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# CHRISTIANITY 201

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**Christianity 201 Student Notes**—*Growing in Your Relationship With Jesus Christ*

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Written and edited by the staff and volunteers of McLean University.

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 0-9711553-2-1

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*Also in Attachment 9 at the end of Week 5 class notes we have shortened and edited an article by Paul Barger entitled Twelve Reasons People Hesitate To Follow Christ and What To Say. The full text article is printed in the Appendix of Make the Net Work.*

## *A Brief History*

**Christianity 201** is the second course in the Basics Series of McLean University. Like **Christianity 101**— it was designed and developed to help people like yourself begin and move ahead on their spiritual journey with Jesus Christ. Since 1990 thousands of students have benefited from reviewing these foundational truths of Scripture. To God be the glory!

## *For Further Information*

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# CHRISTIANITY 201 :: WEEK 1

*Who is the Holy Spirit and Why Did He Come?*

## GROWING IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST

### OUR GOALS

1. To help you grow in your relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. To help you understand some basic truths of the Christian faith.

### OUR CURRICULUM FOR THE NEXT SIX WEEKS

**Week 1:** Who is the Holy Spirit and Why Did He Come?

**Week 2:** How Can I Read and Understand the Bible?

**Week 3:** How Can I Communicate With God?

**Week 4:** How Do I Handle Temptation and Sin?

**Week 5:** How Can I Share My Faith?

**Week 6:** How Do I Keep on Growing?

*Fill in dates for each week:*

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### OUR KEY FOUNDATION—THE BIBLE

The reason we encourage Scripture memory and the study of Scripture is because *Christianity 101* and *201* and other McLean University courses operate under an important premise—*the Bible is God’s revealed truth*. This means . . .

- The Bible is *divinely inspired*.
- The Bible is *fully accurate* in its original form.
- The Bible is *trustworthy*.
- The Bible is *relevant, applicable and authoritative* for our lives.

King David of Israel had such respect for Scripture that he wrote,

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

#### *Hints for Memorizing Scripture*

1. Read the verse in its context.
2. Seek to understand it.
3. Write out the verse and its reference on an index card.
4. Recite the verse aloud one phrase at a time. Do this several times.
5. Repeat the process several times daily during slack periods: while riding on the bus or subway; commuting to work in your car; coffee time or lunch break.

6. After memorizing the verse, review it later on a regular basis to keep it fresh in your mind!

In *Christianity 101* we talked about who Jesus Christ is and how we can establish a personal relationship with Him. If you have experienced the new birth and if you have asked Jesus to be your Savior and your Lord, we know that you are indwelt by God's Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16). To grow in your relationship with Jesus Christ you need to know about the Holy Spirit, who He is and why He has come.

## TODAY'S TOPIC:

*Who is the Holy Spirit and Why Did He Come?*

### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

What habits would you expect to find in the walk of a healthy, growing Christian?

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**Apart from the enlightenment and power of the Holy Spirit, the Christian cannot grow spiritually:**

- He cannot understand God's Word.
- He cannot pray.
- He cannot share his faith effectively.
- He cannot be or do what God wants . . . period!

Someone once said, "*The Christian life isn't difficult, it's impossible!*" And how right they are when we attempt to live without the power of the Holy Spirit. ***The Christian life is a supernatural life:*** God's spiritual life and power working in and through us.

## WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

a. The Holy Spirit is the \_\_\_\_\_ Person of the Godhead, the \_\_\_\_\_.

- Matthew 28:19:** *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

We say \_\_\_\_\_ because *the Holy Spirit has mind, will and emotion.* (Romans 8:27, 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, 1 Corinthians 12:11, Ephesians 4:30)

When we use the word \_\_\_\_\_, we're saying *the Holy Spirit has full divine power and privileges.* He is co-eternal and co-equal with God the Father and God the Son.

The word \_\_\_\_\_ is a *theological term*. The word itself does not appear in the Bible, but the concept is well substantiated throughout Scripture.

