesus and became the first Christians. These people were not part of any denomination, but were simply disciples of Jesus and together they made up His church (the body of Christ).

There are some special functions for people who are in His church. Evangelists (preachers) teach people how to become Christians and group them into local congregations, churches). As men grow stronger in their spiritual life, some become elders or shepherds and have the responsibility of leading and caring for the people of their local congregation. There are also other servants called deacons (ministers) who serve the congregation in a number of ways. Each Christian also is part of the church and has the responsibility of sharing the great news about Jesus and helping others.

The spiritual family called the church is described in the Bible by other terms (depending on the idea emphasized) like *Church of God* (God is planner) 1 Corinthians 1:2, *Churches of Christ* (ownership) Romans 16:16, *Body of Christ* (activity) 1 Corinthians 12:27, and *Church of the Saints* (character) 1 Corinthians 14:33. As individuals, these people are called **Christians** (belonging to Christ)

Acts 11:26, **Disciples** (pupils or learners) Acts 6:1, and **Brethren** (relationship) Acts 6:3. These and other terms are used to identify people who have made Jesus their Lord (ruler) and Savior of their life.

It is both a privilege and a responsibility for you to meet with other Christians in regular assemblies. Hebrews 10:25 makes it clear that you shouldn't miss sharing in these meetings of the congregation. As you seek to show your confidence in the fact that Jesus died for your sins and that He is coming again from Heaven, you will regularly participate in the Lord's Supper. When the bread is given to you, eat a piece of it as you recall that Jesus' body was crucified for you. When the cup containing grape juice is given to you, drink it remembering that the blood of Jesus was shed for you. 1 Corinthians 11:26 says that the purpose of this remembrance is to show your trust in Jesus and what He has done for you. You will want to continue to do this regularly as long as you live.

As a member of the body of Christ you will want to share in encouraging the other Christians as you regularly meet together. You will also want to reach out to others in their various needs and help them in any way that you can. You are a part of the church that belongs to the Lord and this should satisfy you. Don't seek to be in some religious organization or denomination because the church of the Bible includes all of God's family.

Jesus is the only head of the body, which is His church (Colossians 1:18) and any person or group cannot be a substitute for His authority. The commands of Jesus and the instructions to Christians as written in the, New Testament Scriptures become the guide to proper attitude and practice for you. Since Jesus has given instructions you do not need someone else to add to or change that plain message. You are a member of the body of Christ, a citizen of God's kingdom. Be happy and love Jesus who is the only ruler, and head of His church.

### Use the Bible to answer the following:

1. The Church of Jesus Christ became a reality 10 days after Jesus went back to Heaven when about thousand people repented and were baptized (Acts 2:41).
2. And the added to the church day by day those that by trust and obedience were being saved by Jesus (Acts 2:47).
3. Jesus is head of the church which is His body - never just a building (Ephesians 5:23).

4. The fact that Christ has all authority in the church is seen in the reality that He is over all things for the church (Ephesians 1:22-23).
5. There is to be no division in the church, but members should be in one mind and judgment (1 Corinthians 1:10).

**Review questions from the material you studied:**

1. List some terms that describe Jesus' relationship to you.
2. Identify some special functions in the church.
3. What terms does the Bible use to describe the one church belonging to Jesus?
4. What is the purpose of your regular sharing in taking the Lord's Supper?
5. Who has all the authority in the church and is its only head?

**MEMORIZE:**

Acts 2:41; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Ephesians 5:23

### Lesson 3

# Look In The Book

The Bible begins with the book of Genesis which tells that God created everything and ends with the book of Revelation which describes how Jesus will receive you into Heaven. It answers your questions: "Where did life on earth begin"? "Why am I here"?, and "What happens after death"?

In the beginning God talked directly with the head of each family, men like Adam, Noah, and Abraham. Later He spoke to the whole nation of Israel through Moses and also through prophets like Isaiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel. Then Jesus came to earth, lived, died, and rose from the dead. God spoke through Jesus and His apostles to tell all people how to live for Him and be ready for Heaven. An apostle is one sent by Jesus.

The Bible message is in 66 sections called books. There are 39 in the Old Testament Scriptures or writings (a Testament is also an agreement or covenant), and 27 in the New Testament Scriptures. The Old Testament Scriptures cover the time from creation to the coming of Jesus. These 39 books are divided into groups according to what they contain. The first 5 state God's law to the first people and are called Law. The History of the Jews or children of Israel is the main content of the next 12 books called history. Since the next books (Psalms & Proverbs included) were written in a poetic style, they are called poetry. The Old Testament Scriptures end with 17 books recording words of God's prophets or announcers who spoke His message to the Jewish or Hebrew nation. Many important predictions about the coming of Jesus are included in these books called Prophecy (prof-e-see).

The 27 books in the New Testament Scriptures begin with the 4 Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which tell the life of Jesus. Acts, the book of History is next as it tells how the first followers of Jesus became Christians and how these Christians spread the good news about Him. Then there are 21 Letters written to Christians to tell them how to live a happy life with real purpose. The last book in the New Testament Scriptures is called Revelation, because it reveals what will finally happen to those who faithfully follow Jesus, and to those who do not. It is the book of **Prophecy** in the New Testament Scriptures.

So we have in the Bible the message of God recorded by about 40 writers of different backgrounds and jobs but guided by the Holy Spirit. The main idea about Jesus presented in the books of Genesis thru Malachi is that Jesus is Coming; in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Jesus is Here; in Acts, Jesus is Alive After Death; Romans thru Revelation, How to Live till Jesus Returns from Heaven.

When the Bible mentions facts of history it is always right. For example, some people used to question that King Sargon mentioned in Isaiah 20:1 ever lived because he is not mentioned any place else in recorded history. But scientists have dug up many remains of the palace of King Sargon and today there is no doubt that he was King of Assyria.

When the Bible deals with science it is always accurate. In I Corinthians 15:39 four kinds of flesh (men, animals, birds, and fish) are mentioned. For years skeptics said this statement was wrong because they believed all flesh was composed of the same living substance. Today science is well aware that flesh can be identified by one of four kinds of living substance which it contains.

