

Firm Foundation 13-Week Daily Devotion Workbook

Written by Ronnie and Penny Haynes
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Foundational Truths about
Christianity
For the New Believer

Outline of
Firm Foundation Class
Written by Ronnie and Penny Haynes

1. Understanding Salvation

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Christianity is about RELATIONSHIP.

What God wants from me is a DAILY, DEPENDENT RELATIONSHIP with Him, where I look to Him for all of my needs.

God initiated this relationship by sacrificing His only Son, Jesus, to pay for my sins, so I could have the *right* to enter into this holy relationship.

He then revealed Himself and His Word to me so I could have the *opportunity* to enter into this relationship with Him.

When I accepted His sacrifice and His Word to be true, and moved beyond merely believing to actual dependence upon Him, I entered into the relationship by faith.

I remain in this relationship by continued reliance upon God's Word, Spirit, power and presence.

Firm Foundation Glossary Key Words to Know and Memorize

Faith: _____

a) Saving Faith: _____

b) Daily Faith: _____

Sin: _____

a) Transgression: _____

b) Iniquity: _____

Repentance: _____

a) Remorse: _____

Holiness: _____

Grace: _____

a) Saving Grace: _____

b) Daily Grace: _____

Righteousness: _____

a) Righteous Standing: _____

b) Righteous Actions: _____

Saved/Salvation: _____

Old Man / Old Nature: _____

New Man / New Nature: _____

Carnal Man / Sinful Nature / Flesh: _____

Sanctified: _____

Justified: _____

Love: _____

WEEK 1 - DAY 1

UNDERSTANDING SALVATION

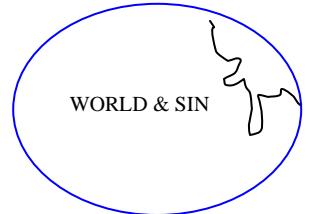
Vs. for the day: John 3:16

Passage for the day: John 3:16-18

John 3:16(NIV) "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

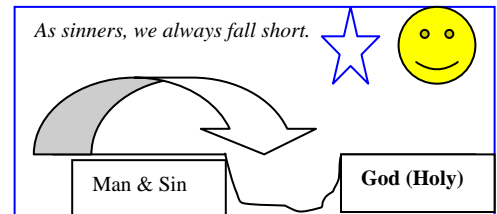
1. ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH GOD'S PLAN & PURPOSE.

- God loves you and wants you to understand how much he loves you. The bible says... "*For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that who so ever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.*" John 3:16 (KJV)



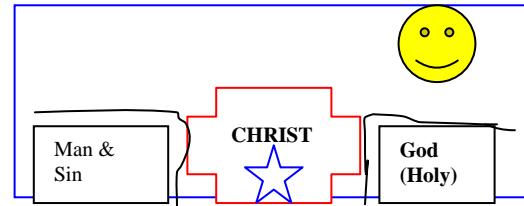
2. OUR PROBLEM IS THAT SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD AND HIS PLAN FOR OUR LIFE.

- We all sin, by nature and by choice, and are separated from God and eternal life. The Bible says... "*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*" Romans 3:23 (NIV)
We can't do it all by ourselves or by any self-works.
"Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:9 (KJV)



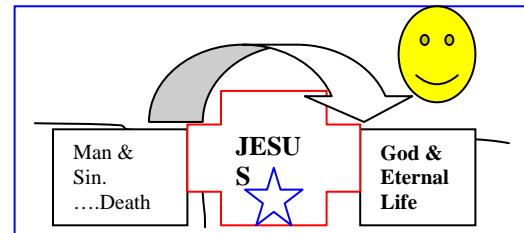
3. GOD'S PROVISION ----- JESUS CHRIST.

- The good news is God provided a way of forgiveness, His Son Jesus. "*Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.*" 1 Peter 3:18 (KJV)
He himself bore our sin in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.
1 Peter 2:24 (NIV)
Jesus said... "I am the way the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." John 14:6 (KJV)



4. OUR RESPONSE IS TO RECEIVE JESUS AS LORD.

- To cross over from death to life, we have to receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior.
"As many as receive Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John 1:12 (KJV)
"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
.... *For with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*" Romans 10:9-10 (KJV)



As you begin to understand what it really means to be saved, you will want to develop a closer relationship with God. This intimate relationship grows through prayer and Bible studies.

Begin by making a commitment to get to know the Lord better through daily prayer and Scripture reading. Remember, prayer to the Lord is no different than talking to anyone else. Ask Him to lead you and guide you. Ask God to show you every area of your life that needs improvement. Begin to trust Him to complete the work He has begun in you.

DAY 2

UNDERSTANDING SALVATION

Vs. for the day: Romans 10:13

Passage for the day: Romans 10:9-13

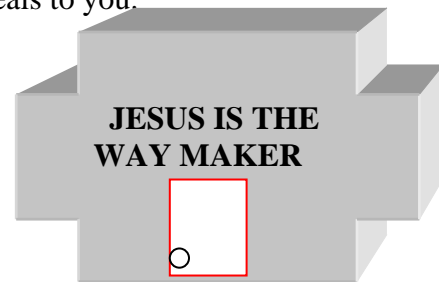
Rom 10:13 (NIV) for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Receiving Jesus as your Lord means placing your faith in him. Faith does not just believe facts about Jesus; it places confidence in him. We have to surrender our lives totally to Him. This means turning our lives over to Him, believing that He is the answer for all our problems. We have to begin to trust in the Lord.

TO RECEIVE JESUS AS LORD AND TO BE SAVED YOU MUST...

1. Admit that you're a sinner, and repent and turn from your sins.
"Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your sins will be blotted out." Acts 3:19 (KJV)
2. Place your faith in Jesus, believing that he died for your sins.
"By grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it's the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8(KJV)
3. Surrender to Jesus as Lord and give him control of your life. Receive Jesus Christ into your heart through prayer.
Jesus said... "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in...." Rev. 3:20 (KJV)
*"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."
Romans 10:13*
*Surrendering to Jesus as Lord means that we have to deny ourselves.
Luke 9:23*

Today, as you talk with God, ask Him to show you areas of your life that you need to surrender to His control. This will be a life-long process, where God continually shows you different things that He wants to change. But ask Him where He wants you to begin. And commit yourself to be obedient to whatever He reveals to you.



DAY 3

FIRST STEPS AS A BELIEVER

Vs. for the day: John 3:3

Passage for the day: John 3:1-7

John 3:3 (NIV) In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

God records your commitment.

"Rejoice, because your names are written in Heaven." Luke 19:20 (KJV)

Now you need to grow as a Christian.

The Bible calls new Christians "babes in Christ." 1 Corinthians 3:1 (KJV)

Jesus said. "I tell you the truth, no man can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." John 3:3 (NIV)

The Church is to a new Christian what the *home and families* are to a baby.

You identify with your new family by confessing Jesus publicly and by believer's baptism.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added about three thousand souls." Acts 2:41 (KJV) Read Romans 6:1-13

Praying is to spiritual life what *breathing* is to physical life.

We should learn to be specific in our prayers to God. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9 (KJV)

God's word is to a new Christian what *good food* is to a baby.

Good food is a daily requirement for proper growth. "Like newborn babies, crave spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good." 1 Peter 2:2 (NIV)

Learning to witness is to a new Christian what *learning to talk* is to a baby.

Jesus commanded us to share the good news with others.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Ghost comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8 (NIV)

WARNING:

Being a Christian is far more than trusting Christ for Salvation!

You probably found out within the first 24 hours after you gave your life to Christ that it takes more than trusting in Christ. And you probably discovered that the harder you try, the more difficult it becomes to grow spiritually and live out your faith.

NOTE: *Whether your Christian life began one week ago or 2 years ago, Satan is still hard at work trying to defeat you. This study will help you get a better grip on being an overcomer and living a victorious Christian life.*

DAY 4

WATER BAPTISM

Vs. for the day: Romans 6:3,4

Passage for the day: Romans 6:3-7

Rom 6:3,4 (NIV) Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Baptism is a way of publicly expressing your decision to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Being immersed (or completely covered) in water is symbolic of the truth that the “old” you is dead. Coming up out of the water represents the truth that the “new” you has been born. This is stating the open rejection of the old lifestyle. Now that you’ve received Jesus into your life, you’re no longer living the old life, but now raised to a new life as a Christian.

Baptism is also a way of identifying with Jesus. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and was buried, but on the third day, He rose to live again. When we are baptized, we show that our sins have been buried with Christ, we are dead to our old way of life, and have been raised to live again as a “new creature in Christ”.

Being baptized is the next step after salvation. If this is something you haven’t done yet, you need to go ahead and do it. Remember even Jesus was baptized (Mark 1: 8,9). So now it’s time for you to bury that old man or woman. Make a commitment to do this with the Elders of the church as soon as possible.

DAY 5

WATER BAPTISM

Vrs. for the Day: Matt. 10:32,33

Passage for the Day: Matt.10: 28-33

Matt. 10:32,33 (NIV) "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

If we've really surrendered to Jesus as Lord it means that we give him control of our lives. As evidence of giving Jesus control of our lives, we want to identify with him. Water Baptism is the next step of showing your faith in Jesus; you are confessing publicly that you are a believer. This is also a way of identifying with the entire body of Christ. Today we're going to look at the importance of acknowledging Jesus Christ through water Baptism.

- Is it important that we acknowledge Jesus Christ as our Lord through water baptism now that we've confessed our sins and received him into our lives? _____

The Bible says in Acts 2:41-44 that those who really received Jesus as Lord were glad to be baptized. Then they joined the Church so the Apostles could feed them the word of God, and so they could share fellowship with other believers.

Baptism is just the first step toward becoming a part of the body of Christ. We leave behind the old "sinner" man, and move forward in the newness of life given to us by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. This is what it means to be **Born Again**.

1 Peter 3:18-21 says that it is an answer of a good conscience toward God. The scripture says that Christ died and suffered for our sins, so that we might find God. It also says that He was put to death in the body but was made alive in the spirit. So being baptized is putting to death the old flesh and being born of the spirit. This is why we are submerged under the water. The water is like the covering of the blood of Jesus. Then we're raised to a new life in Christ Jesus. Remember that it's not being baptized that saves you. Salvation only comes through the acceptance of Jesus into our lives through repentance, placing our faith in Him and receiving Him as Lord of our lives.

If you have never been baptized, today you can make that commitment to the Lord. Have the assurance of a good conscience toward God and bury that "old" person in the water.

Understanding Salvation

I. What Did I Do?

A. **I realized that I was a sinner.** That means that I realized that I have not been in God, but _____ on myself to meet my needs. I have chosen to act _____ of God instead of _____ to God and recognizing His right of ownership over my life. (Luke 18:13,14)

B. **I repented of my sin.** That means that I not only felt _____ for my past actions, but I also wanted to _____ my future actions. I am sorry for living my life independently of God, and want to rely upon Him for direction and guidance, and for _____ from now on.

The Greek word for “repent” is *metanoeo*, which means “_____.” It is looking back at what you have done and not only

a) regretting the consequences that you will have to endure, but also
b) *having a* _____ where you no longer want to do those things.

There is another Greek word, *metamelomai*, which means regret, or selfish dread of the consequences of what one has done, but *with no* _____. There is no forgiveness of sins promised in the Bible for regret, only for _____. (Luke 5:32; Acts 2:38,39)

C. **I placed my faith and trust in Jesus Christ.** That means that

1. I acknowledged that _____ is God in the flesh, and trusted that He died on the cross to pay the _____ for my sins, so I would not have to endure everlasting punishment and _____ from God.

2. I made a conscious decision to _____ my whole life, my past, present and future, everything that is valuable and precious to me, including my plans, hopes, dreams and desires, to the _____ and _____ of God.

3. I decided that I would no longer live _____ of God, but would _____ upon Him for every decision I would make, and would rely upon Him to _____ in whatever way He deemed suitable. (Romans 10:9,10)

D. **I surrendered my life to Him.** That means that I pledged to do my best to submit to His _____ over my life, allowing Him to be the _____ and Controller and Decision Maker in my life. I would follow and obey God’s instructions to the best of my ability through the power of _____ who is now living within me. (1 Peter 3:15)

II. What Did God Do?

A. **God accepted you placing your faith in Him, and applied Jesus’ payment for your sins to your account.** In other words, you no longer have a “_____”; the penalty that you owed for your sins are “_____” by Jesus Christ. (Romans 3:25,26; 1 Jn. 2:2)

- B. God says that you are now as “righteous” in His sight as Jesus Christ is.** Righteousness is “_____”. What God originally intended was for you to be in a _____ relationship with Him; now that you have entrusted and submitted your life to Him, you are where you should have been all along, in “_____” with Him. God *credited* righteousness to you when you placed your faith in Him, not because you did _____ or did something right, but solely because you entered into a trusting relationship with Him. So even if you mess up and do something wrong, you remain “righteous” in God’s sight because you are in a dependent relationship with Him. (Romans 4:5-8)
- C. God took your spirit, which was dead, and “quickened” it or “made it alive”.** All of mankind, since Adam, has been born with a “_____” spirit. The spirit is the part of man that _____ with God and can enter into _____ with God (because God is Spirit). But since your spirit was dead, you could not hear from God or truly have fellowship with God. But God made your spirit alive, so you can now communicate and have _____ with God. (Romans 8:10; Colossians 2:13; 1 Peter 3:18)
- D. God gave you a “new nature” which resides in your newly quickened spirit, and has crucified the “old nature”.** The “old nature” is the essence of who you were, the part of you that wanted to keep _____, or living independently from God. Though your conscience may have been slightly bothered by your wrongdoing, it was never enough to make you stop doing it, nor was it enough to keep you up at night. But your “old nature” was _____ when you entrusted your life to Christ. It died; it no longer exists. (Galatians 5:24)

However, the “new nature” that God gave you desires to _____ God, to obey the Holy Spirit, to depend upon and be in right relationship with God. It is greatly bothered when you don’t do what you know is right, and won’t leave you alone until you’ve _____ the sin and have returned to right relationship with God. (Eph 4:24; Col 3:9,10)

As a side note, you still have “_____”, or old _____ patterns that you have spent a lifetime developing as a means of _____ for yourself. Habits still exist after the new nature takes over, and they must slowly be “mortified” or _____ by the power of the Holy Spirit. In addition, your mind is filled with fallacies (lies) you have always believed to be true, so your mind needs to be renewed and filled with the _____ of the scriptures as the Holy Spirit reveals it to you. (Romans 8:13; Col. 3:5; Romans 12:2)

- E. God gave you eternal life by placing His own life, His Holy Spirit, to dwell within you.** “_____” is life without beginning and without end. There is only one entity that is without beginning and without end, and that is _____. Therefore, He gave you **His life**, eternal life, by placing His own Holy Spirit to live within you. (2 Tim 1:14; 1 Cor. 6:19)

You are now the temple of the Holy Spirit, and God Himself lives inside of you. Everything that God is and has now resides within you by the presence of His Spirit.