The Bible emphatically teaches that there is \_\_\_\_\_ God. The Bible also emphatically teaches that the Father is \_\_\_\_\_; the Son (Jesus Christ) is \_\_\_\_\_ and the Holy Spirit is \_\_\_\_\_.

As such, the word Trinity was selected to express the biblical teaching that there is \_\_\_\_\_ God existing in \_\_\_\_\_ distinct Persons. Some theologians prefer the word \_\_\_\_\_ to express this truth since it reflects both the \_\_\_\_\_ of God (one God) and the \_\_\_\_\_ of God (\_\_\_\_\_ distinct Persons).

b. **The Holy Spirit was involved in \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Genesis 1:2:** *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth . . . and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters . . .*

c. **The Holy Spirit was involved in God's plan of \_\_\_\_\_ when He overshadowed Mary and caused her to conceive Jesus, the Savior of mankind.**

**Luke 1:35:** *The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."*

d. **The Holy Spirit's primary ministry, however, is twofold with respect to every believer:**

**John 3:6:** *Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.*

- First spiritual \_\_\_\_\_.

**2 Corinthians 3:18:** *And we . . . are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

- Second, spiritual \_\_\_\_\_.

## WHY DID THE HOLY SPIRIT COME?

a. **The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ to Jesus Christ and makes Him Known.**

**John 16:13-14:** *But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth . . . he will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.*

b. **The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ the writing of Scripture.**

**2 Peter 1:20-21:** *Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

c. **The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ the truth of Scripture to \_\_\_\_\_ hearts that are prepared to receive it.**

**1 Corinthians 2:10:** *But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.*

**1 Corinthians 2:13:** *This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.*

- d. **The Holy Spirit, by means of the Scriptures, \_\_\_\_\_ people of their sinful and guilty condition and their need for Jesus.**
- John 16:8:** *When he [the Holy Spirit] comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.*
  - Hebrews 4:12:** *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*
- e. **The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ every believer and places [baptizes] him or her into the body of Christ.**
- 2 Corinthians 1:21-22:** *Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*
  - 1 Corinthians 12:13a:** *For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body . . .*
- f. **The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ to every believer that he or she is part of God's family.**
- Romans 8:16:** *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*
- g. **The Holy Spirit transforms a believer's character and produces spiritual \_\_\_\_\_.**
- Galatians 5:22-23:** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*
- h. **The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ every believer upon his or her conversion.**
- 1 Corinthians 3:16:** *Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?*

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a one-time, permanent transaction. It happens at the moment of conversion when we place our full trust in Jesus Christ. At that very moment God's Spirit enters our lives and makes us His spiritual children.

- i. **The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ believers to live for Christ.**
- Ephesians 5:18:** *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.*
  - Ephesians 3:16:** *I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.*

***The filling or empowering of the Holy Spirit is a recurrent transaction.*** Why? Because of sin! The Holy Spirit will never remove Himself from a believer's life, neither will He force Himself upon us nor violate our free will.

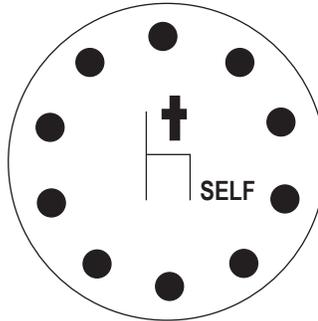
However, whenever he or she sins, a believer can short-circuit the flow and working of the Holy Spirit. And because sin tends to recur, we need to deal with it so the Holy Spirit can empower us once again to live a life that pleases God.