Many prophecies (predictions) are made in the Bible and it is amazing how each comes true. About 800 B.C. (before Christ) the prophet Micah (5:2) wrote that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. In Luke 2:4-7 the Bible tells us this came true as Jesus was born in the little town of Bethlehem.

Because of such evidence as this it is reasonable to believe that each of the Bible writers recorded his special message because God gave him the facts.

### Use your Bible to answer the following:

1. Men of God spoke prophecy in Bible times being moved by the \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Peter 1:21).

2. In John 20:30-31 the signs and miracles written in the Bible are to enable people to believe that Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In the Old Testament or covenant, made the agreement with all Israel only \_\_\_\_\_. (Deuteronomy 5:1-3).
4. Today, we are not under the law (old covenant) but are children of God by faith in \_\_\_\_\_. (Galatians 3:26).
5. For a testament, will, or covenant to be in force, there must be the \_\_\_\_\_ of the one who made it (Hebrews 9:15-17).
6. God took away the first covenant that He might establish the \_\_\_\_\_. (Hebrews 10:9).
7. In the second will or covenant the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ was offered once for all (Hebrews 10:10).

**Review questions (answers are in the material you studied)**

1. How did God inform the nation of Israel concerning what He wanted them to do?
2. The books of prophecy contain many predictions about which person?
3. How to become a Christian is found mainly in which book?
4. What group of books in the Bible is intended to tell Christians how to live a happy life with real purpose?
5. What fact from science would show that the Bible is true?

**MEMORIZE:**

John 1:1; John 20:30-31; 2 Peter 1:21

## Lesson 4

# Power in Prayer

In the last lesson we discussed how God talks to you through the Bible. Now we are going to discuss how you can talk to God in prayer.

As a new Christian you may have heard someone pray or you may have prayed your own prayer. Sometimes as we listen to the prayers of others we might question whether or not they are sincere. Jesus talked about this with His disciples. He told them to be careful when they prayed to be sincere and not to pray to show off their religion to others. Jesus also said not to pray to get the praise of the people but to find a private place and there just talk to the Father (God) telling Him all they wanted to (Matthew 6:5-6).

But what are some of the things you will want to pray about? Jesus gave some suggestions in what is called the "Model Prayer" or "Lord's Prayer" (Matthew 6:9).

- \* Begin with words of praise and honor for God.
- \* Add thanksgiving for things like forgiveness, peace, eternal life and physical things like food, home, and family.
- \* If there are things about which you feel guilty, confess them to God and ask Him to forgive you.
- \* Make some strong statements to strengthen your faith such as: "Jesus, I know you are alive." "Lord, you are my Shepherd."

Realizing that you have needs, ask God for such things as wisdom, strength, and safety.

- \* Also, remember the needs of others.
- \* Keep a small list so you will consider all the persons and things you want to pray about.

Let your prayer be as natural as talking. Pray in the same words that you might use in talking with your earthly father. A private place for prayer helps you to concentrate. You may also find it easier to keep your mind on the things you want to pray about, if you pray out loud.

Here are some suggestions that might help you make prayer a meaningful part of your life.

1. Set a time every day for prayer. (You may want to pray at other times also, but don't miss your daily prayer time). It might be just after you get up in the morning or just before you go to bed at night.
2. Pray for a particular goal (You ought to pray about qualities you want in your life like love, patience and knowledge that will come by growth).
3. When you have an idle moment during the day as you wait for a stop light, for an elevator, or have a break, you can spend several seconds thanking God and asking for help.
4. If your mind wanders while you are praying silently, think about the new item that enters your mind, because it must be important to you.
5. Be sure that you are trusting in God and have faith that He will answer every time you pray (James 5:16). Remember, He may answer yes, no, or not now. And, don't forget that, when you become aware that you have sinned, God has made a way for you to be forgiven of the sin as you repent - change your mind toward that sin - and then pray God for forgiveness. This is taught in two Bible passages: to Simon in Acts 8:22 and to Christians in general in 1 John 1:9.



When problems come in your life - and they will - remember that God is more powerful than any problem. You may be discouraged by problems at home, at school, at work, with friends, in the church, with money, with health and many other things. But these are no longer your problems alone. Give God your problem as you pray and let Him help with the solution. Fill your life with prayer. No time needs to be wasted as long as you can pray.

Use your Bible to answer the following:

1. The Lord intends that prayer comes from the heart and not from saying mere words. He therefore cautions against or meaningless phrases (Matthew 6:7).
2. Jesus gave the principles for meaningful prayer rather than the exact words to pray when he said, " then like this (Matthew 6:9).
3. Part of our prayer life should be giving for all the things that God has so graciously supplied to us (Ephesians 5:20).
4. We may ask, and receive because we ask wrongfully with a selfish motive based upon the lusts of life (James 4:3).
5. Even Jesus prayed to the Father with the idea of yielding by saying, " \_\_\_\_\_ will be done" (Matthew 26:42).
6. We are sure that when we live in Christ and His words live in us that we may ask and it shall be \_\_\_\_\_ (John 15:7)

Review questions (answers are in the material you studied).

1. State a problem in praying that Jesus discusses with His disciples?
2. What are some things that you will want to include in your praying?
3. How should you select what words you will use when you pray to God?
4. Of what value is a private place in which to pray?
5. List some goals about which you will pray?
6. Where does prayer fit into the matter of forgiveness when a Christian sins?

MEMORIZE:

Matthew 6:5-6; Acts 8:22; James 5:16

## Lesson 5

# The Holy Spirit, Your Gift

When you became a Christian, the Bible promised that you received the Holy Spirit as a gift (Acts 2:38).

The Holy Spirit is not imaginary, He is as real as the Father and the Son (Jesus). To help you understand that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit each is God, the following illustration is suggested. The term "H<sup>2</sup>O" shows that Hydrogen and Oxygen are united as one. But H<sup>2</sup>O must exist in one of its three forms; liquid (water), solid (ice), or gas (steam). So the term God is a word showing unity and is used in the Bible for the Father (in Heaven), the Son (Jesus), or the Holy Spirit (Counselor). John 14:16 will help you see this even more clearly. Jesus (God on earth) prayed to the Father (God in Heaven) to send the Holy Spirit (God to live in Christians).