Latent within you are the “_____” of His Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control, and if you will just remain in a dependant relationship with Him, with your spirit united with His Spirit, those characteristics will begin to “bloom” in your life naturally. (Gal 5:22; John 15:4)

The Holy Spirit will lead you into all truth and _____ you about God the Son and God the Father. He will convict you of _____ (even before you do it), and remind you that you are _____ because of your faith in God. (John 16:13-15; 16:8-11)

You now have the same _____ that His Spirit has to take dominion over the forces of evil. In addition, His Holy Spirit also tells you what God wants to reveal to you personally, and when you want to pray, but just don’t know exactly what to say, the Holy Spirit searches your spirit and speaks to God on your behalf. (Matt. 10:1; 28:18; Luke 10:19; Romans 8:26,27)

WEEK 2 - DAY 1

**LEARNING YOUR NEW IDENTITY
WHO WE ARE *NOW***

Verse for the day: 2 Corinthians 5:17

Passage for the day: 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

2 Cor. 5:17 (NIV) “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come”!

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17

After we are born again, what do we become?

Read Ephesians 2:10

Who is it that has re-created us?

Why were we re-created?

God is now ready to begin a new work in your life. This is why it’s so important to understand that we should take on our new identity. Once we become a new creation, we also inherit a new identity.

We learn that after we’re born again, we’re really just beginning our life. The Bible says we’re like newborn babes, so it’s like learning how to walk all over again. However, this time we have our Father God to pick us up when we fall.

Begin to focus on your new identity. Ask God to show you areas in your life that belong to the “old man”. Ask Him to show you how to overcome these weaknesses. Remember that you are no longer that same person any more.

DAY 2

LEARNING YOUR NEW IDENTITY

Vs. for the day: Colossians 3:9-11

Passage for the day: Colossians 3:5-17

Col. 3:9-11 (NIV) Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

How we formerly identified ourselves no longer applies. Paul states here that our race, religion, cultural background or social distinctions no longer apply. And our physical heritage, race or social standing no longer determines our identity.

Fred Astaire was without dispute one of the top singers, dancers, and actors of all time. He played in numerous movies and Broadway shows, winning many awards. But in 1932, when Astaire was starting out, a Hollywood talent judge wrote on his screen test; “Can’t act. Can’t sing. Can dance a little.”

Sometimes, as Christians, we may fail badly. We think, “What kind of Christian would do that?” “How can I ever serve Christ again?” But we develop and grow in our Christian life when we leave those failures behind us, and daily use our God-given gifts for Him. In time, those failures will be forgotten footnotes. We should not look at our past but focus on right now and the future.

Our identity lies in the fact that *we are no longer that old person.*
**WE ARE BRAND NEW; WE ARE IN CHRIST, AND
WHO CHRIST IS DETERMINES WHO WE ARE.**

As you seek the Lord in prayer today, begin to praise him for your new identity. As you start to realize that you’re a child of the Almighty God and you’re going to find your true destiny in life. Just begin to thank Him and praise Him. Ask Him what you can do for Him today so that He might be glorified.

DAY 3

LEARNING OUR NEW IDENTITY

Vs. for the day: Romans 12:2

Passage for the day: Romans 12:1-2

Rom 12:2 (NIV) Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

In Romans 12:1,2, God says that we are not to be _____ to this world. This means that we are no longer to be like the world. It also means that our identity is not to come from the world, or from what has happened to us while we have lived in the world. Remember: we are new creations with a new identity.

But how do we learn our new identity?

Renewing our minds doesn't "just happen". We don't wake up with a completely new mindset. We must study the Word of God so that we can discover and understand who we really are from God's perspective. As we believe what God says about us, and we disregard all that we previously thought about ourselves, our minds will slowly but surely be *transformed*. Daily, we become more and more like Jesus in thought and action.

Today as a commitment to the Lord. Ask God to begin that new work in your mind so a renewing will take place. Ask Him to transform (change) anything that is not acceptable to Him. Remember that if we stay focused on Jesus, we live a victorious life.

DAY 4

LEARNING OUR NEW IDENTITY

Vs. for the day: 1 John 3:1-3

Passage for the day: 1 John 2:28-3:3

1 John 3:1-3 (NIV) how great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

As a side note, don't be surprised when your old friends don't understand the changes in you. Why won't they "know" or understand you anymore?

You are now "children of God". Unless your friends know God, they will not "know" you. You are being changed into the image of Jesus Christ, someone with whom they are most likely unfamiliar. Remember that *you're* still trying to figure out your new identity. Do you really think that your old friends are going to understand this new you? It's going to take time for you to make adjustments in your new life style. So be patient - God is good.

Theres an old saying, "No one can make us feel inferior without our consent." We need to make a conscious decision to not worry about our self-image or what others think about us now. You may find it takes time for others to accept that you no longer are that old person. So stay focused on the important things, like finding out your new identity. You'll even begin to find that things about yourself you didn't even know.

Make a list and begin to pray for those old friends that just don't understand you any more.

As you make your list, remember that at one time you were as blind as they were. So ask God to show each of them the real truth, that they might come to an understanding of salvation.

DAY 5

WHO WE ARE DETERMINES WHAT WE DO

Vs. for the day: Luke 6:43

Passage for the day: Luke 6:43-49

Luke 6:43 (NIV) "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit.

The most important belief we possess is the true knowledge of who God really is.

The second most important belief is who we are as a child of God.

We will behave in accordance with the way we perceive ourselves. If we don't see ourselves as God does, we will not only suffer from a wrong identity and a poor image of which we really are, but we will not act as we should. This also confuses our thoughts of who God really is. You'll find that Jesus used analogies all through the Bible. Here is one example where he uses trees and fruits.

Read Luke 6:43-49

A good tree cannot produce _____ and a bad tree cannot produce _____. A good tree can only produce _____, and a bad tree can only produce _____.

It is *not what we do* that determines *who we are*.
It is WHO WE ARE that DETERMINES WHAT WE DO!

When we realize that we are "sons of God", forgiven and empowered by God's Holy Spirit, we no longer have to act like the persons we used to be. Even when we make mistakes and mess up, we are no longer "Sinners" asking for forgiveness; we are "Saints" of God who confess their sin, ask for forgiveness, and are cleansed from all unrighteousness.

Read 1 John 1:9.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Today is a new day in the Lord. We can be thankful for a forgiving God who knows that we sometimes mess up. Remember the Bible says "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"(Rom.3: 23). So don't give up, even if you've messed up and sinned. Confess it to the Lord, thank Him for His forgiveness, and go on. He is faithful to forgive you.

Learning Your New Identity

WHO WE ARE DETERMINES WHAT WE DO

Let me tell you a story. Once upon a time, there was a homeless young woman who lived on the streets. She had no parents, no clothes except those upon her back, no belongings to speak of. She ate whatever she could find, even someone else's left-overs in a garbage can.

One day, the prince of the city came through the streets with his royal carriage and saw the young woman rummaging through the garbage bins. His heart was filled with compassion, and he had his servants invite the young woman to enter the carriage to come to the royal palace. The woman was confused; why would the Prince want her to come to the palace?

But she accepted the invitation, though she remained somewhat in a daze. When she came to the palace, she was shown to a huge bedroom with a large canopied bed, closets full of women's clothing, and which was adjacent to a large bathroom, with a huge jacuzzi tub. She was instructed to remove her clothing, take a long bath, and put on any of the clothing she found in the closet.

She was suspicious, and very uncomfortable, to say the least, but her curiosity, mixed with her fatigue and her hunger drove her to try it. She enjoyed the luxurious bath and the delicious feeling of being clean; she felt almost decadent when she put on the long flowing gown that she had picked out of all of the splendid garments. She went down the long staircase and was escorted into the main banqueting hall, where she sat down to a huge feast with every food imaginable. The Prince had requested that a special feast be held in honor of the young woman, who probably had not sampled such fare before.

The evening was wonderful. She enjoyed the food, the drink, the fine clothing and the wonderfully important way she was treated by the Prince and the servants. It was like living in a dream. And she expected the dream to soon come to an end.

But the Prince requested that the young woman become his Ward, his permanent guest, whose welfare would now be his concern. All of her needs would be taken care of by the Prince. She was welcome to stay with the Prince as a Princess of the kingdom for as long as she desired.

Amazed at such a prospect, she followed the servant back to the huge bedroom, where she was given a silken dressing gown for sleeping. The bed was soft, the sheets cool, the covers warm. It was perfect.

Yet in the morning, she found herself hungry again. And out of habit, she reached for her old rags instead of the fine clothing hanging in her closet. She went downstairs, through the huge banqueting room and kitchen, and went outside, behind the palace to the garbage dump, where she began rummaging for scraps from last night's feast, as she had learned to do throughout her life in order to keep from starving.

One of the servants noticed a beggar eating out of the trash cans and informed the Prince. His Highness looked out the window and recognized the beggar as his new Ward. He rushed down the stairway and out behind the house and turned the young woman toward himself.

“Why are you wearing these rags? You have new royal clothing in your new bedroom. And why are you eating out of the dumpster? There is an abundance of food in the royal refrigerator, all at your disposal. You are dressed like a pauper, and acting like one who has no food or clothing, when in actuality, you are now a princess, with all the goods, rights and privileges of royalty.

Don’t you know who you are?”

“I am an orphaned pauper,” said the young woman, “living in your palace. I don’t deserve to be in such a fancy place; I am nothing, and I have nothing. I have never done anything to even merit my visiting here, much less my living here.”

“That’s not the point,” said the Prince. “I invited you here, and adopted you as one of the royal family solely out of my compassion for you. You didn’t earn it; I freely gave it to you. And you no longer are an orphaned pauper; you are a royal Ward, with all of the benefits and privileges that come with being my Ward.

“Whether or not you wear the fine clothing or eat the sumptuous food is up to you, but it is yours nonetheless. However until you accept the fact that you are no longer a pauper, and embrace the truth that you are now a Princess, you will never be able to enjoy all that now belongs to you.”

The young woman stood there baffled. How could this be? Who was she? A pauper or a Princess? She didn’t know who she was anymore. She had been a pauper so long, she continually felt like a pauper. But the Prince has decreed that she is a Princess, and whatever the Prince decrees is the truth.

“Dear Prince, I have been a Pauper so long, I do not know how to be a Princess. I don’t feel like a Princess inside. And yet I know that what you decree becomes law. So I need you to help me remember who I now am, so that I will act like a Princess instead of a Pauper. I do so want to be a Princess.”

The Prince called one of the royal servants, a handmaiden named Paraklete. “You”, the Prince said, “are to remain at the side of the Princess at all times, reminding her that she is now a royal Princess. You are to remind her of the benefits and privileges that come with her rank, and remind her of the behavior befitting someone in her position. You are not to force her to do anything, but to always speak the truth in love to her.”

And the newly found Princess slowly learned to eat from the royal refrigerator rather than the royal dump, and reach for her new fine clothing rather than her rags. And she made good use of the royal bathroom and routinely tried to keep herself clean from the filth she used to walk and wallow in.

But this slow transformation of her outward actions only followed on the heels of the renewal of her mindset. With Paraklete by her side, reminding her that she was not a pauper, but a royal Princess, she slowly learned what her new identity truly was, and learned to act according to who she now was.

Questions:

1. What was the woman before she met the Prince? What did she have?
2. Did she deserve to be invited to the palace? Had she done anything to merit the favor of the Prince?

3. Once the Prince decreed that she was a Ward of the royal family, and a now a Princess, was the woman still a pauper? What was she?
4. Did she feel like a Princess? Did that make her any less a Princess?
5. What made her a Princess?
6. What did she act like the morning after her first night in the palace? Why?
7. Did her actions change the fact that she was a Princess? Why?
8. Who did the Prince give to her as a “helper”? What was the helper to do?
9. And what were the resulting changes in the young woman’s life?

10. What were you before you met Jesus: a sinner or a saint? What did you have to offer him?
(*Romans 5:8*)

11. Did you deserve to be invited into the kingdom? Did you do anything to merit the favor of the Son of God?
(*Titus 3:3-7*)

12. Once you received Jesus by repenting of your sins, placing your faith in Him, and surrendering your life to Him, Jesus decreed that you were a royal son of God. Even more so, God the Father now said you are “righteous” in His sight, a saint of God. So what are you now: a sinner, or a saint (sanctified in Christ)? Why? (*1 Cor. 6:9-11*)

13. Do you always feel like a saint? Does that make you any less a saint? (*1 John 3:18,19*)

14. What made you a saint? (*1 Cor 6:11*)

15. Do you sometimes act like the sinner you used to be, instead of the saint God says you now are? Why? (*Romans 7:15-23*).

16. Do your actions change the fact that you are a saint? Why? (*Titus 3:4,5*)

17. Who has the Lord given to you as a “helper”? What is the helper to do? (*John 14:16,17,26*)

18. What do you think the result would be if you told yourself daily that you are no longer a “sinner saved by grace”, but a “saint that occasionally sins”? (Romans 12:2)

WEEK 3 - DAY 1

WHO I AM IN CHRIST JESUS – I AM SECURE

Vs. for the day: Romans 15:7

Passage for the day: Romans 15:5-7

Romans 5:7 (NIV) Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

*Learning who we are, and who God wants us to be, allows us to say
“I AM ACCEPTED”.*

Rejection is one of the hardest things to deal with. Unconditional love and acceptance is one of the most basic needs of humanity. Many times, peer pressures and man’s approval makes people compromise their moral standards to be accepted by others. A person begins to scheme and manipulate other people, or present a false image, to gain approval. Then, when this fails, they envy those who seem to have what they want.

How does it make you feel to be rejected?

When you know who you are in Christ Jesus, you no longer need to be threatened by people or compete with them, because you are secure and loved. No matter what you’ve done in your life, no matter what your background, you have a Father that loved you enough to suffer for you. He allowed a part of Himself too die for you; this shows how much he really loves you.

How does it make you feel to know that someone died for you? _____

Would it be hard for you to die for someone you love? _____

He accepts us just as we are. We don’t have to change to come to Him. He takes us while we are still sinners and gives us the assurance that we are accepted.

As you begin to pray and seek God today. Thank God that you are accepted just as you are. That you don’t have to change before he will accept you. Thank him for all that he’s done in your life so far, and all that he’s going to do in the future. Remember he loves you. So its time to show him that you love him. After all Jesus gave his life for you so that we might be forgiven. With that I believe he proved his love. So try to show him some back.

DAY 2

I AM SECURE IN JESUS CHRIST

Vs. for the day: Hebrews 4:16

Passage for the day: Hebrews 4:14-16

Heb.4: 16 (NIV) Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Just as Jesus was powerful enough to save us, He is also powerful enough to keep us secure in Him. He provides for us everything we need for life and godliness. We have to be confident that He will provide all our needs according to his riches in glory. Our Father owns it all.