In Christianity 201, week 4, we will discuss in more detail how to handle sin and temptation through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF A SPIRIT-DIRECTED LIFE**

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- Love for God and for others
- Spiritual hunger
- Desire to pray
- Desire to read the Bible
- Eagerness to share one's faith
- Joy
- Peace
- Godly, pure thinking
- Direction and purpose



*Notice how the solid black dots reflect harmony and order. This is because voluntarily we've asked the Holy Spirit to run the show!*

Nevertheless, because the old sin nature is still present, **we always have the freedom to choose our own way instead of God's way.** And when that happens, we "quench" or "grieve" the Holy Spirit by not allowing Him to direct our lives. (*Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19*)

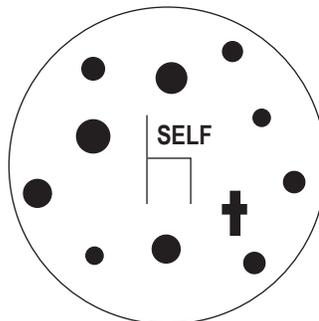
What does the word **grieve** mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

How about the word **quench**? \_\_\_\_\_

**CHARACTERISTICS OF A SELF-DIRECTED LIFE**

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- No love for God and for others
- Spiritual apathy
- Poor prayer life
- No desire to read the Bible
- No desire to talk about Christ
- Discouragement
- Guilt and worry
- Frustration
- Critical spirit
- Impure thoughts
- Life out of control



*Now observe the haphazard arrangement of solid black dots. This time there is no harmony or order!*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Which of the characteristics of a Spirit-directed life would you most like to have?  
Why?

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- Which of the two circles represents your life?
- Which circle would you like to represent your life?

## APPLICATION

### THREE PREREQUISITES FOR A SPIRIT-DIRECTED LIFE

a. My heart must \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for it.

**Matthew 5:6:** *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.*

b. My heart must be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Psalm 51:2, 10:** *Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. . . Create in me a pure heart, O God . . .*

**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.*

Because the Spirit of God is holy and because sin is incompatible with holiness, ***the Holy Spirit cannot fill, empower, direct or influence a believer's life unless that person's heart is right with God—clean and pure.***

c. My heart must be yielded, a \_\_\_\_\_.

**Romans 12:1:** *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.*

The believer is not a robot! God gives us complete freedom to choose. At any given moment, ***the Christian must decide whether or not we will allow the Holy Spirit to empower and guide our lives.***

**1 John 5:14:** *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us . . .*

So if we know it's God's will for us to be empowered and led by the Holy Spirit, then we can pray with complete confidence, asking the Holy Spirit to do that in our lives!

Here's how we might pray:

*Dear God, I know it's Your perfect will that my life be under the leadership, direction and influence of Your Holy Spirit so that I can please You and live righteously. And because of that, I ask You to forgive me for anything which I've said, thought or done which has short-circuited Your power in my life. I'm sorry I've failed you by grieving and quenching Your Spirit. Fill me and empower me once again with Your Holy Spirit. Of my own free will and for Your honor and glory I submit my life to you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.*

## WRAP-UP: SOME KEY POINTS

### Who Is the Holy Spirit?

1. Third Person of the Trinity
2. Co-eternal and co-equal with God the Father and God the Son
3. Involved in God's plan of creation and redemption
4. His primary role toward believers: spiritual birth and spiritual transformation

### Why Did the Holy Spirit Come?

1. Brings glory to Jesus Christ and makes Him known
2. Superintended the writing of Scripture
3. Reveals the truth of Scripture to responsive hearts
4. Convicts of sin and guilt and brings a person to repentance and faith
5. Gives new life to, indwells and empowers a believer
6. Anoints and seals the believer placing him into the body of Christ
7. Gives assurance of our salvation
8. Transforms a believer's character and produces spiritual fruit

## ACTION POINTS

1. Review Week 1 class notes: *Who is the Holy Spirit and Why Did He Come?*
2. Listen to Lon Solomon's sermon on CD (Week 1), entitled ***An Inspired Bible - So What?***
3. Read and answer the Week 2 preview questions.
  - Who is the author of Scripture? (*2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21*)
  - Who is the best person to help us understand the Bible? (*1 Corinthians 2:9-13*)
  - List two results of knowing and reading God's Word! (*Psalms 119:11, Acts 20:32*)
  - What are some things that prevent Christians from reading and studying the Bible?