You do not have to totally understand the Holy Spirit in order to benefit from Him any more than you have to understand how a television works in order to benefit from it. When the Holy Spirit is given to you as a gift, that is exactly what you have.

Now that you are a Christian, God does not leave you in the world on your own and then run off from you. He loves you and knows that you need Him, so He sent the Holy Spirit to aid you in living a full life. To see the Holy Spirit as your helper, think of taking a trip in a car to a place where you have never been but you have a guide seated beside you who knows the way and can direct you there. You may follow all, some, or none of his directions. You may also let him be a companion to you or you may totally ignore him. But if you follow all his directions, you arrive at the planned location and he has served his purpose very well.

It is the same with the Holy Spirit who is your guide. Romans 8:14 states that all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. You are led by the Spirit when you follow His message as found in the Bible. You are also given wisdom by the Holy Spirit to apply your knowledge (James 1:5).

Not only does the Holy Spirit act as a helper in giving direction and purpose to life, but Paul promises in Romans 8:26 that the Spirit will help you in your weakness in prayer. It is the Spirit Himself who talks to the Father for you when you don't know what to say. When you can't put into words the things you are thinking in prayer, the Holy Spirit does that for you and the Father fully understands the attitude of your heart.

The Holy Spirit (in some Bibles called the Holy Ghost) is God as a Spirit being. Because of this He can live in the body of each Christian all over the world. As He lives in the Christian He produces nine results which are called fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22. Each of the fruits - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control - is yours, but only present in the beginning in seed form. When they are allowed to grow and mature they produce the full grown results in you, like strong love and deep peace.

As a Christian you will have a constant battle between the desires of the flesh and the Spirit. Your natural body will want to rule your life, and the Spirit which is in you will want to rule. The Bible says in Romans 8:13-14 that if you live according to the rule of the flesh you will die, but if you live according to the Spirit you will put to death the desires of the body and you will live. It also says that all who are led by the Spirit of God are in the family of God and are rightly called "Sons of God."

So in order to have the Holy Spirit rule in your life, set your mind, ponder, meditate, think on the things of the Spirit and your life will be full. This is also a sure way to guard against having the things of the flesh rule in your life.

Use your Bible to answer the following:

1. The Holy Spirit is given by God to all those who \_\_\_\_\_ Him (Acts 5:32).
2. The Holy Spirit dwells in us because the Bible says that our bodies are the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19).
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ is presented as a gift to each person after he repents and is baptized (Acts 2:38).

4. We are led by the \_\_\_\_\_, when we allow Him to rule our lives (Romans 8:13-14).
5. There are nine \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit which can be produced in the life of each Christian who will continue to grow (Galatians 5:22).
6. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit (which is the Word of God) helps the Christian to battle against evil (Ephesians 6:17).

Review questions: (answers are in the material you studied).

1. How does the Holy Spirit function as your guide?
2. What does it mean to you to have the Holy Spirit intercede or talk to God in your behalf ?
3. Give an example of the fruit of the Spirit in a full-grown way.
4. What has the Holy Spirit given us to wage warfare against evil?
5. What results when you are led by the Spirit?

MEMORIZE:

Acts 5:32; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Galatians 6:8

## Lesson 6

# God Wants to be Personal

It is very important that you continue to grow spiritually. As with any living thing, it must grow or it will die. Therefore, we are concerned that you have a basis for growing in a spiritual way. Since the Bible is the Word of God you want to read and study its message to learn more about God and how you need to live. Here are some practical suggestions for your daily quiet time with Jesus.

### GUIDES TO BIBLE STUDY

There are some things that you need as helps in order to study in a good way.

1. Your own personal Bible that you are used to and can mark and underline: best translations are American Standard, New American Standard, Revised Standard or New International.
2. A small looseleaf notebook that you can carry with you.
3. A place where you can have quiet.
4. At least 15 minutes a day set aside (the same time daily, if possible).

### But how can you approach this quiet time to get the best results?

1. Remember that God is with you in this quiet time. He wants you to grow and He is willing to direct your mind.
2. Begin with a brief prayer. Thank God for special blessings and for being with you now. "You will seek and find me; when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord" (Jeremiah 29:13-14).
3. Read the brief Bible passage which you have chosen for the day. Do not read simply to "understand". You are feeding on God's Word. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Don't be troubled that you don't understand everything you read. Realize that God will help you to understand as you move along. Put moments of prayer and meditation into your reading. Meditation is going over and over the thought until it is a part of you. You can even read parts out loud to hear how it sounds with different emphasis. Enjoy your quiet time.
4. Write down what comes to you during your reading-meditation-praying time. Be personal. What does this mean to me or for me? Try to hold on to what the Holy Spirit is putting in your mind and heart. Even if the thought is not related to the passage you are reading, that's alright. Write it down.
5. Close your quiet time with a prayer. Thank God for truths that you have been able to learn.

### WHERE SHOULD YOU START IN THE BIBLE?

1. A simple method is to read daily until you have completed a simple book, paragraph, or a thought at a time, The gospel of John, Colossians, James or I John are good ones to start with.
2. You may want to study topics such as love, peace, forgiveness, prayer, or service. A concordance (a book which lists all Bible words alphabetically and where they are found in the Bible) will help you find passages dealing with your topic.
3. You may also study part of long books such as Psalm 1,3,23,32,46,73,91,100, 103.

4. Some other important and helpful passages are found in Matthew chapters 5,6,7,25; Isaiah chapter 53; John chapters 1,14,17; I Corinthians 13, etc. Note who is speaking, to whom and when it is spoken. It makes a great difference whether the devil or Jesus is speaking and whether the message comes before or after Jesus' death--whether the readers were living under the law of Moses or under Jesus.

Quiet time with God is only one of your personal needs. You will also need regular assembly with Christians for spiritual growth. As you continue to grow, you will gain understanding and increase your service to God.