All we have to do is stay as close to Him as we possibly can, and He will complete in us what He needs to accomplish. He'll shelter us in times of need and He'll bless us with **ABUNDANT LIFE RIGHT NOW.**

- (Romans 8:1,2) We are free forever from _____.
- (Philippians 1:6) I am to be confident that the good work God has begun in me will be _____.
- (2 Timothy 1:7) I have not been given a spirit of _____.
- (Hebrew 4:16) I can always find _____ and _____ in time of need.
- (1 John 5:18) If I am born again, Satan can't _____ me.

The Bible says if we abide in Him, He will abide in us. He'll never leave us or forsake us. That should be enough security for us all.

DAY 3

WHO I AM IN CHRIST JESUS – I AM SIGNIFICANT

Vs. for the day: John 15:4,5

Passage for the day: John 15:1-5

John 15:4,5 (NIV) Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

What do you think that a man or woman's greatest need is? Some people have said that they would like their tombstone to say that they made a difference. We all need to feel significant and that we have purpose and meaning in our lives.

Our problem occurs when we look in the wrong places to find our significance. Some people try to find it in their jobs and in money. Others try to find it in "stuff" or worldly things. Some try to find it in power.

Significance all rests on the questions "Who am I?" and "Why do I exist?" Our answer to these questions divides us into two groups: those who pursue significance in the right way and those who pursue it in the wrong way. Our desire to fulfill this need can either drive us closer to God and all the right answers, or away from God and seeking the ways of the world. Lasting significance is found only in Christ Jesus.

I Am Significant in Christ

- (Matthew 5:13,14) I am the _____ and the _____ of the earth.
- (John 15:1-5) I am a _____ of the true vine, and a channel of his life.
- (Act 1:8) God has empowered me to be a _____.

DAY 4

WHO I AM IN CHRIST JESUS – I AM SIGNIFICANT

Vs. for the day: Matthew 6:26

Passage for the day: Matthew 6:25-34

- **(1 Corinthians 3:16) I am God's _____.**
- **(Ephesians 3:12) I can approach God with _____ and _____.**
- **(Philippians 4:13) I can do _____ through Christ Jesus who strengthens me.**

So few people feel significant in today's automated society, but you are extremely important to God. Even the hairs on your head are numbered. The God of who created the universe actually takes the time to daily watch over every aspect of your life and take care of you.

When we were dead in our sins, we believed we were insignificant, and many of us acted as though we were worth very little. But now we have the sure knowledge that we are invaluable to God, even worth the death of His only begotten, and we need to learn how to live as the precious children we are.

Today, as you pray to the Lord begin to see that God loves you and remember you're special to him. With the thought in mind that you are significant in the eyes of the creator of all things.

DAY 5

WHO I AM IN CHRIST JESUS – I AM SIGNIFICANT

Vs. for the day: Romans 8:37

Passage for the day: Romans 8:28-40

Read Romans 8:37

Now, we are no longer defeated, but we are more than _____.

Read Romans 8:29

God predestined us to be conformed to the image of _____
_____.

Now that we've learned that we have a new identity, we begin to see that we no longer have to worry about the things in our past. Now we have to focus on the things of the future. We need to realize that we are significant to God through Christ Jesus. We should no longer live in a defeated state of mind, because we are more than conquerors through Jesus.

God has a plan and a purpose for our lives. He has predestined us to be *called* (chosen and set apart for a destiny), *justified* (made innocent, as if we had never sinned), and *glorified* (made more like Jesus). Christ did all of this for us when He died on the cross.

REMEMBER:

**We are no longer products of our past. Instead,
*We are products of Christ's work on the cross!***

Just as you've learned in the last two days that you are special and that God has predestined you with a special purpose. Today as you pray, ask God to show you that purpose. With the thought that you're significant no matter what's going on around you right now. Trust in God so that he will direct you to your destiny.

WEEK 4 - DAY 1

BELONGING TO YOUR CHOICE: SPIRIT OR FLESH

Vs. for the day: Galatians 5:15

Passage for the day: Galatians 5:13-23

Galatians 5:15 If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

Did you know that you have a new nature? From birth, you had the Old Nature. But since you have been born again, you have a New Nature.

Read Galatians 5:13-18

What is the main word in these Scriptures? _____

The one thing that propels us to serve the Lord is our love for Him (because of what He has done for us), and our love for one another (which He implants in our hearts when He comes to live in us). By loving as the Lord commands, we actually fulfill the law's righteous requirements.

What are some signs that your Flesh is in control? (Galatians 5:19-21)

The things named in this passage are very self-serving actions, motivated to please ourselves at anyone else's expense.

What are some signs that your New Nature is in control? (Galatians 5:22,23)

The things named in this passage are God- and other-centered. They are expressions of love, or ways that we can give of ourselves for the benefit of others.

Once you are "born again", you begin a process of "re-learning" how to think and how to act. During this process, you will find that the choices you make become extremely important. Do you obey the Flesh and continue to do what you have always done? Or do you obey the New Nature's voice, which suggests that you do something that is somewhat unfamiliar.

You will discover the reality that your future really does depend upon today's choices. ***You belong to your choice***, so choose wisely.

DAY 2

YOU BELONG TO YOUR CHOICE

Vs. for the day: Galatians 5:16, 24

Passage for the day: Galatians 5:24,25

Galatians 5:16, 24 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature...Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

Your own choice will decide whether the Spirit or the Flesh will be in control of your life. Read Galatians 5:16,24.

How does the Scripture say we can make the right choices?

Before you were born-again, the Old Nature was directing your life. All of your thoughts, desires, actions and emotions were expressing that nature.

What does “walking in the Spirit” mean?

Now that you have the New Nature, you have the supernatural ability to express the thoughts, desires, actions and emotions of God’s Spirit, which lives in you. He is slowly transforming you into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ, and the more you yield to the Spirit’s leading, the more Christ-like you will become.

Christians are to live in the Spirit, by the Spirit. How does one live by the Spirit?

1. We must believe that the Spirit is within us and know that God has sent the Spirit into our heart. (Galatians 4:6)
2. We must, in every situation, be yielding to the Spirit, and be able to submit our desires to those of the Holy Spirit.
3. We must be dependent on the Holy Spirit for help, enabling us to live a God-pleasing life.
4. We must anticipate the effects of the Spirit to help us in our daily lives.

Too many people try to “live like a Christian” without truly yielding themselves to the Spirit’s control. They try to do it through sheer willpower. But willpower will not conquer your Flesh. It is only by the Spirit that we put to death the Flesh, with all of its characteristics (Romans 8:13), and it is only by submitting to God’s Spirit that we can live victoriously.

Ask God to reveal to you areas of your life where you are trying to “kill off” the Flesh by sheer willpower, and ask Him to replace those efforts with the supernatural ability to obey the Spirit’s voice.

LIVE BY THE SPIRIT!

DAY 3

YOU BELONG TO YOUR CHOICE

Vs. for the day: Galatians 2:20

Passage for the day: Romans 8:1-14

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Read Romans 8:10-11

Now that Christ lives in you, what is your condition?

You have been taken out of darkness and placed into His marvelous light; you have been rescued from death and have now been made alive. You also have righteousness, which means you are “right with” or “not guilty” before God.

Read Galatians 2:20

How do you live now? What is it that allows you to continue in Him?

Christ now lives within you, and you live by the faith of the Son of God. This actually means that God gives you the faith you need to live. The scriptures say that every man receives a “measure of faith”, a certain amount that is sufficient for that person for that day.

Jesus totally believed every word His heavenly Father spoke; He had faith in God. That same faith that He had has been imparted to us, so that we have the ability to trust God and trust His choices for our lives. We can yield to the Holy Spirit because we know that He will lead us into eternal life and righteous living. We can obey His still small voice because we trust that He knows best for us.

But you must choose to follow the prompting of your New Nature before Christ can take control of your life. He has to be your Lord and Master. When you make that decision, **you belong to your choice.**

Has God been speaking to you regarding any area particular area of your life? Have you been resisting doing what the Spirit has suggested, or have you obeyed Him, choosing to believe He really does know best in all situations? Make a commitment to obey the Spirit’s leading in this area, regardless of how strange or uncomfortable it may feel. You will be amazed at what wonderful things God can do through an obedient and yielded vessel.

DAY 4

RISEN WITH CHRIST

Vs. for the day: Colossians 3:1

Passage for the day: Colossians 3:1-7

Colossians 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Read Colossians 2:12-13 and 3:1-7.

What does it mean to be “**risen with Christ**”?

When Paul speaks to the Colossians about seeking things from above, he is saying that you have “died” with Christ and are now “risen” with Christ. Therefore, not only have the Colossian believers been freed from sin, they have also turned to a new life, leaving behind their old ways, habits, values, interests and sins. **Seek those things from above.** Seek knowledge, closer fellowship with Him, the experience of His resurrection power and victory over our sin.

What 3 choices in Colossians 3:1,2,5 should we make to live victoriously?

- 1) _____ 2) _____
3) _____

Remember that it is by obeying the Spirit’s leading that we “mortify” or put to death the craving of the Flesh (Romans 8:13). You can’t force yourself to *not* do all those old things you used to do. Your victory will be short-lived if you do it that way.

But when you replace your old thoughts, emotions and habits with those of the Spirit, you will find yourself automatically doing things that please the Lord. And without even trying, your old ways and habits will just die off as you **make your choice** to walk in the Spirit and follow His leading.

What old habits do you want God to remove from your life? Can you hear the Spirit speaking to you about other ways you should be acting or reacting? One good decision will lead to another if you will just begin with one act of obedience. Don’t forget that you are Risen with Christ, and able to live victoriously in every situation by the Spirit’s power.

DAY 5

RISEN WITH CHRIST

Vs. for the day: 2 Corinthians 5:17

Passage for the day: 2 Corinthians 5:14-18

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-18

Christ died for all so that we would not live for _____, but instead live for _____.

We all “died” with Jesus Christ, meaning that our Old Nature was crucified on the cross with Jesus, and it therefore no longer exists. We have also all been made alive through Jesus Christ’s resurrection, which means that Jesus Christ has come to live within us, and we are free to obey our New Nature.

2 Corinthians 5:16 says that we no longer regard anyone from a “worldly point of view”. What does that mean?

In the book of James, we are told that we are not to judge people according to how they look. In the Old Testament, God told the Prophet Samuel that He does not look on man’s outside, but instead looks upon his heart. This verse discourages us from looking at people according to who they were, or what they have done. Why?

2 Corinthians 5:17 says that we are _____.

Old things have passed away, and behold ALL things have become new. It has been said that the only person who will remind you of your past is the devil, because God has chosen to remember your sins no more. He has created you to be something brand new. The old person no longer exists.

Today, make the choice to no longer look at yourself as you used to be. Instead, choose God’s view and opinion of you over your own or the opinion of others. You are a new creation, risen with Christ, with the Spirit of the living God within you. Now you can **live for Christ!**

BELONGING TO YOUR CHOICE

What do the following five things all have in common?

A nun, Someone who rides horses, Someone who bites their fingernails,
Someone who curses, Someone who attends church regularly.

Since we are a new creation in Christ, and the old man is dead, why do we still have a problem with doing things the “old” way?

How do we make choices that please God?

Read Romans 13:8-14. What does God tell us to “put on”?

What are we to make no provision for? _____

Read Ephesians 4:22-24. What does God tell us to “put on”?

Why is this so important?

Read Ephesians 6:10-17. What does God tell us to “put on”?

Belt _____ Breastplate _____

Shoes _____ Shield _____

Helmet _____ Sword _____

Christ is _____

Read John 3:30. What does John the Baptist say here?

Every choice we make is either for the flesh or for the spirit. Every choice brings us either one step closer or one step further away from becoming more and more like Jesus Christ.

WEEK 5 - DAY 1

“CONTAINERS” FOR CHRIST

Vs. for the day: 2 Corinthians 4:11

Passage for the day: 2 Corinthians 4:6-11

2 Corinthians 4:11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

Read 2 Corinthians 4:6-11.

Start out with verse 6: God's light shined into our hearts and gave us the light of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. What did God put into our hearts so that we could know Jesus Christ personally?

That light is the Holy Spirit, who leads us into truth and witnesses to us about who Jesus Christ really is. We can know Him personally, because He lives within us.

In verse 7, Paul refers to the Holy Spirit as a “_____” in jars of clay, or earthen vessels. Our bodies are those clay jars (because Genesis says that our bodies were formed from the dust and will return to dust), but these earthen vessels are of extreme value now that the treasure of the Holy Spirit lives within us. His presence makes all the difference in our life.

Verses 8 and 9 tell us of our victory when Jesus is in control and we submit to his will. Even though we go through hard times, we win the battles because the Holy Spirit empowers us. We may look a little tattered and torn at times, but inside, we are becoming more and more like the Lord Jesus, because the Spirit is slowly but surely transforming us into His image.

There is no doubt that you receive a New Nature when you choose to allow Christ to control your life. **We are the container for the indwelling Christ.** That is how we can know Him, hear Him, and choose to obey Him.

Many people try to live a Christian life and try to understand God without ever really experiencing the indwelling presence of Christ. But they can't do it because they don't allow themselves to be the containers for Christ. Only those who receive the new Nature have the ability to know God as well as follow and obey Him.

Praise God today for the indwelling presence of Jesus Christ through His Holy Spirit. Thank Him for changing you to be more and more like Jesus. Rejoice because, no matter what happens, you will not be crushed, despairing, abandoned or destroyed. This is His promise through the treasure that lives within us. Praise Him that you are the container for the indwelling Christ.

DAY 2

CONTROLLED BY THE NEW NATURE

Vs. for the day: Galatians 5:22,23

Passage for the day: Galatians 5:19-26

Galatians 5:22,23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

We should recognize that Jesus Christ lives in us now.

As new Christians, we often ask Christ to give us qualities like love, power, gentleness, and righteousness. But Jesus doesn't just give us those qualities: **He gives us Himself**. He is the source of those qualities, and more. If we receive Him into our hearts, He will bring these things with Him.

But we have to **surrender our lives to His direction**, letting the Flesh die so He will allow His life to flow through you. He is the New Nature. He is the source of all good things. And his desire is that you have it all.

Re-read Galatians 5:22-23.

These are the characteristics that fill us when Christ inhabits us. They are called the **“Fruit of the Spirit”**. Name the nine Fruit of the Spirit:

- 1)_____ 2)_____ 3)_____
- 4)_____ 5)_____ 6)_____
- 7)_____ 8)_____ 9)_____

Circle the one that is weakest in your life. In your quiet time, acknowledge this weakness to Jesus and ask Him to strengthen you in this area.

DAY 3

RELEASING THE NEW NATURE

Vs. for the day: Romans 8:26

Passage for the day: Romans 6:12-18

Romans 8:26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

Romans 8:26-28

An apple tree produces apples. It can't produce peaches. Why? Because by nature, it is an apple tree.

Your New Nature also produces fruit: Fruit of the New Nature. Re-read the nine (9) Fruit of the Spirit from yesterday's lesson. Jesus can make all of these qualities real in our lives if we are willing vessels, allowing Him to flow through us.