### Growing On Your Own

*Take time this week to look up each verse in your Bible and read it in context.*

4. Read *7 Minutes With God*.
5. Read *A Guide for Daily Bible Study, Prayer and Worship*.
6. Read *I Want to Understand the Bible Better. Where Do I Begin?*
7. Learn memory verse #1.
  - ❑ **2 Timothy 3:16-17:** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

### NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC

*How Can I Read and Understand the Bible?*

# ATTACHMENT 1

## *A Guide for Daily Bible Study, Prayer and Worship*

- **THANKS** Begin your time by turning your mind and heart to God. In a quiet, uncluttered place, alone, recall His blessings and His goodness. Express your love and gratitude to Him aloud or silently.
- **PRAY** to God before reading and ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand and receive His Word. Through Christ you are in the Father's presence. Approach Him boldly, humbly and expectantly.
- **READ** carefully the Bible passage for the day, looking at the preceding and following passages as necessary, so that you read in context. Then reread the passage or chapter again marking those verses which seem especially meaningful to you.
- **FOCUS** in on one or more of the verses or paragraphs that seem most important to you today. Copy, in your own handwriting, the key verse(s).
- **MEDITATE** on this specific section through observation, interpretation and application:
  - a. What is the context? The situation in which it was written?
  - b. Who is writing? Who is involved in the events? To whom is this being written? When? Where?
  - c. What is the main point? What does this teach me about the character, the methods, the concerns of God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit? (Parallel passages, cross-references, explanatory notes in your Bible and even referring to a Bible dictionary or commentary may be helpful. However, beware of becoming dependent upon the insights of someone else.)
  - d. What am I shown about the needs of mankind before God?
  - e. What insights am I gaining about myself and my life situation? With what sins do I need to deal? What promises can I claim? What attitudes must I embrace or forsake? What commandments can I obey? What examples should I follow?
- **APPLY** what Christ requires of me now, today, in thought, word or action in relationship to my family, friends, associates, church, community, etc. How does this apply to me now?
- **WRITE DOWN YOUR MOST IMPORTANT INSIGHTS.**

## ATTACHMENT 2

*“I Want To Understand the Bible Better.  
Where Do I Begin?”*

Are you someone who wants to understand the Bible better but doesn't quite know how to go about it? Well, first of all, you're not alone! In fact, throughout history people just like you have stood in awe of the Bible. Amazingly, in spite of persecution and ridicule through the centuries, the Bible still stands unscathed and as permanent as ever! Even today it remains the best-seller of all time.

When it comes to the Bible, just where do we begin? After all, it is a massive volume made up of 66 individual books written over an extended period of 15 centuries by 40 different authors, and these human authors were from every conceivable type of background! Some were well-educated, such as Moses and Luke and Paul; yet others were shepherds or fishermen like Amos and Peter. Some were kings like David and Solomon, but others were very average folks like Jonah or Nahum or Matthew. And yet, as we examine the Bible carefully and objectively, it has a single subject; there is a unity in its composition, coherence in its content and progression in its truth.

This amazing fact has only one satisfactory explanation, namely that God took these ordinary men and somehow, using their individual personalities, spoke through them and caused them to write the Scriptures according to His divine plan. Even as the Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary, who gave birth to Jesus Christ, the living Word, so also the Holy Spirit overshadowed these writers of Scripture who produced the Bible, God's written Word. Therefore, both the living Word and the written Word were perfect and without blemish because of God's special intervention.

Paradoxically, the wisdom and depth of Scripture is vast enough to challenge the world's greatest scholars and intellects, yet its truth is simple enough to be understood by the smallest child. No wonder the Bible remains unparalleled as the Book of books. Regardless of skeptics, critics and antagonists, the fact remains that the Bible speaks to the hearts of all people irrespective of age, sex, language, culture or historical period, and it invariably changes the lives of all who voluntarily take God's truth at face value and by faith apply it for themselves.