Don't be discouraged if you don't grow as fast as you think you should. Solid growth takes time. A mushroom comes up overnight but can be moved by a little nudge. A great oak tree takes years of growth to gain its size but neither high wind nor rushing water can budge it. Remember, it will take years of steady growing before you will be spiritually mature.

Be patient with yourself, but be sure to keep up a regular pattern of study, meditation and prayer.

**Use your Bible to answer the following:**

1. As you have the continual desire that causes you to hunger and thirst after \_\_\_\_\_ you shall be satisfied (Matthew 5:6).
2. As a child of God you should set your \_\_\_\_\_ on things above, having your aims and goals centered on things in heaven (Colossians 3:2).
3. God expects you to grow in grace (favor) and \_\_\_\_\_ of your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).
4. You should do your best to present yourself to \_\_\_\_\_ as one approved - rightly handling the Bible (2 Timothy 2: 1 5).
5. The Christians in Berea were searching the scriptures to learn if the things spoken about Jesus were true (Acts 17:11).

**Review questions: (answers are in the material you studied).**

1. Why should you have your own personal copy of the Bible?
2. How will God help you in your quiet time?
3. Why shouldn't you worry when you don't understand all you read?
4. Give some method for daily Bible reading.
5. Why shouldn't you be discouraged if you don't grow as fast as you think you should?

**MEMORIZE:**

Psalms 119:105; I Timothy 2:15; I Timothy 3:16-17

**Lesson 7**

## Sharing Jesus With Others

If you really love Jesus, you will want to share Him with others. There is a great joy in sharing something good. The good news about Jesus is that Jesus is willing to save people and give them everlasting life. In Jesus' final words to His followers, He clearly expected them to tell others about Him. Matthew 28:19-20 says that "having gone" into all the world, His followers were to make pupils out of people everywhere. The same thought is in Mark 16:15-16 as Jesus commands that the gospel be preached to every creature.

When you have something good, you want others to know about it. If you were at a store and you saw an unadvertised sale that had real bargains you would naturally tell your friends and family about the great bargains. It is also true that if you saw a house on fire, you probably would run and pound on the door to warn the people even though they were total strangers to you, because you feared they would die in the fire. Your Message is Important. Likewise, if your friends don't have the eternal life that Jesus gives, you will want to tell them about Him. The good news about Jesus is really a life and death matter for those who are not His followers. They must be told!

Without memorizing a lot of facts, there are some things that you will quickly be able to do.

1. Tell how empty you were or how you were filled with guilt before you became a Christian.
2. Tell how you became a Christian; what you did to get the benefits that come from Jesus.
3. Tell people what Jesus means to you right now--the peace He gives you, the answers to your prayers, the assurance of Heaven, the continual forgiveness of sins, and such things. These are things other people are concerned about, and your answers will help meet their needs.

But be sure you tell others the most important thing--the good news about Jesus. In the book of Acts the message shared wherever the Christians went was about Jesus Christ. When Phillip talked to the Ethiopian nobleman in Acts 8:35, he told him the good news about Jesus. Remember, you can't save anyone. Jesus does that. But you can tell people Jesus loves them and how they can be ready for Heaven. Think! God uses people to tell people about Jesus and that He will forgive their sins. He is counting on Christians to spread this good news.

In talking to people you may want to emphasize your great congregation, the Lord's church or some other topic. But stop! The gospel is Good News about Jesus and this is their first need.

Each non-Christian must find out the facts of the gospel which are listed in I Corinthians 15:3-6. They must hear that all have sinned (Romans 3:23), that Jesus is the promised Savior and that He died for their sins (Romans 5:8), that they must decide not to practice sin, which is what repentance means (2 Corinthians 7:10), and that they must be baptized into Christ's death (Romans 6:3) to be raised into a new life (Romans 6:4).

Pray for opportunities to share the good news about Jesus with others and God will give you many contacts. When you're with any person for a length of time, try to share with him the love and goodness of God, and how he can benefit from Him as you have.

Here are some other practical ways to help people know about Jesus:

1. Study the Bible facts with a friend.
2. Give a person a tract that tells how to become a Christian.
3. Bring a friend to your Bible class.

Since you're a Christian all of the wonderful benefits that Jesus provided for His followers are available to you - share them!

**Use Your Bible to answer the following:**

1. Jesus came into the world to seek and \_\_\_\_\_ that which was lost (Luke 19:10).
2. Jesus says that as we are His followers. He will make us \_\_\_\_\_ of men (Matthew 4:19).
3. We should know that the \_\_\_\_\_ is the power of God to save people (Romans 1:16).
4. It is important to know that to change a sinner from his sinful way is to save a soul from \_\_\_\_\_ (James

5:20).

5. The early Christians were so full of the benefits that come from Jesus that even though they were scattered by persecution they went everywhere \_\_\_\_\_ the word (Acts 8:4).

**Review questions: (answers are in the material you studied).**

1. What did Jesus say that lets you know He expected His followers to tell others about Him?
2. What is one of the motives that will cause you to want to share the good news of Christ with others?
3. What benefits did you get from Jesus that you want others also to know about?
4. State some facts about Jesus that every non-Christian must hear if he is to learn the gospel.
5. What are two practical ways in which you can share your faith in Christ with someone else?

**MEMORIZE:**

Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 19: 10; Romans 1: 16;

## Lesson 8

# Service Is Worship

God expects the Christian to be faithful in three particular areas.

1. Doing good to others (Galatians 6:10).
2. Encouraging Christians to have love and do good works (Hebrews 10:24).
3. Telling the lost the good news about Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20).

This is best done as you give your body (alive) to God in real dedication, which is to God a worship or service (Romans 12:1). God doesn't need anything since He made the world and everything in it. His creatures have personal needs and that's where you come in. It becomes the joy of every Christian to honor or worship God by supplying the needs of those around you as far as you are able. It is also the joy of Christians who are assembled as a congregation to encourage the others to practice love and to show that love in works of kindness. Even when you sing you encourage others to trust and obey God. It is true that when you meet as a spiritual family you are concerned about others and so as part of that concern, you look for those who are hurting, discouraged, or sad and seek to build them up.