Read Romans 8:26-28

There is no excuse for not producing fruit. Even our weakest qualities can be changed through prayer. Verse 26 says that the Spirit makes intercession for us (prays for us) even when we don't know how to pray.

There is a simple decision that you make as a Christian. You must allow Jesus Christ to be the Lord of your life. When you do this, His Nature is in control of you and will produce the Fruit of the Spirit.

You don't have to struggle to be like Jesus. **You simply let Him be Himself within you!**

Read Romans 6:12-18

What does this scripture say about sin? _____

According to verse 12, sin tries to rule your life, but you have a choice who will rule.

You belong to your choice. If you choose to let Christ reign, He will reign as King of your life, allowing the fruit to flow through your life. But you have to choose whether you want to live by the Spirit and the Fruit of the Spirit. Choose the Flesh or the New Nature.

DAY 4

MAKING JESUS CHRIST KING

Vs. for the day: Romans 8:7,8

Passage for the day: Romans 7:21-25

Romans 8:7,8 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

You can't allow the Flesh back in. You can't trust the Flesh. Many times Christians get defeated after they are born-again. They expect their lives to automatically change, or expect everything that might lead them astray to be removed. This is a bad mistake. **You can't trust yourself until Christ is totally in control of your life.**

Sometimes we have to take ourselves out of situations that can bring up the Flesh. The Flesh will never change or be any different, but will always produce the same ugly, bad fruit. If you don't allow the Flesh to die, your body becomes a battleground. A struggle begins between your New Nature and you Flesh.

Read Romans 7:22-25

This is a struggle of a Christian who has not made a clear-cut decision to let Jesus Christ reign over His life. If Jesus Christ is truly your Lord, He must control your life. The Flesh has to die.

Read Romans 8:6-8. This tells of 4 negative statements about a Christian who has not yielded their life to Christ. Write them below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What allows us to make Christ King and obey Him? Read Romans 8:9.

This tells us that we have the Spirit of God dwelling in us. The word "dwelling" means "reside permanently". When the Holy Spirit dwells in us, we are not controlled by the sinful nature but by the Spirit of God. But we must still make the choice to obey what the Spirit says. Making Christ King happens on a moment by moment, decision by decision basis.

DAY 5

MAKING JESUS CHRIST KING

Vs. for the day: Ephesians 4:22-24

Passage for the day: Ephesians 4:22-32

Ephesians 4:22-24 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

How do you win victoriously over the Flesh? Read Ephesians 4:22-32.

What are the steps described in the following verses?

Vs. 22 _____

Vs. 23 _____

Vs. 24 _____

These verses talk about replacing the Flesh with the New Nature. We replace the old thoughts and behaviors with new attitudes that reflect the new creation that we truly are in Christ.

Verses 25 –32 state examples of behaviors we must “trade-in” to become new. What are they?

Vs. 25 _____

Vs. 26 _____

Vs. 28 _____

Vs. 29 _____

Vs. 31 _____

Verse 32 is a summary of how the New Nature will act: kind, compassionate, forgiving...Christ-like.

You must forsake your Flesh for the New Nature. But the secret is in allowing God to live out His life from within you. He is naturally kind, compassionate and forgiving, and you will be too if you yield to his leading. If there is any area over which Christ does not reign as Lord, ask God to take control over it, and He will do it for you.

Containers for Christ:
What Difference Does It Make to Have Christ Living In Us?

Body

1.

2.

3.

Soul

1.

2.

Spirit

Read Romans 7:14 – 8:10.

In Romans 7:14 – 8:1, what is Paul describing?

Can you relate? Give an example.

In Romans 8:5 – 8:10, describe the difference between the mind that is controlled by the flesh and the mind that is controlled by the Spirit.

Read 2 Cor 4:6-11.

What does “earthen vessels” or “jars of clay” represent? Why?

What is supposed to be revealed in our body?

Read Col. 1:27.

What is the hope of glory?

Read John 14:16,17.

What does Jesus say will happen after he goes away?

So what is the main difference between you today and you the day before you were saved?

And how do we allow the Holy Spirit to make a difference in our everyday lives (our external actions)?

Read Colossians 3:16.

What will the Word of God do for you? Read Romans 12:2.

WEEK 6 - DAY 1

BECOMING WHOLE

GOD WANTS YOU TO BE WHOLE

Vs. For the day: Matt. 1:21

Passage for the Day: Matt. 1:18–25

Matt. 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

God wants you to be a whole, unbroken person. Today we are going to focus on becoming whole. We are going to use the greatest example God could have ever given us, and that example is Jesus Christ. He is the only one who lived blameless before God and man, and He is the only person that can truly say that He was without sin.

As Christians, we sometimes mistakenly tend to focus our lives on the people around us. However, we need to turn from this worldly focus on each other and begin to focus on the only person who deserves to be imitated. That was the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Savior.

Read Matthew 1:21

What does the word "saved" mean?

The word "saved" actually means "to be made whole".

Even though you're now a Christian do you ever feel like you're still missing something in your life?

You may not feel whole. But God wants you to realize that there is hope for becoming whole. God loved us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to make us complete.

Read Luke 4:18,19.

What are the 6 things Jesus came to do?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____

Jesus came to do these things in **your life**. No matter what you have gone through, Jesus wants to heal you and fill the emptiness within you. The Scripture plainly tells us that He comes to set us at liberty so that we might be free from any bondage and so that we can be made whole. Remember to keep your eyes on Jesus. We should let him be the example that we try to become more like.

Today end your lesson with a prayer of thanks to the Lord Jesus, and ask Him to help you to overcome any kind of bondage that might be holding you back from being whole.

GOD'S SPIRIT MAKES US WHOLE

DAY 2

Vs. for the day: 2 Timothy 1:7

Passage for the day: John 14: 15 - 31

2 Tim. 1: 7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

We did not receive a spirit of _____. Instead, we received a spirit that had the power to make us whole from “the inside out”.

What are the characteristics of this spirit that lives within us?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

We need to recognize the power, love and discipline that God has implanted within us which will enable us to fulfill every good work He has planned for us.

Read John 14:15-31. What does the Scripture say that the Father will send?

Verse 17 calls him the “Spirit of truth.” How did Jesus say the disciples would know the Spirit in this verse?

God’s plan always included sending the Holy Spirit down to make us new, to make us whole and complete. Part of the reason why Jesus left the earth was so that the Holy Spirit would come to live in us.

Thank Jesus today for the Holy Spirit within you. When you feel the “tug-of-war” going on inside yourself, listen for the voice of the Spirit. He will always lead you in the right way – the way that will make you more like Jesus.

FORGIVING YOURSELF

DAY 3

Vs. for the day: Revelation 12:10

Passage for the day: Revelation 12:10-12

Revelation 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.

- **Although you can't change your past, you *can* recover.**

You can be completely forgiven and healed by God, but your memory won't be quite as forgiving.

Read Rev.12: 10

The _____ of the brethren will make sure you're reminded of every failure. That is why it is of the utmost importance that you remember who you are *right now* because of what ***Christ has done for you and in you.***

Something important to remember is that God will not remind you of your past once you have confessed it and you have been forgiven. He separates your sin from you as far as the east is from the west. The only person who will remind you of your failures is Satan, so you don't have to listen to his accusations.

Read Romans 8:33. This scripture says that no one has any right to bring a charge against you except God the Father. And if God the Father has forgiven you, then He can't possibly condemn you. Your past is in the **past**, and you have every right to forget it, just as the Father has.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17

Remember: you are a _____. Living in the past is evidence that you have not forgiven yourself.

Finally, Read Romans 8:1.

If you are in Christ Jesus, you are free from the past; there is no longer any _____. Although all of us continue to fall from time to time, as "righteous" people, we always get back up again. (Read Proverbs 24:16)

- It doesn't matter what you used to be.

It doesn't matter what you are the day you give your life to Christ.

What really matters is what Christ is doing in and through you.

Remember, God is not finished with you yet. Today, remind yourself that you are a new creation, with a forgiven past and a clear future. Reach for all that God has for you, forgetting what is behind.

FORGIVING THOSE WHO HAVE HARMED YOU

DAY 4

Vs. for the day: Luke 23:34

Passage for the day: Matthew 6:14,15

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Romans 8:29 says that we are predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus. Our goal is to continually be more and more like JESUS.

Read Luke 23:34

What did Jesus say in response to those who tortured, betrayed and crucified Him?

Jesus knows what it's like to be hurt and betrayed; yet he was able to forgive those who caused him so much pain. Jesus calls us to have this same forgiveness for *those who have harmed us*.

Read Matthew 6:14,15

If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will _____
_____. But if you _____
men their trespasses, neither will your Father _____
_____.

Forgiving others is not an option; it is a necessity. This scripture, along with others in the Bible, makes it clear that **unless you forgive others, God will not forgive you** for the sins **you** commit.

Ways you can forgive others:

1. Pray for them and forgive them.
 2. Possibly you can write to them.
 3. Go to them and express your forgiveness personally.
 4. Give them a call.
 5. What are other ways you can forgive those who have hurt you?
- Forgiveness is not just what you do for others; it's a vital thing you do for yourself. Abraham Lincoln was known to hold short accounts. He once was asked, "Why do you try to make friends out of your enemies?" Lincoln replied, "Am I not destroying my enemies when I make them my friends?"
 - Read Ephesians 4:31,32. Let all _____ and _____ and _____ and _____ be put away from you, with all _____, and be _____ to one another, _____, _____ one another, as God in Christ _____ you.

Forgiving others is a part of becoming whole. Ask God to help you forgive those who have hurt you. You will find forgiving others to be an incredible release for you.

ACTING UPON GOD’S WORD – NOT YOUR FEELINGS

DAY 5

Vs. for the day: James 1:22,23

Passage for the day: Matthew 7:24-27

James 1:22,23 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.
Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror

Read Matthew 7:24-27

Everyone who hears Jesus’ words and does them will be like a _____
_____ who built his house upon the _____. When the storms
came, the house stood firm. But everyone who hears Jesus’ words and does not do them
will be like a _____ who build his house upon
the _____. When the storms came, the house _____.

Many people build their lives on foundations of their own choosing. But only the
foundation of God’s Word will allow us to build a life that can stand the storms of life.

Reading God’s Word isn’t enough, though. Read James 1:22,23

Be a _____ of the word, and not a _____ only.

God demands that we **act** upon His Word. There is a parable about two sons. Their
father asks them to go out into the field and work. One son says he will go and work, but
never does. The other son says he won’t work, but actually goes into the field as his
father had asked. Jesus asked which son acted righteously. The answer was the one who
actually obeyed the father’s request, not the one who *said* he would do it. The important
thing is to obey the Father’s requests of us through His Word.

Read Phil. 3:13,14

What is the one thing that Paul says he has done?

Forgetting what lies _____ and straining toward what lies
_____, he presses on toward the goal for the _____ of the
upward call of God in _____.

We ***must not live in the past***, but must press on toward the future, which Jesus has in
store for us. Jeremiah 29:11 says, “For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord,
plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

**Leave the past behind and press on toward the future and the hope which Christ
Jesus has for you.**

BECOMING WHOLE (PERFECT, MATURE & COMPLETE)

James 1:2-4: Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

PERFECT

5046. teleios, tel'-i-os;

The image of fully completed growth as contrary with infancy and childhood, being set over against the babes in Christ. God's perfection is absolute; man's is relative reaching the goal set for him by God with each individual different according to one's God-given ability. The "teleios" is one who has attained his moral end, the goal for which he was intended, namely, to be a man obedient in Christ. It may be true, though, that having reached this attainment, other and higher ends will open up before him to have Christ formed in him more and more.

Perfection is not a static state. It in part indicates the ultimate goal in heaven as contrary with something that can have only partial fulfillment on earth. In 1 Jn 4:18, perfect love means the love that is not wanting, the love which accomplishes its goal. In James 1:17, a perfect gift means that which meets the need of a person. That you may be perfect means that you may not be morally lacking. Perfect is not to be confused with sinless (anamartetos).

In Matthew 5:48, who is perfect?

Who does Jesus say should be perfect?

In Matthew 19:21, what does Jesus tell someone to do to be perfect? Why do you think he says this?

In 2 Corinthians 12:9, God says that His _____ is made perfect in Paul's weakness. What does this mean?

Read Philippians 3:12. Paul says he has not yet been made perfect; so what does he do?

In Colossians 1:28, who is supposed to become perfect? What does "perfect in Christ" mean?

In Hebrews 2:10, who was made perfect? How was he made perfect?

In Hebrews 10:14, what did Jesus do to those who are being made holy? How did He do it?

MATURE

In Ephesians 4:13, mature means attaining what?

In Hebrews 5:14, what is one of the characteristics of a mature Christian?

.....

Luke 8:14 – The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.

5052. telesphoreo, to be a bearer to completion (maturity); i.e. to ripen fruit (fig.):--bring fruit to perfection, as the seed does the fruit.

.....

COMPLETE

3648. holokleros, hol-ok'-lay-ros; complete in every part, i.e. perfectly sound (in body): --entire, whole

You can have complete _____ (Jn. 15:11), _____ (Acts 3:16),

_____ (James 2:22) and _____ (1 Jn. 2:5, 4:12, 4:17).

Read James 1:2-4. Exactly what is it that brings perfection and maturity to the Believer?

INTEGRITY

WEEK 7 - DAY 1

Vs. for the day: Colossians 2:10

Passage for the day: Colossians 2:9-10

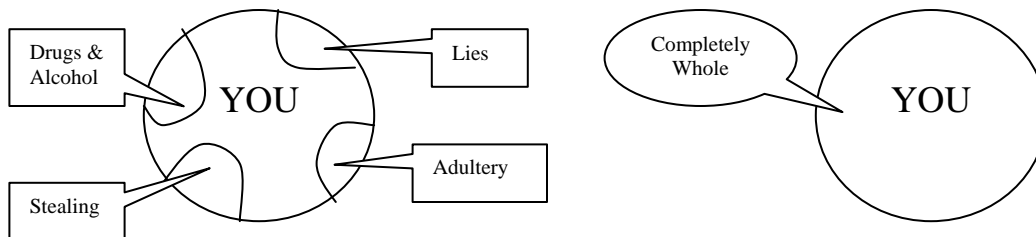
Colossians 2:10 And you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

God desires us to be whole and complete, and our “completeness” comes from being “in Christ.” Today’s lesson is going to show us how God purposes for us to have **integrity**, and why integrity is so important to the Body of Christ. Many people speak about integrity, but very few people know its true meaning.

What is the definition of integrity?

The state or quality of **being complete**, undivided, or unbroken; entirety, unimpaired state; soundness, purity.

Take, for example, an *integral number*. An integral number is a **WHOLE** number, as opposed to a fraction. The same root that is used in the word “integral” is used in the word “integrity”. So integrity is the state of being “whole”.



Making bad choices or decisions causes cracks or chips that split apart your wholeness as a person. When you deliberately do what you know is wrong, you spoil your integrity, and your wholeness.