### I. TWO BASIC PRESUPPOSITIONS

There are certain axioms or presuppositions, however, that are fundamental and absolutely essential for anyone who wishes to understand the Bible and profit from it. The two assumptions are:

#### A. The Bible is the Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16)

1. It is perfect and without error.  
*(Psalm 12:6; 19:7-9; 119:140, 142)*
2. It is certain and true.  
*(Psalm 19:7b; 119:160a; John 17:17b)*
3. It is eternal.  
*(Psalm 119:89; Mark 13:31; 1 Peter 1:25)*
4. It is authoritative and effectual.  
*(1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12)*
5. It is essential for spiritual salvation and growth.  
*(1 Peter 1:23; 2:2)*

**B. God's Word cannot be spiritually discerned and applied apart from the illumination and power of the Holy Spirit.**

1. A non-Christian or disobedient Christian cannot progress beyond an intellectual and superficial understanding of spiritual truth. (*1 Corinthians 2:14; 3:1-2*)
2. Only a Christian who is filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit can fully discern and apply spiritual truth to his life as God reveals it to him. (*1 Corinthians 2:9-13; John 16: 13-15*)

## II. PREPARATION FOR BIBLE STUDY

With these assumptions as foundations, we can now take a closer look at how to approach study of the Bible.

**A. Spiritual and practical preparation**

1. A clean heart. (*Psalms 24:3-5; 1 John 1:9*)
2. An expectant heart. (*Psalms 119:18*)
3. A teachable spirit. (*Proverbs 1:5,7*)
4. A Bible with cross-references (accurate, literal, translation such as KJV and NASV).
5. A pen and paper.

In addition, optional but very helpful are:

1. A concordance (*Strong's Exhaustive, Young's Analytical*).
2. A Bible dictionary (*Unger's Bible Dictionary*).
3. A Bible encyclopedia (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*).
4. A Bible atlas (*Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible, George Ernest Wright, Westminster Press; Macmillan Bible Atlas, Macmillan Company*).
5. A Bible commentary.

**B. Mental preparation**

Secondly, there are some definite steps for studying the Bible which are, in fact, somewhat basic for approaching any literature:

**1. Observation (awareness of details).**

*"I have six faithful serving men*

*Who taught me all I know.*

*Their names are **What** and **Where** and **When**  
and **How** and **Why** and **Who**."*

- a. What type of literature is this? (historical narrative, poetry, drama, logical or didactic literature, parabolic, apocalyptic).
- b. Who is writing?
- c. To whom is he writing?
- d. When is he writing?
- e. Where is he writing? What is the setting, circumstances?

- f. Why is he writing?
- g. How does he say it? (grammatical structure, words, repetition, etc.)

## 2. Interpretation

- a. What does this mean?
- b. Why is this said, and why is it said here?
- c. What does this imply?

## 3. Correlation

This means that we should constantly look for connections between various biblical passages, and between Scriptural statements and the data one finds outside the Scriptures. One should constantly attempt to see the Bible as a whole and life as a whole.

## 4. Application

This involves discovering the exact contemporary situation to which the passage is applicable.

- a. Is there a principle or truth to be applied to our contemporary situation today? How? Where?
- b. Is there something here that applies to me personally? An example to follow? An error to avoid? A duty to perform? A promise to claim?
- c. What specific changes would I make in my life? How do I propose to carry out these changes?
- d. With whom specifically would I like to share these truths?

# III. METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

## A. Book Study

The Bible contains 66 different books. Each one has a special message from God and has its own particular setting, purpose and audience. On the other hand, we need to consider each book as a part of the whole of Scripture and consider how it contributes to and relates to other parts of the Bible.

## B. Chapter Study

This is simply a smaller unit of the book study, but the same principles apply.

## C. Topical Study

Take an important subject, such as grace, truth, prayer, faith, etc., and by using cross-references, a topical or chain-reference Bible and a concordance, study the scope of the topic throughout the Scriptures. As you accumulate material, it may be necessary to divide each topic into sub-topics, e.g. forms of prayer, examples of prayer in Scripture, Christ's teachings on prayer, etc.