Along with your expression of honoring God and serving His followers, you have the urgent need of seeing that the lost are told about Jesus. Those who are not Christians sometimes help the people in need, but who besides the Christian will help another Christian to show love and honor to God? Who besides a Christian will feel the need to bring those who are not followers of Jesus to trust and obey him?

Jesus promised that if you seek first to be in His family and have His approval, your basic needs will be met (Matthew-6:33). The great principle of putting God in the number one position in your thoughts and your actions brings not only happiness now, but eternal blessings in the future life. As you put God at the top place there are many blessings that immediately belong to you, like the assurance that your prayers will be answered, that you have forgiveness for all sins of which you repent, that you have spiritual life that will never die, that God gives you the ability to resist temptation, that He will supply every need of your life, and countless other promises that will put purpose and meaning into your living.

So, as you are His disciple or follower you have set your mind on the things that are above and on God. You are trying to put off the things that are against God and are trying to honor Him by a total life of worship service. The great Sermon on the Mount presented by Jesus in Matthew chapters 5 through 7 can be summed up in a single word--attitude. Jesus is stating that the right attitude of mind on the part of His disciples puts them in the right relationship with God. They honor Him, worship Him, serve Him and are always trying to do as their God instructs, because they love Him.

So as you live, not only do you regularly meet the Christians to worship God, but you look for opportunities to point others to the hope that is in Christ. You see a person that is in need of food and you try to feed him. If you find someone without enough clothing, you try to provide for him. If you know of someone who is ill, you are genuinely concerned about his well-being. Jesus sums up this idea in Matthew 25:40; "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

Don't be deceived by watching those around you who claim to be Christians but put many things in front of God and their service to Him. Real love for God has to be shown - you cannot hide it. If you really love God He will have first place in your life and your worship and service to Him will come before **all other activities**. After all, in the words of Jesus, what do you profit if you gain the whole world and lose your soul, or what can you give in exchange for your life (Matthew 16:26)?

### Use your Bible to answer the following:

1. We are servants of the master whom we \_\_\_\_\_ serving sin unto death or serving God unto life (Romans 6:16).
2. Jesus demonstrates the necessity of undivided service to God as He answered Satan, "You shall worship the



Lord your and Him only shall you serve" (Matthew 4:10).

3. Jesus illustrates undivided service when He says that you can't serve both \_\_\_\_\_ and mammon (material), (Matthew 6:24).
4. "Whosoever would be first among you must be \_\_\_\_\_ of all" (Mark 10:44), makes service a mark of true greatness.
5. "Well done, good and servant" (Matthew 25:23), shows how the Lord views faithful service.
6. Our religion is pure before God when we visit the orphans and \_\_\_\_\_ in their affliction (James 1:27).

**Review questions: (answers are in the material you studied)**

1. Which of the three areas of faithful Christian service needs your greatest attention?
2. What does it mean to you to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness?
3. How do you set your mind on the things that are above?
4. Give examples of individuals worshiping God by serving people.
5. Why is it important to put worship and service to God in front of everything else?

**MEMORIZE:**

Galatians 6:10; Hebrews 10:24; James 1:27

## Lesson 9

# Know Your Enemy

As a Christian you will find that people often greatly disappoint you or make you angry. The human reaction is to try to get even, but Jesus tells us that vengeance (punishment of evil) belongs to God who will in the end settle all things in a just way.

You need to realize that the real enemy that you have is not people, but Satan, who is the chief enemy of God, also. The Bible says that your struggle is not with human foes alone, but with the spirit forces of wickedness (Ephesians 6:12). Satan led Adam and Eve to disobey God. Satan tried to cause Jesus not to trust His heavenly Father (Matthew 4:11). And Satan still today seeks to ruin Christians by trying to control their minds and cause them to disobey God.

This is the great warfare that is being waged between Satan who would have you disobey God, and the Holy Spirit who would have you trust and obey God. When you are tempted, this is not from God, but it is the lure that Satan uses to try to get you away from depending on God and trusting in Him (James 1:13-14).

Many young Christians have difficulty in realizing that temptation is not sin but that giving in to temptation is. James also gives you the answer for overcoming this problem as he says in James 4:7 that you should completely submit yourself to God and as you resist the devil he will flee from you. As a chemistry teacher told his students, the best way to get all of the air out of a test tube is to fill it with some liquid. So also the best way to get rid of Satan is to fill your life with godly thoughts, attitudes and actions of love.

Don't be deceived in thinking that the devil is a pushover. He is referred to as god of this world and he has great power to deceive and cause people to believe lies (2 Corinthians 4:4). Jesus resisted him by the great words, "It is written" recalling what God had already said in the scriptures. Your knowledge of the Word of God (the Bible message) will help you resist him.

For instance, if you know the idea of Galatians 5:21 that envy is a work of the flesh and you begin to be full of envy because someone has things or fame which you wanted, you can refer back to these Bible words and be motivated to remove such thoughts. Hebrews 13:4 says that a wrong sex-life will get God's judgment, so you resist temptation and try to be pure because that's what God wants, and you love God.

God has provided you with all the parts of the Christian armor which are listed in Ephesians 6:13-17. The protective armor, such as your shield of faith, is supplied to you so you can really resist the devil who would seek to destroy you.

You have also been given the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. With this Sword (Bible message) you can fight against the devil by obeying what God says and not giving in to his temptation.

But, when you yield to temptation don't blame it on the devil by saying, "He made me do it". Rather, recognize that he put the lure in front of you and you yielded to it rather than obey God. You are going to be tempted as long as you live, but the more you learn to say no to temptation and the more you fill your life with the Word of God, the stronger you will be.

If you know of an area in your life in which you are especially weak, be very careful here so the devil doesn't bring you down by hitting at your weakest point. The Bible says stand up against Satan and get rid of him. You and the Lord are stronger than the devil. Remember, Satan has his end in the lake of fire - the followers of Christ will be in Heaven.