Proverbs 10:9 says “The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out.” The Hebrew word used for “integrity” comes from the word meaning “completeness”, and can be translated “uprightness”. When you belong **completely** to God, you are upright, and will act with integrity.

Ask God to reveal to you what parts of your life are not in line with His Word and His ways, causing you to lack integrity, or wholeness. Ask Him to help you give your life completely to Him, so that you may be the reflection of Jesus in everything that you say and do.

Remember, He desires your wholeness and integrity even more than you do, and by His grace, He will enable you to be complete.

INTEGRITY

DAY 2

Vs. for the day: Genesis 37:28

Passage for the day: Genesis 37:1-36

Genesis 37:28 So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt.

In Genesis 37, we find the story of Joseph, son of Jacob. He had dreams where the Lord had revealed to him that his brothers, and many others, would bow down to him. His brothers already knew Joseph was his father's favorite child, because Jacob had given Joseph a beautiful, multi-colored coat. So when one of them suggested getting rid of Joseph, most of the other brothers agreed, and Joseph was sold into slavery.

Now Joseph did not necessarily do anything to deserve being punished in this way by his brothers, but it happened anyway.

What kind of attitude would you expect Joseph to have?

What kind of attitude do you think you would have if you were done severely wrong without a cause?

Is integrity basically an attitude, a commitment, or an action?

Integrity actually begins with a complete commitment to the Lord, which is reflected in a person's attitude and actions.

Read Psalm 37:5.

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this:

He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

What does this scripture command you to do?

When you do it, what will God do for you?

When you commit yourself completely to the Lord, He will make you upright and whole. Pray today that God will help you commit yourself completely to Him, and that you will walk in integrity.

INTEGRITY

DAY 3

Vs. for the day: Genesis 39:10

Passage for the day: Genesis 39:1-23

Genesis 39:10 And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

1. Now read Gen. 39, here we see the story of Joseph where he had been sold by his brothers who hated him. Now Joseph finds himself a slave in Potiphar's house.

What does Potiphar observe about Joseph (vv.3-6)?

2. Why does Joseph refuse the request of Potiphar's wife (vv.8-9)? What does he call her suggestion (vv. 9)?
-

3. Instead of calling our "indiscretions" evil, wicked, and against God, what are some of the excuses we sometimes use for our actions?
-

4. How does the woman's persistence make matters more difficult (vv.10-12)?
-

5. How much do you think Potiphar's wife understood about Joseph's reasons for refusing her (vv.13-19)?
-

6. How would you compare her loyalties with Joseph's?
-

Proverbs 20:6 says "Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?" Joseph proved his love for the Lord by remaining faithful to God. His loyalty and commitment to be true to the Lord kept his integrity intact.

Today, pray that the Lord will increase your faithfulness to Him, and will make you aware of things that vie for your loyalty. Make a commitment to honor the Lord in everything you do and say.

INTEGRITY

DAY 4

Vs. for the day: Genesis 39:19,20

Passage for the day: Genesis 39:19-23

Genesis 39:19,20 – When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, “This is how your slave treated me,” he burned with anger. Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined.

Even though Joseph had not done anything wrong, Joseph was punished for a crime he did not commit. Normally, people who have been “done wrong” will “do unto others as others have done unto them.” However, Joseph refused to compromise his integrity (complete commitment to the Lord), and the Lord protected him and blessed him for his loyalty to God.

Let’s continue to review Genesis 39:19-23.

1. Why does Potiphar believe his wife instead of Joseph (vv.19-20)?

2. What would have happened if Joseph had not had any integrity and favor in Potiphar’s eyes?

3. Who really came out the winner in this scripture? Why?

4. It has been said that moral failure in leaders comes with *power* - which sometimes causes them to think “the rules don’t apply to me”. What would have happened if Joseph had been conscious of his power rather than his trust?

5. Have you ever been tempted to think, “the rules don’t apply to me”? What was the circumstance?

We need to be faithful stewards when God entrusts us with anything. Even when circumstances seem to turn against us, we must remain loyal to the One we know is still in charge. Our commitment to Christ must remain unmovable and unshakable, even when people wrong us.

Pray that God will help you to remain faithful with whatever He entrusts you, and that you always act in accordance with His will.

INTEGRITY

DAY 5

Vs. for the day: Ephesians 6:13

Passage for the day: Ephesians 6:10-18

Ephesians 6:13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Your completeness, or integrity, must be guarded at all costs. When Paul says that we must put on the full armor of God, he is reminding us that we must protect ourselves from the schemes of the devil, in whatever form they may come. Joseph protected himself with the word of God, hiding it in his heart that he might not sin against God. His inner commitment to be faithful to the Lord kept his integrity intact, and allowed him to overcome and be victorious.

If Joseph had been led by his feelings and emotions, and by Potiphar's wife what would have happened?

Joseph had a great deal of self-respect. How is self-respect related to integrity? People with low self-esteem or lack of self-respect do not have a sense of wholeness, and therefore do not think their actions are affecting their ability to become whole. In other words, they do not think they are, or will ever be whole, so they say to themselves, "What difference does it make what I do?"

1. What do you lose when you give into temptation or you are careless about your integrity?

2. What is currently trying to grab you and tempt you to compromise your integrity?

3. In what ways can we follow Joseph's example and maintain our integrity?

Proverbs 4:23 says "above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." Integrity is a main ingredient for becoming whole. Our lives depend on our integrity. What we have or what we do is nothing without the integrity of which we are. Our lives should be centered on Integrity. We should always keep our eyes on Jesus. Remember even if no one else sees what we do. God always does.

WEEK 8 - DAY 1

UNDERSTANDING WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU

Verse For The Day: Colossians 1:21,22

Passage For The Day: Colossians 1:13-23

Colossians 1:21,22 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation

Now that you have begun your walk as a Christian, you realize that things are already changing in your life. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.

What does this Scripture say has happened?

Why has all of this happened?

What makes the difference?

Yes, Christ makes the difference.

Read Colossians 1:21-22. Before you received Jesus into your life, what does the Scripture say your attitude was to God? _____

How did God view our deeds and thoughts before our conversion?

Even though your thoughts and life in your eyes may not have been that bad, **sin is sin to God**. And the Scripture says that your relationship was hostile to God. This should be all the more reason to be thankful that he still loved you, just as you were. He never gave up on you.

Now some of those old ways that you once enjoyed and considered “fun” don’t feel quite as good anymore. Why? _____

What words or phrases describe how God is changing you?

“God is making me _____, _____
and _____.”

God has begun to separate you from your evil and old ways. He is creating a new person who will desire holy living. Even though we mess up regularly, he is always faithful to forgive us if we confess our sins (1 John 1:9).

Know that Christ now lives in you. You can’t change yourself, but God does it for you – if you are a willing vessel. Psalm 51:12 says “Grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.” Today, ask God to help you to be more submissive to His Spirit and to His will for you.

DAY 2

GOD'S PRINCIPLE TO LIVE BY

Verse For The Day: 1 Corinthians 10:31

Passage For The Day: Romans 14:7-8

1 Corinthians 10:31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

As Christians, living by faith is not a long list of do's and don'ts you should live by. But the Bible **does** give us a simple principle to go by in making all of our choices.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Romans 14:7-8

What is the principle to live by in both of these Scriptures?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:19,20.

What does it say about who you are? _____

To whom you are responsible? _____

What you are to do? _____

If at all times we can keep in mind God's plan for us and for our lives, it will help us make decisions that will honor God and glorify Him. Our problems begin when we focus on what we *think* we want or what we *think* is best for us, instead of trusting that God the Father loves us and actually *knows* what is best for us.

Life is about choices. Your first spiritual choice was whether or not to receive Jesus. But since that decision was made, your life has been (and will be) filled with choices that have the ability to bring glory and honor to God.

Today, resolve to make every decision count, remembering that our goal in every choice we make is to honor God and glorify Jesus.

DAY 3

BEING IN THE BODY

Verse For The Day: 1 Corinthians 12:27

Passage For The Day: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

As a new Christian, Satan tries to rob us of our victory. He tries to keep us from growing spiritually, serving God, ministering and being an effective witness. He also wants to rob us of our fellowship with God the Father. The foundation to overcome this attack of Satan is the presence and power of Jesus Christ, who now dwells in us personally, and in the Body of Christ as a whole.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

What is the Body? _____

Now, let's read Colossians 1:18

Who is the Head of the Body? _____

Read Ephesians 1:22

When we are all born-again, the Bible says we are called "babes in Christ." (1 Corinthians 3:1).

What does a baby need to have (other than food) in order to survive?

Read Romans 12:4-5

What does the Word say here?

The Church should have a working relationship with one another.

1. The Bible says we should assemble together. (Hebrews 10:25)
2. We should have compassion for one another. (Colossians 3:12-17)
3. We should bear one another's burdens. (Galatians 6:1-3)

When we try to make it on our own, or try to be "Lone Rangers", we can be defeated by the enemy. If you are going to live victoriously in Christ, the church must be a vital part of your spiritual growth. You'll find that God uses each person to make up the Body (Church) for everyone's benefit.

So after your conversion, God says you are to be baptized, confess him publicly and become a part of the Body (Acts 2:41-47). Make a commitment to attend as many weekly services as possible, so you can be encouraged by others, and even be an encouragement to someone else.

DAY 4

BEING IN THE BODY

Verse For The Day: 1 Corinthians 12:18

Passage For The Day: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

1 Corinthians 12:18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:14-27

In our study of the Body, review how each member of the body needs one another to function. Also, the Church (Body) must have every member to function.

Your growth as a Christian directly affects and is affected by others in the Body of Christ. When one suffers, all hurt. When one rejoices, all are happy. The Bible says we are to be in one mind and one accord.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:18. What does God decide?

Sometimes people feel like they are not important, and that their service is not needed, but what does 1 Corinthians 12:21-25 say about everyone's service?

Read Acts 4:32-35. What is another thing that members of the Body do?

Christians are even closer-knit than a family – we are a Body, and we need each other. Christ is our head, and we are his arms and feet and hands to reach out to others, and to take care of each other.

Thank God today that He has placed you in the Body of Christ, with a specific purpose in mind, and that you play an important role in His plan for the Kingdom of God.

DAY 5

BEING IN THE BODY

Verse For The Day: Ephesians 2:22

Passage For The Day: 1 Peter 2:4-10

Ephesians 2:22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Read 1 Peter 2:4-10

What word does this scripture use repeatedly to describe Jesus? _____

Read Ephesians 2:19-22

Who are we joined together with? _____

What are we becoming? _____

In these Scriptures, the Word speaks of stones, and how Jesus is our Cornerstone. We're described as "living stones", being constructed into a "spiritual house", a "holy temple." A building is made up of many parts, none any less important than the others. And that is how we must consider every person in the Church – none any less important than the others.

Stones have to be carved in order to fit into a building. Sometimes God has to "chisel" off some rough edges, or "knock off" some things in our lives that will hinder us or hinder the Body as a whole. He uses our circumstances and situations, and especially the people around us, to make us "fit" closely together in the church. We must realize that God uses everything that happens to us to make us more like Jesus Christ, the Chief Cornerstone.

Pray today that God will reveal how you fit into the body, and pray for an opportunity to encourage someone else to fulfill their place in the body as well.

THE BODY

What does a body do?

Then what would the Body of Christ (or the church) do?

Let's look at the Body of Christ. Let's read 1 Cor. 12:4-7

What is the purpose of these different gifts, service and working?

Someone read verses 8-11

Read vs. 11 and 12.

What do these verses say to us in today's society?

Read the remainder of the chapter.

Read 1 Cor. 3:4-9

WEEK 9 - DAY 1

GIFTS AND TALENTS IN THE BODY

Verse For The Day: Romans 12:6

Passage For The Day: Romans 12:6-8

Romans 12:6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.

God has given everyone **gifts and talents**. What is the difference?

A **Spiritual Gift** is a gift given to you by God. The Holy Spirit enables you to use this gift to edify the Body and to help the Body function.

A **Talent** is something God gave you upon your natural birth which you later discover and develop.

Gifts and talents are totally different. Only Christians have received spiritual gifts, and those gifts can only be used to the glory of God. You can use your talent to express a variety of spiritual gifts, or you have the choice to use it for your own purposes or glory. (For example, a musical talent)

Read Romans 12:6-8

What are we do to with the gifts we are given? _____

Read Ephesians 4:11-13

God gifted us to do different things in the body, but all gifts have the same purpose.

What is that purpose? _____

Read Romans 11:29.

The good news here is that you are never too old or too late to use the gifts that God has given you, or to fulfill the call that God has for your life. The gifts and the call are _____.

Today, ask God to begin showing you the gifts He has given to you that will enable you to fulfill your call in His kingdom. Ask Him to give you wisdom to use the gifts wisely, and to be led by the Holy Spirit in everything you do.

DAY 2

GIFTS AND TALENTS IN THE BODY

Verse For The Day: 1 Corinthians 12:1

Passage For The Day: 1 Corinthians 12:

1 Corinthians 12:1 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-12

All gifts come from the same source, God’s Holy Spirit. That is why they are called “spiritual” gifts. God uses them all for His purposes, but the manifestation of the Spirit (*meaning the appearance of the spiritual gift*) is given for the _____
_____. (v. 7)

Once again, see how the gifts are given to be used **IN THE BODY**, for everyone’s good.

Let’s create a quick overview of the spiritual gifts listed in this passage:

Vs. 8: - _____
- _____

Vs. 9: - _____
- _____

Vs. 10: - _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

You will learn more about the meaning of these different gifts at another time. The important thing, however, is that you use the gifts that God gives you for the benefit of the body. And 1 Corinthians 12:31 says that, although we should **eagerly desire the greater gifts**, there is something of greater excellence than the gifts. That is **love**.

DAY 3

GOD’S DEFINITION OF LOVE

Verse For The Day: John 3:16

Passage For The Day: Luke 6:31-35

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

The world has created some of its own definitions of love. What are some that you can think of that are portrayed in the media?

God has His own definition of love, and it is found in John 3:16. Let’s take a close look at it:

1) What did God do? _____

2) How did He do it? _____

3) Who did He do it for? _____

4) Why did He do it? So they _____

God’s definition of love means **giving of yourself for the benefit of someone else**. How did God express His love? By giving of Himself, giving us His Son. Who did He do it for? For us, for someone other than Himself. Why did He do it? So we would not die, but have eternal life – He did it for our benefit. And this is the example we are to follow.

The opposite of love is actually not hatred, but selfishness – taking something from others for the benefit of ourselves.

Read Philippians 2: 2:1-5

What should you look to? _____

In a world where looking out for “Number One” is the motto, looking to the interests of others seems foreign to us. But that is the kind of love God calls us to. Ask God to show you how you can express **His** selfless love to someone around you today.

DAY 4

THE BODY'S LAW OF LOVE

Verse For The Day: Matthew 22:40

Passage For The Day: Matthew 22:36-40

Matthew 22:40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

There are laws of physics, laws of nature, and there is the law of the Body of Christ. And that law is love. Everyone seeking “righteousness”, or right standing with God, will be interested to know that every one of the commandments is fulfilled when we love others as Christ has loved us.