## D. Biographical Study

There are 2930 people mentioned in the Bible. The lives of many of these make extremely interesting biographical studies. Using a concordance, topical Bible or the proper name index in your Bible, look at every reference to the person in question. Make observations and ask questions:

- What do we know of his family?
- What of his training and background?

- What about his life accomplishments?
- What about outstanding character traits?
- What about his friends and their influence on him?
- Was there a great crisis in his life? If so, how did he face it?
- Does his life show character development?
- What was his experience with God?
- Is there some lesson in this person's life which is outstanding?
- Are there any particular faults or sins evident in his life?
- What led to them?
- What were the nature and effect of these sins on his future life?
- What were his children like?

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Getting into the Bible is like getting into a swimming pool. The important thing is to get in and get wet. Once you're in, you're glad you did it! And studying, like swimming, will take time and practice. Step out in faith! Be patient, and let God do the rest.

#### *Quotable Quotes*

*"The Bible is like a compass—it always points the believer in the right direction."*

*"Don't live on second-hand food! Read the Bible yourself."*

*"When all else fails, try reading the directions!"*



# CHRISTIANITY 201 :: WEEK 2

*How Can I Read and Understand the Bible?*

## REVIEW OF LAST WEEK'S TOPIC:

*Who is the Holy Spirit and Why Did He Come?*

### KEY POINTS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

#### Who He is

1. Third Person of the Trinity
2. Co-eternal and co-equal with God the Father and God the Son
3. Involved in God's plan of creation and redemption
4. His primary role toward believers: spiritual birth and spiritual transformation

#### Why He Came

1. Brings glory to Jesus Christ and makes Him known
2. Superintended the writing of Scripture
3. Reveals the truth of Scripture to responsive hearts
4. Convicts of sin and guilt and brings a person to repentance and faith
5. Gives new life to, indwells and empowers a believer
6. Anoints and seals the believer placing him into the body of Christ
7. Gives assurance of salvation
8. Transforms a believer's character and produces spiritual fruit

### MEMORY VERSE #1

☐ **2 Timothy 3:16-17:** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

## TODAY'S TOPIC:

*How Can I Read and Understand the Bible?*

### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are your earliest memories in relation to the Bible?

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2. Describe your best personal experience in reading the Bible.

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3. In what ways do you find reading the Bible difficult?

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### THE BIBLE AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. **The Holy Spirit authored and superintended the writing of Scripture.**

- 2 Timothy 3:16:** *All Scripture is God-breathed...*
- 2 Peter 1:21:** *[Scripture] never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

2. **The Holy Spirit illumines the mind of the Christian with regard to Scripture.**

- 1 Corinthians 2:12:** *The Spirit was given to us so that we may understand what God has freely given us.*
- 1 Corinthians 2:14:** *The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God . . . and . . . cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

Someone has said, “The study of Scripture is a spiritual exercise, not merely mental.” So whenever we approach the Scriptures, we must ask the Holy Spirit to reveal God’s truth to our minds and hearts. The writer of Psalms put it this way:

- Psalm 119:18:** *Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your Law.*

### 3. The Holy Spirit uses Scripture to help believers grow spiritually.

a. God's Word enlarges our \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Romans 10:17:** *Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*

b. God's Word reveals God's \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Acts 20:32:** *Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

c. God's Word \_\_\_\_\_ us up.

d. God's Word reveals our spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ .

e. God's Word helps us \_\_\_\_\_ spiritually.

**1 Peter 2:2:** *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation . . .*

f. God's Word judges our \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Hebrews 4:12:** *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

## VARIOUS APPROACHES TO BIBLE STUDY

1. **Topical** (*faith, wisdom, money*)
2. **Biographical** (*Abraham, Jacob, Ruth*)
3. **Book** (*Psalms, Proverbs, Gospel of Mark*)
4. **Word** (*love*)
5. **Chapter** (*Luke 15, the Prodigal Son*)

## GENERAL APPROACH TO BIBLE STUDY

The study of God's Word is an exciting adventure! Its truth and wisdom are without measure. The more we study Scripture the more the Holy Spirit imparts to us! This is how when we approach His Word with open eyes, open ears and an open heart.