### Use your Bible to answer the following:

1. The Christian should use all parts of the armor given by God so he can stand against the \_\_\_\_\_ (Ephesians 6:11).
2. The evil work of Satan is pictured by his sowing \_\_\_\_\_ among the wheat (Matthew 13:25).

3. Jesus is more powerful than Satan because Jesus said \_\_\_\_\_ Satan", and he left him (Matthew 4:10).
4. Christians must submit to God and draw near to Him and they must also \_\_\_\_\_ the devil (James 4:7-8).
5. The final victory over the devil comes when he is thrown into the lake of \_\_\_\_\_ Revelation 20:10).
6. God always gives you a way out of \_\_\_\_\_ if you take it (1 Corinthians 10:13).

**Review questions from the material you have studied:**

1. What is Satan doing today to try to ruin Christians?
2. Explain how temptation is not sin.
3. How can followers of Jesus gain a victory over temptation?
4. Why shouldn't you blame Satan when you yield to a particular temptations
5. What is the certain end of Satan and his followers?

**MEMORIZE:**

Matthew 4: 10; 1 Corinthians 10:13; James 4:7

## Lesson 10

# You Are A Manager Now

It may be hard to believe, but everything on earth belongs to the Lord (Psalms 24:1). That simply means that everything, including time, talent, and what we call our possessions really belongs to God. He has given them to us and asked us to properly manage these things that belong to Him. This is what a steward or manager does when he carefully handles that which belongs to another. The airline flight attendant does not own the blankets, pillows, and magazines presented to the passengers on the plane, but manages them just the way the owner would want.

The parable that Jesus told in Matthew 25:14-30 has shown that a person has the responsibility to carefully handle each of God's possessions. The person who has used his possessions well, God will call a faithful servant.

The Bible states that it is required of a steward or manager that he be found faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2).

Every person has 168 hours every week - no more, no less, and he is responsible for the use of each of these hours as God would want them to be used. You will be concerned about the time you spend in relaxation, time you spend in helping others, the time you give to your spiritual development, the time used in seeking the lost and the time given to prayer. Realizing there is time for everything that's good, each needs to be put in its right place.

God has given each person abilities and talents. Again, you are responsible for the development and use of these talents. Much will be required from one to whom much has been given (Luke 12:48). It is also important to use even a single talent you may have, because even a single talent, when blessed by God, becomes very useful.

Almost every new Christian wonders about giving his money back to God. He probably understands that God is the owner of all things and that He has given into the hands of the Christian certain amounts of money which should be handled the way God directs. So as the Christian seeks to give to God by returning part of his money, he still may wonder how **much** to give. Christians were told to give their money for the purpose of helping other people (I Corinthians 16:2). When you are motivated by love, then you will also give to God in a way that shows love. It may be helpful to remember that in the old covenant the Jew gave 10%, but you are living under a better covenant (Hebrews 7:22). It then is practical that each Christian will review his weekly income and in love give back part of that income to God.

Your motive in giving is so important that you should carefully plan to see that you don't give out of pressure or with a grudge, but rather what you have already planned to give to express your love for God (2 Corinthians 9:7).

To keep back from God that which rightfully belongs to Him is so serious that the prophet Malachi called such people "robbers" (Malachi 3:8). However, those who are liberal givers find that God keeps his promise and pours out a blessing on such givers.

When you see the wisdom of being a good manager of your time, talent, and possessions - using them as God desires, real happiness comes to you. God made everything, including you, so He is in a position to make everything in your life work for your benefit. By remembering that it is more blessed to give than receive, you increase your joy in living (Acts 20:35).

### Use your Bible to answer the following:

1. A Christian who worries about the need for food and clothes has forgotten that his heavenly \_\_\_\_\_ knows all his needs (Matthew 6:32).
2. The idea of reaping what you \_\_\_\_\_ is also true in your giving to God, for if you give much God will give much to you. (2 Corinthians 9:6).
3. The person who had two talents and the one who had five, each got the Lord's approval for using their talents when He called them good and \_\_\_\_\_ servants (Matthew 25:21).

4. When you show that you are faithful with just a little, God knows you will be faithful with \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 16:10).
5. Both you and the things you call your own belong to God because you were bought with a \_\_\_\_\_ (I Corinthians 6:20).

**Review questions from material you have studied:**

1. Since you are a manager of the time, talents, and possessions God has given you, what is your responsibility to God?
2. What will guide you in the use of 168 hours each week?
3. Even if you don't have as many talents as your friends, what should you do?
4. What will help you decide the starting amount of your **giving** money back to God?
5. Why is it important that you give to God out of love?
6. Why is a good manager truly a happy person?

**MEMORIZE:**

Matthew 25:21; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 1 Corinthians 9:7;

## Lesson 11

# What's Right - What's Wrong

Sincere Christians are always concerned about the way they live and about finding out what is right and what is wrong. God has given you some guides in the Bible so you can know the difference between right and wrong.

First, there are **commands** about things to DO which you'll want to do. I Corinthians 11:24 is a command about the Lord's Supper as Jesus said to His followers, "Do this in remembrance of me". Matthew 28:19-20 is a command for Christians to make followers or disciples of people from all the nations. As you understand these commands, you are responsible to obey them. This is one way that God tells you what is right.

Second, there are **commands** about things to AVOID. In Ephesians 4:26 the Bible says do not let the sun go down on your anger. Ephesians 4:29 commands you not to let evil talk come out of your mouth. Your major problem with right and wrong won't be learning the commands, because they are written in the Bible. It may be hard for you to obey some of the commands but at least you'll know what is right and what is wrong when it is commanded in the Bible.

Third, there are a great many things that are not called by name in the Bible but are only mentioned in a general way. This is where **real** difficulty comes for many new Christians. Such things as drinking beer, smoking, playing cards, and similar things might come in this area. When the Bible does not mention something as being right or wrong, the Christian must decide for himself. Here are some of the tests that will help you come to a conclusion in these matters where the Bible does not mention something by name.