Read Matthew 22:36-40

What are the two (2) greatest commandments?

1) _____

2) _____

What two (2) things hang on these commandments?

_____ and _____

Everything God has ever written and commanded is fulfilled when we truly love Him and love others – ***according to His definition of love.*** Look at the Ten Commandments.

Read Deuteronomy 5:7, 8, 11, 12, 16-21

The first four (4) commandments are examples of how we are to express our love for God. The second six (6) commandments are examples of how we are to express our love for our neighbor.

Therefore, whenever we question whether or not our actions are righteous, we need to ask ourselves if we are acting in love. Are we “giving of ourselves for the benefit of another”, or are we getting something from someone else for our own benefit?

Today, ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to love God the Father and love the people around you. Ask Him also to show you any areas where you have been acting selfishly, but have told yourself that you have been doing something for someone else’s benefit. Be prepared to change your actions according to what the Spirit reveals.

DAY 5

FUNCTIONING IN LOVE (CHARITY)

Verse For The Day: 1 Corinthians 13:13

Passage For The Day: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

1 Corinthians 13:13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Now, let's get back to how love and gifts are connected.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

One of the most beautiful and most famous chapters of the Bible is found in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. In this chapter, you will read about the greatest of all realities, even greater than God's spiritual gifts.

What is this reality? _____

What is "charity"? _____

The Body of Christ's existence depends upon **love**. God called you out of your sin through love. (John 3:16)

What never fails? _____

List the many qualities of love:

Which one of these listed do you desire to have most in your life?

The Bible says that God is love, and he desires you to have love in your life. Paul lists 5 things beside love. Put an X beside the ones that **will not last**.

- Inspired Prophecy
- Tongues
- Knowledge
- Faith
- Hope

***Love is the greatest thing in the world.
That's why God wants His love to flow through us to others.***

Pray that God will flow through you today as you have the opportunity to love on others around you.

THE LAW OF LOVE

When people think about Christianity, they think about laws, about do's and don'ts. But in the Body of Christ, there is only one law, and that is the Law of Love.

Let's read the following scriptures:

Romans 13:8, Romans 13:10, Galatians 5:14, James 2:8

What do these scriptures say about the relationship between law and love?

So, what is love?

Read John 3:16. How is this the example of biblical love?

For God so loved the world that He **GAVE** –
His only begotten Son –
That whosoever believes on Him –
Should not perish but have everlasting life –

AGAPE:

Read Matthew 22:36-40.

What are the two (2) greatest commandments?

- 1.
- 2.

When Jesus said that all the law and the prophets hung on these two commandments, what did He mean?

Deuteronomy 5:7,8,11,12,16-21 (The 10 Commandments):

1. Commandments regarding love for God:
2. Commandments regarding love for others:

Let's look at 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.

What is Paul saying to the Corinthian church?

Let's quickly read Galatians 5:22,23.

Compare this listing of the fruit of the Spirit with the characteristics of love? What do we find?

1 Corinthians 13	Galatians 5

Look at the characteristics of love. Ask yourself, do you have those characteristics in your life?

Which ones do you have?

Which ones are lacking in your life?

WEEK 10 - DAY 1

QUIET TIME

Vs. for the day: Joshua 1:8

Passage for the day: Psalm 119:97-105

Joshua 1:8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

What is a “Quiet Time”?

A “quiet time” is a time where you establish a regular time to nourish yourself spiritually, a time to be alone with Christ. This will enable you to begin your personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Begin an honest evaluation of yourself:

- My quiet time is a daily practice in my life and I feel good about it just as it is.
- My quiet time is a daily practice, but it really doesn't seem to make a difference.
- My quiet time is irregular and not meaningful.
- I don't have a quiet time, but feel I need practice one.

If you checked any of the last three, here's how to establish or strengthen your quiet time.

1. **Find a specific time and place for your quiet time.** Think of it as having an appointment with Jesus. He will be there waiting for you.
2. **Be consistent.** Be serious about this. Consistency is the key to a meaningful quiet time.
3. **Have your Bible, notepad and pencil.** Always be ready for God to talk to you as you begin. Let him lead you in his Word and be prepared to write down what's on your mind as he speaks.
4. **Always begin your time with prayer.** This is just like calling a loved one on the phone. Open up your heart to Jesus. Tell him how much you love him. Offer yourself to him daily so he can direct your day and your life in order to teach you. Share every thought with him.
5. **Take time to let him speak to you.** Will God speak to you verbally? No, not always. Bible reading is one of the main ways God communicates with you. Read his words slowly and meditate on them.
6. **Try to end your quiet time with a definite commitment for the day.** This can help you extend your faith. For example, you can tell God how much you love him, and trust him to lead you each day. Or you can commit to share the Gospel with someone today. Respond with a commitment to do whatever God puts on your heart that day.

DAY 2

LEARNING HOW TO PRAY

Vs. for the day: 1 John 1:9

Passage for the day: Matthew 6:9-13

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

First of all, **you have to believe that God hears your prayers. (1 John 1:9).**

Don't be afraid to speak to God and tell him what's on your mind. Why? Because he already knows what's on your mind. Prayer is like talking to your best friend, because God is your Father, Best Friend, and Brother. God desires you to talk to him.

God gave us a model prayer (Matthew 6:9-13).

How should we address God when we pray? _____

We should talk to God like he is the most perfect father in the world, because He is.

Does God expect you to use fancy words or sound really "spiritual"?

God wants you to talk ("pray") to him in the way you talk to a father or best friend, or someone you love – **talk to him from the heart.**

Jesus gave us this prayer as an example of how to pray. He wants us to pray our own prayers in the same manner that we normally talk to other people. Using The Lord's Prayer (and the below explanations) as an example, write your own prayer to God:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,	Acknowledge and address God as your Father
Hallowed be thy name	Praise Him for what He has done for you, and for His wonderful characteristics
your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.	Tell Him that you are willing to submit yourself to His will for your life
Give us today our daily bread.	Ask Him to provide for your needs, according to His wisdom and riches
Forgive us our debts	Ask Him to forgive you for your sins and shortcomings
As we also have forgiven our debtors.	Ask Him to help you forgive those who have harmed you or those you love.
And lead us not into temptation,	Ask Him to show you the correct path to take today, so you will not fall into temptation
But deliver us from the evil one.	Ask for His protection against the evil powers of Satan, and for the wisdom to know how to fight against him.

DAY 3

USING GOD’S WORD AS A SOURCE OF GROWTH

Vs. for the day: 2 Timothy 3:16

Passage for the day: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

Before you begin your Scripture reading, talk to God about what you are about to read. Ask Him not only for understanding, but also to show you how to apply the truths you learn to your life.

After reading a Scripture passage, meditate on His Word. What is meditation? It is to think about what you have read so you can better understand it.

These are helpful questions to ask yourself every time you read the Bible. Today, read 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and answer the following questions.

A. Is there a truth in this passage that should influence:

1. What I believe?

2. How I feel?

3. The way I behave?

B. Can I find an example here to follow or avoid?

C. Is there a command from God to obey?

D. Is there a promise from God to claim? What is it?

End your quiet time with a commitment for today.

Write at least 1 way to take your commitment and put it to practical use in your life.

You can use this sheet as a guideline for Bible study every time you read a passage of Scripture.

DAY 4

KNOWING GOD'S WORD

Verse For The Day: John 1:1

Passage For The Day: John 1:1-14

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

Here the Scripture is speaking of the Word of God, and that Jesus is the Word of God. John writes that Jesus, the powerful Son of God, came in human flesh, gave his life on the cross and then returned to the Father. John wanted his readers to know that if we believe on Jesus, we can receive eternal life.

The Scripture speaks that through the Word (Jesus) all things were made, and without Him nothing could be made. It also says that He is life and light, and that life and understanding comes only through Him.

It also says that the world could not recognize him. Why? Because if we're lost in sin, we can't see the truth. He is the only truth and understanding. He can shine light on our lives in times of darkness. But we have to be willing vessels, ready to receive His word and let it sink down deep into our spirits.

Understand that Jesus Christ is the "express image of God", exactly what God would be like if He was standing next to you in human form. The Bible is also the "express image" or exact representation of God's thoughts, personality, characteristics and actions – only in written form. In order to really know God in a personal way, you need to learn about Him through His written Word (the Bible), and through your daily experience with His Holy Spirit.

As you spend time reading the Bible today and praying, ask God to reveal Himself to you in a new and personal way. Be prepared for God to answer that prayer, and throughout the day, look for Him to do something special in your life.

DAY 5

MEMORIZING GOD'S WORD

Verse For The Day: Psa 119: 11

Passage For The Day: Psa. 119: 11-16

Psalm 119:11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

As new Christians, you should find yourself a Study Bible that you can understand. It doesn't matter if it is the NIV (New International Version), the NKJV (New King James Version), the Spirit-Filled Bible, etc. **The important thing is that you need to be able to understand what you read.**

Read Psalms 119:11-16

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me your decrees.

With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth.

I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.

I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.

I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.

Where did the writer of the Psalm say he kept the Word of God?

Jesus said in Matthew 4:4 – It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Is it important to memorize Scripture?

It is no harder than memorizing a phone number, a song on the radio, a zip code or address, names of people, spelling or street names. You have to make it a habit.

Try beginning with small scriptures and advance yourself to larger scriptures with discipline and practice. Use memory cards (index cards).

Learn your verses as if your spiritual growth depends on it – because it does! Even Jesus needed and used memorized Scripture during his tempting by Satan in the wilderness. Start by choosing one weekly “Verse of the Day” to memorize, using the memory card method. Be prepared to share your verse during class each Sunday.

QUIET TIME

What is the purpose of a quiet time?

What can a quiet time be composed of?

What is prayer?

Is there a set way to pray?

Why do we use the Bible during quiet time?

What are we to do with the scriptures we read?

Meditate = siyach

Read the following verses. Write down what we are to MEDITATE on:

Joshua 1:8; Ps 48:9; Ps 77:12, Ps 119:15-18, 23, 24, 27, 28, 98, 99, 148; Ps 143:5

1. Joshua 1:8:

2. Psalm 48:9:

3. Psalm 77:12

4. Psalm 119:15 – 18

5. Psalm 119:23, 24

6. Psalm 119:27, 28

7. Psalm 119:98

8. Psalm 119:99

9. Psalm 119:148

10. Psalm 143:5

Read Psalm 145. Find at least one (1) verse that describes an aspect or action of God that you have seen in action in your own life. Write down corresponding praises that you could write to God, being specific about what He has done and why you are praising Him.

WEEK 11 - DAY 1

GOD’S WORD: INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

Verse For The Day: Exodus 10:1,2

Passage For The Day: Leviticus 26:12-17

Leviticus 26:12 And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

The Old Testament contains the history of God’s chosen people, God’s interaction with them, and God’s purpose and plan for His creation. These 39 books were written by approximately 30 writers from different backgrounds and generations during the period prior to Christ’s birth.

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

5 Books of Moses

12 other Historical Books

The first **17** books are **Historical Books**, beginning with the **5 Books of Moses** (called the **Torah** in Hebrew; called the **Pentateuch** in Greek), and followed by **12** other historical works.

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon

5 Poetical Books

The next division of books are the **5 Poetical Books**.

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekial
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

5 Major Prophets

12 Minor Prophets

The last **17** books are **Prophetic Books**, beginning with the **5 Major Prophets** and ending with the **12 Minor Prophets**.

Though most of these 39 writers did not know one another, it is amazing to note that all of them carry the same theme throughout their stories: God’s love and faithfulness to man, even when man turns away from God. **Thank God for His faithfulness to you**, and that He has left you His Word, like love letters from a beloved, to remind you of His unfailing love for you.

DAY 2

IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Verse For The Day: Genesis 12:3

Passage For The Day: Genesis 12:1-3

Genesis 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

There are **six (6)** key people in the book of **Genesis** about whom you need to learn.

- 1) **Adam** – Father of the human race. God formed him from the dust of the earth and then breathed the breath of life into his nostrils to make him a living “soul”.
- 2) **Noah** – Through whom the world was spared from total annihilation by the flood and through whom the world was re-populated. He is famous for building an ark.
- 3) **Abraham** – The Patriarch (or “Father”) of the Israelites who believed and received the two-fold promise written in Genesis 12:1-3. What are the 2 promises written here?
A) _____
B) _____
- 4) **Isaac** – Abraham’s long awaited and promised son.
- 5) **Jacob / Israel** – Isaac’s son, Abraham’s grandson, whose name (and personality) was changed from “Jacob” (or “Deceiver”) to “Israel” (or “Prince with God”). He had 12 sons, who became the **12 Tribes** (or families) of **Israel**.
- 6) **Joseph** – Jacob’s beloved son, the wearer of the “coat of many colors”, who was sold into slavery by his brothers, but consequently became ruler over Egypt. He was therefore able to save his entire family (the nation of Israel) from famine by inviting them to live in Egypt. Eventually the Israelites were enslaved by the Egyptians.

Then there are **Eleven (11) “Leaders”** (or groups of Leaders) of **Israel**. They are:

- 1) **Moses** – The deliverer of Israel from Egyptian slavery.
- 2) **Joshua** – Moses’ successor during the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.
- 3) **The 12 Judges** – They ruled over a 400 year period where Israel’s spiritual state and faithfulness to God slowly but continually declined.
- 4) **Samuel** – Actually was a “Judge” **and** a prophet who, per Israel’s request, changed Israel from Tribal Government to a nation led by a king.
- 5) **Saul** – Israel’s first King who couldn’t handle the job. He later persecuted his future successor and tried to kill him.
- 6) **David** – Saul’s successor. He is known for his triumph over Goliath, the giant, with a sling and a stone, and is famous for writing many Psalms, for being a “man after God’s own heart”, and for his affair with Bathsheba.
- 7) **Solomon** – Israel’s third and final king over a “united” Israel. He had wisdom and riches beyond anyone else, but he married foreign wives and began worshipping their gods, and so the kingdom was divided after his reign.
- 8) **39 Kings of the Divided Kingdom** – Solomon’s son caused Israel to divide into 2 nations, Israel in the North (with 10 tribes) and Judah in the South (with 2 tribes).
- 9) **Zerubbabel** – The first of 3 leaders who led the people of Judah home after their 70 years of Babylonian captivity.
- 10) **Ezra** – The second leader to return with the exiled people in order to rebuild the city of Jerusalem.
- 11) **Nehemiah** – The third leader to return with the exiled people. His concern was rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem.

People from every walk of life were important to God, and He did great things through those who were willing to learn and do His will. You, too, are important to Him. Tell Him today that you desire to know His will and play a part in accomplishing His will for the world.

DAY 3

SIMPLE SUMMARY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

Verse For The Day: Genesis 1:1

Passage For The Day: Genesis 1:1-31

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The next three days will be spent looking at the content of the books of the Old Testament. This is a very short summary, but hopefully it will prove to be helpful.