1. You are a servant of Christ and, therefore, you want to please Him. You might ask the question, "Would Jesus have me to do it?"
2. What is the opinion of faithful Christians in this matter? Read Philippians 3:17.
3. Does it hinder my influence for Christ by raising a question in the mind of another person who **is** not a Christian? Read -1 Corinthians 9:22.
4. Does it take time and money that I could use in a better way? Read Matthew 25:19.
5. Does it bring me into regular contact with people who might be a bad influence on me? Read I Corinthians 15:33.

**Now let's make some conclusions on these things that in themselves are not right or wrong.**

1. It may take you years of study and thought before you reach a decision.
2. Please be patient with those who do not have the same knowledge that you have.
3. You may point out dangers to others, but don't be the final judge of those who do not agree with you in these things.
4. Something may be right today and wrong later. This could be illustrated by certain foods or beverages that are not thought to be harmful today, but after testing, in the future may be thought to be harmful to health.
5. Something may be wrong in one place but right in another. Chewing gum may be wrong in the classroom, but right at football games.
6. Be sure pleasing Jesus **is** the greatest desire in your life.

The first wrong was done in the garden of Eden when Adam and Eve disobeyed God as they ate from the tree they were told not to. One Bible definition of sin is "lawlessness" (I John 3:4). James 4:17 says if you know to do

good by putting God into your plans but fail to do it, this, too, is Sin. You sin when you disobey God.

Temptation isn't sin. Giving in to it is sin. When temptation is strong but you resist that temptation you haven't sinned. If you give in to the temptation in your mind, it is the same as if you committed the sin. You may not have the chance to actually do what you were thinking but you say in your mind "If I could, I would". That's how a person could commit adultery in his heart without any action (Matthew 5:28). Therefore, right and wrong are best controlled by a right attitude in your heart.

**Use your Bible to answer the following:**

1. To follow the mind of the flesh ends in \_\_\_\_\_ but to follow the mind of the Spirit gives life (Romans 8:6).
2. The Christian with the right attitude is concerned lest he do anything to make his brother \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 14:21).
3. There are a number of works of the \_\_\_\_\_ or natural person which, if practiced, will keep you out of God's kingdom (Galatians 5:19-21).
4. Sincere Christians seek to keep away from everything that is \_\_\_\_\_ or evil in every form (1 Thessalonians 5:22).
5. Your love must not be for the world, neither for the things in the \_\_\_\_\_ if you claim to have the love of the Father (I John 2:15).

**Review questions: (answers are in the material you studied):**

1. What should be your attitude toward Bible commands given to Christians?
2. How should you treat things not mentioned by name in the Bible?
3. What attitude should you have toward those who don't agree with you in your conclusions?
4. What should be the greatest desire in your life?
5. What is one definition of sin?
6. Why is it wrong to think and plan sin in your mind?

**MEMORIZE:**

Psalms 119:11; Romans 14:21; 1 Corinthians 15:58;

## Lesson 12

# Why You Should Try To Live Right

Someone once asked the question, "Does might make right?" Must you win each battle for right to be profitable? Isn't it possible that victory may come slowly with good final results?

When Jesus was 12 years old He said, "I must be in my Father's house." At age 30 He began His public teaching not to build a great earthly kingdom, but to capture the hearts and minds of people. For three years He taught in order to do this. How could people be sure His teaching was right? When He was crucified many left Him wondering what was the use to continue following Him. And the same question comes to us today, "Why should anyone try to live according to His teaching?"

Look at Jesus your leader. Matthew 10:29-31 says if God cares for the sparrow, how much more must He care for those who are His followers. The very fact that He overcame death and rose from the grave gives you a confidence that He has the power of God with Him.

There shouldn't be any anxiety on your part as His follower because He promises you that your material needs will be met. It is true that you may be disappointed with things but there is no disappointment with Jesus. He hears the prayers of His child and this puts peace in your heart (Philippians 4:6-7). He promises to take your burdens (I Peter 5:7). Can you imagine a dad and his son on a hike with full field packs when the son says, "I can't go on, the pack is too heavy." But the father responds, "Give it to me- and I'll carry it for you." This is the way that God is willing to act with you. He never intends for you to carry burdens.

Can you be sure that the results of right living will be what you need? Your Lord says if God is for you, who can be against you or what can accomplish your downfall (Romans 8:35-38). The very fact that judgment is coming and the assurance that those who are with Him will enter into Heaven according to His promise is very satisfying.

Remember, Jesus alone is the author of eternal life. His promises are true, His judgment is sure, and His victory is certain. Put your trust in Him, have complete peace *and* a real purpose for trying to live according to His direction.

There will be times in your life when the problems become so great you will be tempted to quit. In your discouragement for the moment, you will say, "What's the use of trying to follow Jesus?" But you can be refreshed when you realize that the promise of Romans 8:28 is true for God's children; that you know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord and are called according to His purpose. This does not say that everything is good, but that God can work everything out for good because you love Him and have made His purpose for your life your purpose in life.

A new Christian said, "I'm not sure that I can hold out--what am I to do?" We assured her she could have perfect peace by simply trusting God (Isaiah 26:3). When you have faith, trust, confidence, and dependence on God, you are not trying to live on your own strength, but totally relying on Him. It is important that you set your mind and think on the things of God rather than the things of the world. You must press on in trust waiting for Heaven. Remember, you have peace, forgiveness, power to resist temptation, the Holy Spirit as your guide, the answer to your prayers, real happiness, purposeful living, and everlasting life.

I John 1:7 says that if you walk in the light (truth) as Jesus is in the light (100%) you have fellowship with other Christians and the blood of Jesus keeps you cleansed (forgiven) from sin. The only way you can walk as Jesus walked (100 % truth) is in heart or aim or intention. When you so intend to live in truth, the promises also are yours.

### **Use your Bible to answer the following:**

1. Even when others left Jesus, Peter knew that He alone had words of eternal \_\_\_\_\_ (John 6:68).



2. Repentance is such a part of right living that this change of mind brings no \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Corinthians 7:10).

3. Jesus went to Heaven but is coming back for His faithful followers to share the prepared \_\_\_\_\_ with Him (John 14:3).