Genesis – Reveals God’s sovereignty, unlimited power, and unfailing love for man as it chronicles the relationship between God and the people He created. Stories include Adam and Eve; Cain and Abel; Noah and the Flood; the Tower of Babel; and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph’s lives. Most of the history of the world occurs in the first 11 chapters of Genesis. It ends with the Israelites being invited by the Egyptians to live in Egypt.

Exodus – Means “exit” and describes the Israelites’ departure from Egypt (and deliverance from slavery) by the hand of God through His servant, Moses. It is the source for the Ten Commandments.

Leviticus – The Priests’ handbook for the Tabernacle set up during the exodus.

Numbers – Begins with a census that counts the people, describes the 40 years of wandering, and ends with another census.

Deuteronomy – The 2nd in a series – summarizes the wilderness wanderings and reteaches the Law to the new generation.

Joshua – Details the entrance and conquest of Canaan until the death of Joshua.

Judges – The 400 year period where Judges ruled over Israel. During this time, Israel slowly fell into a horrible cycle of sinning against the Lord, being enslaved, crying to God, Him saving them and granting them peace in their land, and then their falling into sin again.

Ruth – Biography of a widowed Moabitess who chose to become an Israelite, and eventually became an ancestor of King David as well as Jesus.

1 Samuel – The birth of Samuel and the reign of Israel’s first king, Saul. Also David’s anointing for kingship, his battle with Goliath, and his persecution by Saul. It ends with Saul’s death.

2 Samuel – The reign of David. Stories include his affair with Bathsheba, and also his son, Absalom’s, revolt against him.

1 Kings – The reign of Solomon, division of the Kingdom between the 10 tribes in the North (Israel) and the 2 tribes in the South (Judah), and the beginning of the 39 kings who reigned. Elijah was prophet at that time.

2 Kings – The reign of the remaining kings of the Divided Kingdom until Israel is scattered and Judah is carried captive to Babylon. Elisha becomes Elijah’s successor in this book. The chariot of fire that takes Elijah off to heaven is found in this book.

1 Chronicles – Summarizes the Kingdom Period of David.

2 Chronicles – Summarizes the Kingdom Period of Solomon, and then only Judah’s history.

DAY 4

SIMPLE SUMMARY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

Verse For The Day: Psalm 119:103

Passage For The Day: Psalm 119:97-104

Psalm 119:103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Ezra – Details the return from Babylonian Exile until the Temple is rebuilt. The king of Babylon actually sent the Jews home with money and supplies to rebuild the Temple.

Nehemiah – The final phase of the return from the Exile and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

Esther – Biography of a Jewish orphan who became queen of Persia and who saved the Jews from complete annihilation.

Job – This book deals with the problem of human suffering.

Psalms – These are actually called the “Books of Hallel” or “Books of Praise”. They are written by David and others, and reflect every possible movement of man’s spirit and soul.

Proverbs – Written by King Solomon, they deal with understanding and practicing wisdom.

Ecclesiastes – Details Solomon’s quest to discover “meaning in life” apart from God. It was an unsuccessful quest, as he finds that there is no meaning to life without God.

Song of Solomon – Describes a love relationship on 2 levels: first, between King Solomon and one of his soon-to-be wives; and secondly, between Christ and His bride, the Church.

Isaiah – One of the most important prophets in the Old Testament. This book foretells the exile as punishment for Israel’s disobedience, as well as Christ’s future coming. It also has an uncanny resemblance to the entire Bible as a whole. Its’ 66 chapters are even broken up like the 66 books in the Bible, with 39 chapters in the first section and 27 chapters in the second.

Jeremiah – He was known as the “weeping prophet” who had to foretell the doom of the exile to the Israelites. It also foretells of the coming “New Covenant” that would involve Christ.

Lamentations – A book containing the heart’s cry of a sorrowing nation in exile.

Ezekial – Another major prophet whose visions of God include the four creatures and the “wheel within a wheel”. God also requested Ezekiel to perform some very strange acts as prophetic demonstrations of Israel’s sad spiritual state, and what God would do to Israel.

Daniel – One of the most well-known prophets. Stories include Daniel’s interpretation of the dream; Daniel and the Lion’s Den; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the Fiery Furnace; and the “writing on the wall”.

DAY 5

SIMPLE SUMMARY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

Verse For The Day: Joel 2:28

Passage For The Day: Joel 2:23-32

Joel 2:28 'And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

Hosea – This prophet was called to marry a prostitute who continued to be unfaithful to him in order to show the Israelites an example of how they were being unfaithful to their “Husband”, the Lord.

Joel – This prophet preached about the “Day of the Lord” and the coming judgment. However, it is within this small book that we find the prophecy about God’s spirit eventually being poured out upon all flesh.

Amos – Prophecies judgement against the surrounding nations, as well as upon Israel and Judah’s wickedness. He has several visions which include a plumbline and a basket of fruit.

Obadiah – Another prophetic book of judgement, except on Edom.

Jonah – One of the most well-known prophets due to his experience in a whale belly. He was called to prophesy to Ninevah, but instead ran away. This book shows how God gives us second chances, even when we have been rebellious and turned away from Him.

Micah – Prophecies more judgment against Israel and Judah. One of its famous verses is found in 6:8 – “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

Nahum – Another prophecy against Ninevah. This book characterizes God as all-knowing, righteous, longsuffering, all-powerful, good, and holy.

Habakkuk – Perplexed because wickedness is so rampant, Habakkuk wants to know why God doesn't do something about it. Famous verse is 3:19 - The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights.

Zephaniah – Prophecies judgement against Judah.

Haggai – Prophetic book detailing prophecies regarding Zerubbabel and Joshua, the son of the High Priest.

Zechariah – The prophecy begins with a strong call to repentance, a prerequisite to experiencing the blessings in the book. Its most famous verse is 4:6 – “So he said to me, 'This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.’” It also contains the prophecy about Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey.

Malachi – God is a refiner and purifier of silver and gold in this book. Malachi prophesies about Judah’s unacceptable sacrifices to the Lord. Here God tells His people to test Him by tithing to Him and allowing Him to pour out unlimited blessings on the people in return.

The Old Testament is the story of Israel and it’s stormy relationship with God. Yet God protected Israel, because out of its womb would come the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Christ, who would save His people from their sins and restore right relationship between God and His people. Praise God that the same miraculous delivering and healing power that was evident in the Old Testament is available to you and I today.

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

What did you find most interesting about this week's lesson on the Old Testament?

What kind of people wrote the books of the Old Testament?

Read Hosea 1:2,3

What does God ask Hosea to do?

Why does God ask him to do that?

Read Hosea, Chapter 2

What does the Lord claim that His "wife" has done?

What does the Lord say He will do in the first 13 verses?

What is His purpose in doing this?

What does He do, though, in verses 14 through 23?

How does his story mirror our lives today?

How do you think the unfaithful wife felt during the time of chastisement and punishment?

How do you think the Lord felt during the time of chastisement and punishment?

How do you think God feels when He has to discipline us?

What kind of people do you think God wants for Himself? (think about not only the above story, but many of the other Old Testament stories)

So what do you think would be the main theme of the Old Testament?

WEEK 12 - DAY 1

GOD’S WORD: INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

Verse For The Day: 1 John 5:13

Passage For The Day: 1 John 5:11-13

1 John 5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Read 1 John 5:11-13. This is a basic summary of the purpose of the New Testament.

In verse 11, what two things did God give us? 1) _____

2) _____

In verse 12, He who has the _____ has _____, and He who does not have the _____ does not have _____.

In verse 13, to whom were these things written, and why were these things written to us?

1) _____

2) _____

The 27 books of the New Testament can be divided into three (3) sections:

1. **Historical Books** (The Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; and Acts)
2. **Epistles or letters** (Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1 & 2 & 3 John, Jude)
3. **Prophecy** (Revelation)

There are eight major time periods in the New Testament. They describe the expansion of the gospel throughout the known world in Jesus’ time. The periods are as follows:

The Life and Ministry of Jesus (covered in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and the beginning of Acts):

1. Jesus’ Birth and First Thirty (30) Years.
2. Jesus’ Public Ministry
3. The Last Week
4. The Next Forty Days

The Early Church (covered in Acts):

5. The Church at Jerusalem
6. The Church “Scattered Everywhere”
7. Paul’s Missionary Trips
8. Paul’s Arrest and Trip to Rome

The purpose of the Scriptures, Old and New, is to reveal God’s character and plan to the people He has created. The New Testament mission is to spread the good news about Jesus, the Savior, and how He can save you from hell and change your life forever.

Today, make the decision to spread the truth about Jesus to someone with whom you come in contact.

DAY 2

THE AUTHORS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Verse For The Day: John 20:31

Passage For The Day: John 20:29-31

John 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The 27 books in the New Testament were written by eight (8) men. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of the New Testament was written by three (3) men: Paul, Luke and John.

1. Luke wrote the Gospel of Luke and Acts.
2. Paul wrote all 13 books from Romans through Philemon (and possibly Hebrews)
3. John wrote the Gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John and Revelation.

The other five (5) men who wrote books that bear their own names are:

4. Matthew
5. Mark
6. James
7. Peter (1 & 2 Peter)
8. Jude

Let's take a look at the Gospels. Here we find the life and ministry of Jesus told by four different people, from four different viewpoints. Each has a different point to get across and sees Jesus from a separate angle.

1. **Matthew** – This gospel was written by one of Jesus' disciples, also known as "Levi". He was a Jew and a tax collector. This book was written to convince Jews that Jesus is the long-awaited Jewish Messiah and King who fulfills the Old Testament prophecies. And in Jewish style, his gospel includes genealogies and references to Jewish customs and traditions. It stresses His *kingship*, His *kingdom*, and the principles of that *kingdom*. In Matthew, **Jesus is the King**.
2. **Mark** – This gospel was written by John Mark, nephew of Barnabus. He accompanied His uncle along with Paul on the first missionary journey, but defected before it's completion, causing a rift between Mark and Paul. But Mark must have spent time with Peter, because his gospel has a lot of the Apostle Peter's memories and stories of Jesus. Mark writes in part to the Romans of the day, and presents the Lord Jesus as the Servant of the Lord, and for this reason stresses action and deeds rather than words or family pedigree. In Mark, **Jesus is the Servant**.
3. **Luke** – This gospel was written by a physician named Luke, who was extremely detailed in his descriptions of Jesus, down to the "sweat that was like great drops of blood." He is acclaimed to be the greatest historian of all time. He accompanied Paul on important missionary journeys, but never mentioned himself by name. Luke focuses in on Jesus' humanity, and how He was fully man, and therefore includes more information on Jesus' birth and boyhood. His writing is aimed at the Greeks, who were seeking the perfect man. In Luke, **Jesus is the Son of Man**.
4. **John** – This was written by the "disciple whom Jesus loved", John the son of Zebedee. This gospel focuses on Jesus' deity, the fact that He was God incarnate (or in the flesh), and that believing on Him is the key to light and life. In John, **Jesus is the Son of God**.

DAY 3

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

Vs. for the day: Romans 1:17

Passage for the day: Romans 1:16,17

Romans 1:17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Acts – This book, written by Luke, tells of the Acts of the Holy Spirit as well as the beginning and growth of the Church. The Old Testament reveals **God the Father**; the Gospels reveal **God the Son**; Acts reveals **God the Holy Spirit**. In chapters 1-7, the gospel is presented in Jerusalem, and from 8-12 moves to Judea and Samaria. Chapters 13-28 cover the gospel spreading to the end of the earth through missionary journeys. It begins with the central figure being Peter at Jerusalem, but changes to Paul and the Church at Antioch.

Romans – Written by Paul, this Epistle (or letter) to the Church at Rome gives detailed doctrinal teaching and gives explicit directives for the practical application of spiritual truth. You learn about the meaning of important terms such as *justification, righteousness* and *faith*. **Read it's key verses:** Romans 1:16,17.

What is revealed in the gospel? _____

How does it come? _____

1 & 2 Corinthians – Paul wrote these letters to the Corinthian church he had established. They were blessed with great spiritual gifts, but were plagued by immaturity, carnality (following their fleshly desires), internal confusion, strife and division. Paul had to spend a lot of time correcting them and clarifying specific issues, especially where spiritual gifts and spiritual authority were involved. It is interesting to note that in the midst of addressing some very serious problems is the "Love Chapter", 1 Corinthians 13. Paul emphasizes the fact that although spiritual gifts are wonderful things, if they do not love God and love one another, their spiritual gifts have no value, and their lives are not pleasing to God.

The next 4 epistles generally go together and provide a practical handbook for living.

Galatians – Paul wrote this letter to defend several truths that his critics were attacking. They claimed he was not an apostle and that he did not preach the gospel. They were "Judaizers" who believed that when Gentiles (non-Jews) accepted Jesus Christ as their savior, the new converts needed to follow Mosaic law, including circumcision. Paul emphasized two things. **Read Galatians 5:6.** What are those two (2) things?

1) _____ 2) _____

Ephesians – Paul wrote this letter to the church at Ephesus, but it was intended to be circulated to all the churches in Asia. Subjects include God's grace, predestination, what it means to *become* a Christian and to *be* a Christian, spiritual gifts and the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. It also includes practical instruction on how Christian unity should function, how a family should live, and how spiritual warfare is waged. It concludes with a very famous portion of scripture. **Read Ephesians 6:10-18.** What is described here? _____

Philippians – Paul wrote this epistle while he was under house arrest in Rome, awaiting his trial. That is why it is so amazing that the key words in this letter are **joy** and **rejoice**. Subjects include how Christians can and must rejoice 1) in spite of suffering, 2) in service for the Lord, 3) in the excellence of Christ and 4) through anxiety (so they can find peace). It is a letter of great encouragement.

Colossians – Paul writes to the church at Colosse to clear up some false teaching that had crept in. It also contains great practical suggestions. Real believers are to practice love, meditate in the Word until filled and transformed, be thankful, be prayerful, and praise God, until their Christian walk and talk bear adequate witness to a genuine experience of faith.

Read Colossians 3:12-15. Ask the Lord to help you to follow these instructions and become all He intends you to become.

DAY 4

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

Vs. for the day: James 2:18

Passage for the day: James 2:17-20

James 2:18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

1 & 2 Thessalonians – Paul points out several areas of weakness to the Thessalonian church: laziness and sexual sins in particular. Paul also encourages the believer to live in faith, love and hope as he anticipates the imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ. No other book tells us more about the rapture of the church. **Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.** 2 Thessalonians centers on clearing up a misunderstanding concerning the Day of the Lord.

1 & 2 Timothy – This is a “Pastoral Epistle” from Paul to his “son in the ministry”, Timothy. This book contains important instruction for the order of the church and the appointment of leadership. It is instructions to a young pastor which include the exhortation to keep the faith by keeping sound doctrine. In 2 Timothy, Paul deals with the great apostasy and social corruption which will exist in the latter days of the church.

Titus – This particular epistle from Paul deals with correcting false doctrine, motivating the recipients toward good works, and establishing order in the churches by teaching sound doctrine.