4. At the resurrection, those who have practiced right living will \_\_\_\_\_ have life, but those who have practiced will face God's judgment (John 5:28-29).

5. Shall you go on sinning because you are living under (Romans 6:15)?

**Review questions from material you have studied:**

1. What does Jesus' care for the sparrow mean to you?
2. Since God is for you what does this assure you about your future if you remain faithful?
3. How does the promise of Romans 8:28 relate to you?
4. List some present benefits which result from living for God?
5. How can you walk in the light as Jesus is in the light?

**MEMORIZE:**

Romans 8:28; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 John 1:7;

## Lesson 13

# Your Spiritual Check Sheet

### 1. YOU'RE READY FOR HEAVEN

How have you been claiming God's promises daily?

Have you checked to see if you made a **practice** of sinning in any area of your life?

How are you aware that love is a real attitude in you?

### 2. A BODY WITH MEMBERS

How is the Lord's Supper meaningful to you?

In what ways have you encouraged others to assemble regularly?

What does it mean to you to have Jesus as your head ?

### 3. LOOK IN THE BOOK

What is the difference between the Old and New Testament Scriptures?

Are you able to place the books of the Bible in their proper groups?

State the main themes about Jesus in the Bible.

### 4. POWER IN PRAYER

In what way is it now easier to pray to God?

How has prayer become a real part of your daily living?

Did you repent and pray each time you knew you'd sinned?

### 5. THE HOLY SPIRIT, YOUR GIFT

What promise concerning the Holy Spirit is given to those who repent and are baptized?

Which of the nine fruits of the Spirit are best seen in you?

How did you allow the Spirit to be your helper?

### 6. GOD WANTS TO BE PERSONAL

What time did you select for your daily meditation-study?

Recall some highlights from your study?

Evaluate your spiritual growth since you became a Christian.

### 7. SHARING JESUS WITH OTHERS

Have you found at least one person with whom you are sharing Jesus and His love?

How did you make the contact and what did you do to share Jesus?

What results have you seen from your sharing?

### 8. SERVICE IS WORSHIP

How have you tried to build up another Christian?

What things have tried to keep Jesus from staying number one in your life?

How did you worship God by serving some person?

### 9. KNOW YOUR ENEMY

State some lures of the devil you have had to resist.

What have you used from the Bible message to resist temptation

In what area of your life are you most easily tempted?

### 10. YOU ARE A MANAGER NOW

What have you done to be a good manager of your time?

What idea guides the right use of your money?

Why do you desire to be a really good manager?

### 11. WHAT'S RIGHT - WHAT'S WRONG

What happened when you used the stated guidelines in learning whether something is right or wrong?  
What is the difference between temptation and giving in to temptation?  
Tell why planning sin is wrong even if you don't finish the plan.

12. WHY YOU SHOULD TRY TO LIVE RIGHT

What does God promise you about food and clothes?

When you are discouraged, why should you keep on **trying** to live like God wants you to?

## Appendix A

# Explaining "God"

Little children ask questions about God and so do many adults. It seems that every generation comes along with the same questions about identifying God.

It should be understood that anytime we seek to put into human terms things that are eternal or identify deity we find a human failure. Therefore, any illustration that we might give to try to clarify an understanding of the identity of God would of necessity have its weaknesses.

Very soon in our study of the Bible we learn that there is but one God. And this God has functioned since the beginning of the creation until this present hour. Part of the solution in making God more than a term is to recognize Him in one of His distinct manifestations cited in the Bible. The Father is referred to as God Philippians 2:11; The Son is called God, Hebrews 1:8; and the Holy Spirit of God is mentioned, Ephesians 4:30. Jesus uses the unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in His commission, Matthew 28:19, as in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit individuals throughout the world are to be baptized. This divine unity of God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) may be clarified further by the use of a material illustration.

The chemical term H<sub>2</sub>O describes the perfect unity of molecules of hydrogen and oxygen. But it should be recognized that the term H<sub>2</sub>O" in print is just a term and must be realized in one of its three forms to be understood and valuable to people. In its solid form H<sub>2</sub>O would be ice, in its liquid form it would be water, and in its gaseous form it would be steam or vapor. A person may take a container and place within it H<sub>2</sub>O liquid, then add H<sub>2</sub>O solid and it is possible to produce, on the outside of the container, H<sub>2</sub>O gas or vapor. Although it may not **sound** logical to put H<sub>2</sub>O into H<sub>2</sub>O and get H<sub>2</sub>O yet that is exactly what takes **place** when ice is added to water and water vapor results.

In a similar manner the word "God" is a perfect unity of Father Son and Holy Spirit. But the word "God" on paper is just a term and is understood by people and becomes profitable only as God is considered in at least one of His manifestations (Father, Son, or Holy Spirit). No man has seen God the Father and He has never left Heaven. God the Son came in human form when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. God the Holy Spirit is promised as a gift to live in the body of Christians. In John 14:16, God the Son prayed to God the Father that He would send God the Holy Spirit. Someone might remark that it is ridiculous to have God pray to God that He might send God. But when we place H<sub>2</sub>O solid into H<sub>2</sub>O liquid and produce H<sub>2</sub>O gas we have no problem because most persons can visualize this action. Terms of the deity should likewise present no problem. By faith we recognize God praying to God that He would send God and we have by this illustration put into some material terms, a description of the one God (unity) who is identified as Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

When we read the term "God" in the Bible most persons usually think of the Father in Heaven. But on other occasions when we read "God" as in John 20:28 "My Lord and My God", we immediately think of the Son (Jesus). In Acts 5:4 when we read, "You have not lied to men but to God," we realize that the Holy Spirit is being considered as in verse 3. The Bible begins in Genesis 1:1 with "God" (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) uniting in creation. Then throughout the Bible one must examine the context to determine whether the unity term "God" is to be understood or God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit.

Thus we trust that even the new Christian can come to a basic understanding that the One God of the Bible manifests Himself as Father, Son or Holy Spirit, and that each of these beings individually or together is "God".