Philemon – This letter is written to a slaveholder in Colosse who was a Christian brother and dear friend to Paul. It deals with a runaway slave named Onesimus who had been led to faith in Christ and was demonstrating his repentance by returning to Colosse and making things right. He was placing himself at the mercy of his owner, who could punish him severely or kill him. Paul pleads with Philemon to treat his slave kindly, and as a brother in the Lord.

Hebrews – The author of this letter is unknown, but it may have been Paul. It was written to mid-first-century Christian Jews who were giving serious thought to renouncing their commitment to Jesus Christ by returning to the practice of Judaism. This book shows how the blessings found in Jesus Christ are superior to those offered through the rituals of Judaism. Unbelief was the cancer that began to destroy them, which is why you find the famous “Faith Chapter” in Hebrews. This letter explains the meaning of real faith, which depends upon keeping your eyes and thoughts fixed on Jesus. It describes Jesus as our compassionate High Priest who is far superior to any human High Priest.

James – The author of this letter is believed to be James, the half-brother of Jesus. This book is the most practical book in the New Testament. It is not so much what a person says as what he does that is important. **Read James 2:17-20.** _____ without _____ is dead. It gives specific examples of how to live and what to watch out for. Ask the Lord for the ability to live what you believe and therefore be a witness through your everyday life.

DAY 5

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

Vs. for the day: Jude 1:24,25

Passage for the day: Jude 1:20-25

Jude 1:24,25 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy-- to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

1 & 2 Peter – The Apostle Peter is the author of this book. This letter helps Christians deal with trial and persecution. It deals with the suffering of the people of God and is addressed to the Christians who have been scattered due to persecution. He emphasizes that fiery trials purify and mature us, helping us become more like Jesus. 2 Peter stresses the danger of false teachers that will come.

1, 2 and 3 John – The “disciple whom Jesus loved” is the author of this letter that was circulated to all the churches. The key words are *know, believe, love* and *fellowship*. To really appreciate the change in John from before Jesus’ resurrection and after the coming of the Holy Spirit, you need to understand that his nickname had formerly been “Son of Thunder”, because he wanted to rain down fire upon Jesus’ opponents. However, as you see in his gospel and in his letters, this “Son of Thunder” now speaks only of the importance of **love**. 2 John deals with a cult of the day called “Gnosticism”, and explains the falsehood of that doctrine. The key word in both 2 & 3 John is **truth**.

Jude – This letter, written by another half-brother of Jesus, encourages believers to fight valiantly for their faith. Jude also deals with Gnosticism, and condemns all evil men and their practices.

Read Jude 1:14,15. With whom does the Lord come in this verse, and for what reason does He come?

Then read Jude 1:20,21. What are we to be doing until Jesus returns?

What good news does Jude 1:24 state?

Maintaining our life with God is the key, because our only hope to be righteous and holy is to have Him live His life in and through us.

Revelation – This prophetic book was written by John, the author of the Gospel and the letters that bear his name. John wrote this while he was exiled on an island of Patmos, and this book is derived from a vision that God gave to John. Revelation reveals God’s triumphs, the eternal glories of Christ, the new heaven and the new earth. In times of darkness and persecution, this book has given courage to its readers, enabling them to endure hardship and death for the sake of Christ. This is the only book that promises that its reader will be blessed for reading it; and it ends with a curse on anyone who adds or takes away from this prophetic book.

Thank God today for the Word He has left us. Think of them as love letters to us from a Father who wants us to always remember Him and keep Him foremost in our lives.

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

Let's read the book of Philemon.
What has happened in this story?

Now, let's read through verses 10-12, and 15-19, but change the characters around.
Substitute your name for Onesimus, God the Father's name for Philemon, and Jesus' name for Paul. What parallels do you discover?

(Phile 1:10 NIV) **I (Jesus) appeal to you for my son (/daughter), _____, who became my son/daughter while I (Jesus) was in chains.**

(Phile 1:11 NIV) **Formerly _____ was useless to you, but now he/she has become useful both to you and to me.**

(Phile 1:12 NIV) **I am sending _____ --who is my very heart--back to you.**

(Phile 1:15 NIV) **Perhaps the reason _____ was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him/her back for good--**

(Phile 1:16 NIV) **no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother/sister. _____ is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a (wo)man and as a brother/sister in the Lord.**

(Phile 1:17 NIV) **So if you consider me a partner, welcome _____ as you would welcome me.**

(Phile 1:18 NIV) **If _____ has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me (Jesus).**

(Phile 1:19 NIV) **I, Jesus, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back.**

Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.

What did Christ do for us? (vs. 14)

Why did He do that? (vs. 15)

What is the result of Christ's death in our place? (vs. 16,17)

What was God's purpose in sending His Son to die and making us new? (vs. 18)

How was He able to do that? (vs. 19)

What has He committed to us now? (vs. 19)

What does that mean? (vs. 20)

How did we become righteous enough to enter back into relationship with God? (vs. 21)

What would you say that the theme for the New Testament would be?

WEEK 13 - DAY 1

CHRISTIANESE
(BASIC CHRISTIAN TERMINOLOGY)

Vs. for the day: 1 John 4:10

Passage for the day: 1 John. 4:7-12

1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Many Christians attend church, listen to the sermons and speak about God's Word, but they really don't know the meaning of many of the words they use. They have a concept of what the terms mean, but can't actually give you a definition.

This week, we are going to learn the actual meaning of some very important terms: Love, Faith, Sin, Righteousness, Mercy, Grace, Justification and Sanctification.

LOVE:

Read 1 John 4:7-12. How did God show His love to us?

What does John say love is?

The important thing to see in John's definition of love is that God is the author, source and definer of love. Since God **is** love, His actions will be **examples of how true love acts**.

And the main characteristic of His love is **SELFLESSNESS**, giving of Himself and what is important to Him so that someone else (namely us – a sinful people) could gain something of great worth (eternal life).

Also notice, in verse 10, that God's love is unconditional, and **never depends on being loved in return!** How many of us love only when we are loved back? Real love sacrifices for others, even when it is not appreciated, and more specifically, even when the object of that love hates the Lover.

Read Luke 23:33,34. What was Jesus' response to those who had beaten, ridiculed, slandered, mocked, betrayed and crucified Him?

Jesus' love never depended on our loving Him. The same is true for God the Father.

In the book of Hosea, God commanded a prophet to take a prostitute for his wife, knowing she would be unfaithful. When the wife ran away, God commanded Hosea to take his wife back. All of this was to give a living example of God's relationship with, and long-suffering love for, the nation of Israel.

The definition of **love** is "giving of yourself for the benefit of another." Take a good hard look at your surrounding relationships and the people you say you "love." Are you loving them with God's love, or with the world's selfish "what can you do for me?" version of love? Ask God to make you aware of this, and ask Him to help you love others without asking for anything in return.

DAY 2

CHRISTIANESE (BASIC CHRISTIAN TERMINOLOGY)

Vs. for the day: Romans 4:5

Passage for the day: Romans 4:3-9

Romans 4:5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

FAITH:

Read Romans 4:3-9. Here, the Apostle Paul defines faith by using the “Father of Faith”, Abraham, as an example. Focus on verse 5.

The man who has faith does not do what? _____

This means he does not attempt to “earn” his righteousness.

Instead, what does he do? _____

How important is faith? Read Hebrews 11:6. What does it say?

The Greek word for faith is “pistis”. It means to rely upon, to throw all your weight upon. It means entrusting your entire self, including all that you have and all that is important to you, to something or someone other than yourself. Biblically, the definition of faith is **confidence in God that expresses itself through complete reliance upon God**. You believe not only in your head that God exists and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; you express this confidence in God through your actions.

Read James 2:18. How does James say that He will express His faith in the Lord?

SIN:

Now, if we understand this definition of faith, we can define its opposite: **sin**. The word for “sin” actually means “missing the mark.” According to our section on faith, what is the mark for all believers? (Reread Hebrews 11:6) The mark is having faith in God. Therefore, to sin is to have a **lack of confidence in God that expresses itself through complete reliance on self or others**.

Read Hebrews 3:12-19.

In v. 12, what must we be careful **not** to develop? _____

In v. 14, what must we be careful to hold on to? _____

In v. 19, what was the source of their sin? _____

Sin does not originate in our actions; instead, it begins with our refusal to trust in God. Then this lack of reliance upon God and His provision for our lives will manifest itself in self-serving, “get what I can for myself” actions. And if you remember the definition of love, you cannot give of yourself for the benefit of another if you are striving to get all you can to meet your own needs.

Unbelief that God will meet all of your needs and take care of you will block your ability to love others. On the other hand, when you are confident that God will give you everything you need, when you need it, and are not concerned with “looking out for #1” (yourself), you have the freedom to give selflessly of your own time and resources. That is why Galatians 5:6 says that **the only thing that matters is faith expressing itself through love**. Ask God to help you identify areas of your life where you are relying upon something or someone other than God.

DAY 3

CHRISTIANESE
(BASIC CHRISTIAN TERMINOLOGY)

Vs. for the day: Romans 10:3

Passage for the day: Romans 10:3,4

Romans 10:3 Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.

RIGHTEOUSNESS:

We know from the previous day’s scriptures that righteousness comes by faith, but what exactly is “righteousness?”

Read Romans 10:3,4. There are two sources of “righteousness” mentioned; what are they?

1) _____ 2) _____

The only righteousness that matters is the righteousness that God defines and offers. The problem with mankind throughout the ages has been its attempt to be “righteous” apart from God. They sought to “establish their own” righteousness, create their own definition and rules for becoming righteous. But that is unacceptable in God’s sight. So let’s see what God’s version of righteousness is.

Righteousness is innocence or holiness in God’s sight. It is a state of being in “right standing” with God. It cannot be earned, but it can be given to you. Think of a person who receives an honorary Doctor’s degree at a university – they did not attend the school and earn it, but it is given to them at the discretion of the head of the university.

Righteousness is somewhat like that; it is impossible for us to ever pay the penalties for our own sin, but God can “credit” righteousness to our account, and we can stand before Him as if we had never sinned. Read Romans 4:6-8. What does God do for those He has credited righteousness?

3) _____ 2)

3) _____

Jesus paid the cost for our sins when He died on the cross. When we have faith in (or completely rely upon) God’s payment for our sin through Jesus’ death, God “credits” or gives to us righteousness.

Now, there is a difference between **being righteous** and **acting righteously**. When you place your faith in Jesus’ work on the cross, God credits righteousness to your account. You can come into heaven and stand before Him. You have received the “honorary degree” of being righteous.

However, when you follow the leading of your emotions, your old habits or your old mindset, you will not act righteously. But when you follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, who **is righteous**, you will **act righteously**.

YOUR ACTIONS DO NOT DETERMINE YOUR STANDING WITH GOD. You received your righteousness through faith in God, and cannot lose it by your actions. However, JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE RIGHT STANDING WITH GOD DOESN’T MEAN YOU WILL ACT RIGHTEOUSLY. Righteous living comes through a day-by-day commitment to follow the leading of the Spirit. Thank God for paying for your sins and allowing you to be His child, and commit yourself to strive toward righteous attitudes, thoughts and actions.

DAY 4

CHRISTIANESE
(BASIC CHRISTIAN TERMINOLOGY)

Vs. for the day: Ephesians 2:4

Passage for the day: Ephesians 2:4,5

Ephesians 2:4,5 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.

MERCY:

Mercy is a quality that God highly esteems. Read Matthew 5:7. What does God desire us to give more than sacrifices? _____ That is probably because our Heavenly Father is merciful. Read Luke 6:36. What does God command here?

In Luke 10:29-37, Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan. When Jesus asked who was a “neighbor” to the man who had been robbed and attacked, the correct response was, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Read Ephesians 2:4,5. God who is rich in mercy made us alive with Christ when?

Did we deserve to be made alive with Christ? No. In other words, we actually deserved death, hell and the grave. Romans 6:23 says that the wages of sin is death. But God refrained from sending us to hell, and instead was merciful.

Mercy is **not giving someone the negative response they deserve**. When one servant had his huge debt cancelled by his Master, the Master showed Himself to be merciful. When this same servant turned around and had another servant thrown into jail for not paying a small debt, the first servant showed himself to be unmerciful. In the parable of the wicked servant, Jesus said that the unmerciful servant and his family were to be sold into slavery – not for neglecting payment of his debt, but for being unmerciful. He who is merciful will receive mercy.

GRACE:

The Apostle Paul starts many of his letters by praying for grace to be given to his readers. We know that we are saved by grace, through faith, but what exactly is grace? Unlike what most people think, grace is NOT forgiveness. Grace is NOT mercy. Grace is **God’s divine empowerment in our lives which allows us to accomplish His purpose in the world.**

Read John 1:16. What did we receive out of the fullness of God’s grace?

Remember how righteousness could not be attained through obeying the law? It could only be obtained through faith. Well, when we have faith in God, trusting in His Son’s payment for our sins, God gives us the power to become sons of God. (John 1:12).

Read 2 Peter 1:3. What has God given us?

This divine enablement to live for God is His power dwelling within us by the Holy Spirit. But for God’s grace (supernatural empowerment) in our lives, we would still be like we used to be. Thank God for coming to live within you, and allowing you to share in His power.

DAY 5

CHRISTIANESE
(BASIC CHRISTIAN TERMINOLOGY)

Vs. for the day: Romans 3:26

Passage for the day: Romans 3:22-26

Romans 3:26 he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

JUSTIFICATION:

“Justify” = “**Just as if I’ had never sinned.** God justifies us and declares us to be innocent. It is a judicial term, one used in a court of law, where someone on trial is cleared of all charges.

When we, by faith, believe in God’s payment for our sins, and we entrust ourselves wholly to Him, God justifies us (makes us legally innocent) and credits to our account righteousness.

Read Romans 3:22-26

According to verse 23, what have we all done?

What are we justified by? _____

What are we justified through? _____

In verse 24, what did God do to demonstrate his justice?

In verse 26, who are the ones who are justified? _____

Whereas we deserved death and hell because of our rebellion and unbelief, due to God’s great mercy, He has sent His Son to pay our penalty and declared us “not guilty”. That is **justification**.

SANCTIFICATION:

To sanctify means to “make holy” (which means to set apart for God’s use); “to purify or consecrate”. Sanctification is a life-long process which begins at salvation and ends when we die (or are taken away to be with the Lord). It is the slow transformation we undergo to become less like our old selves and more like our Lord.

Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. In verses 9 and 10, what are some of the things we used to be?

In verse 11, what happened to us? _____

Read Philippians 2:12,13.

In verse 12, what is Paul’s command to the believers?

When we place our faith in Christ, He puts His salvation INTO us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But that salvation must begin to show on the OUTSIDE through our actions. Remember the difference between **being righteous** and **acting righteously**. Our sanctification is expressed by our righteous actions; people will know we belong to the Lord by the “fruit we bear”. Through sanctification, we move from glory to glory; we decrease and Jesus increases. We are conformed into the image of Jesus Christ. That is sanctification.