Thus whenever we study Scripture, we need to ask the Holy Spirit to fill us and guide us with regard to observation, interpretation and application of Bible truth.

### **Observation—What does the text say?**

As we read, we should ask ourselves six key questions:

- |         |          |        |
|---------|----------|--------|
| • Who?  | • When?  | • Why? |
| • What? | • Where? | • How? |

**Ten Strategies to First-Rate Reading**

- Read Thoughtfully
- Read Repeatedly
- Read Patiently
- Read Selectively
- Read Prayerfully
- Read Imaginatively
- Read Meditatively
- Read Purposefully
- Read Acquisitively
- Read Telescopically

\* Taken from *Living by the Book* by Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, Moody Press, 1991. Used by permission.

As we read, we should look for six things:\*

- Things that are emphasized
- Things that are repeated
- Things that are related
- Things that are alike, and unlike
- Things that are true to life
- The big picture!

**Interpretation—What does the text mean?**

Five keys to interpretation:\*

- *Content*: Results of your observation step
- *Context*: What comes before and after the passage
- *Comparison*: Scripture with Scripture
- *Culture*: Don't look at text through 21st century, non-Jewish eyes
- *Consultation*: Thousands of gifted believers have wrestled with the text before us; they've left their contributions.

**Application—How do I apply it to my life?**

Nine questions to ask:\*

- Is there an example for me to follow?
- Is there a sin to avoid?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there a prayer to repeat?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a condition to meet?
- Is there a verse to memorize?
- Is there an error to mark?
- Is there a challenge to face?

**FOR YOUR INTEREST**

McLean Bible Church offers Bible study classes throughout the year. We encourage you to take advantage of the resources offered at MBC. A list of available classes may be found on our web site at [mcleanuniversity.mcleanbible.org](http://mcleanuniversity.mcleanbible.org). In this workshop, you will learn how to dig into your own Bible and discover Bible truths for yourself! In addition, we encourage you to take advantage of other class opportunities.

**GETTING SOME EXERCISE TODAY**

Today we're going to do a short exercise that acknowledges interpretation and application but primarily implements the observation step, making observations as we answer three questions from Psalm 119: 1-24.

1. How is God's Word described?
2. What does God's Word do for me?
3. What does God want me to do with regard to Scripture?

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**PSALM 119: 1-24**

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- 1 *Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD.*
- 2 *Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart.*
- 3 *They do nothing wrong; they walk in his ways.*
- 4 *You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed.*
- 5 *Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying your decrees!*
- 6 *Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all your commands.*
- 7 *I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws.*
- 8 *I will obey your decrees; do not utterly forsake me.*
- 9 *How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.*
- 10 *I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.*
- 11 *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*
- 12 *Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me your decrees.*
- 13 *With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth.*
- 14 *I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.*
- 15 *I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.*
- 16 *I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.*
- 17 *Do good to your servant, and I will live; I will obey your word.*
- 18 *Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.*
- 19 *I am a stranger on earth; do not hide your commands from me.*
- 20 *My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times.*
- 21 *You rebuke the arrogant, who are cursed and who stray from your commands.*
- 22 *Remove from me scorn and contempt, for I keep your statutes.*
- 23 *Though rulers sit together and slander me, your servant will meditate on your decrees.*
- 24 *Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors.*

<b>How is God's word described?</b> <i>(e.g. "the law of the LORD", v. 1)</i>	<b>What does God's Word do for me?</b> <i>(e.g. keeps me from sinning, v. 11)</i>	<b>What does God want me to do with regard to Scripture?</b> <i>(e.g. walk according to it, v. 1)</i>

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. As you read and study Scripture, look carefully at what God has revealed about His Word. Did Psalm 119 reveal anything new to you?

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2. How can God's Word meet the current needs in your life right now?

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3. How can you do better in your study of God's Word?

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4. What changes are you willing to make in your own personal schedule in order to spend quality time with God?

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## WRAP-UP: SOME KEY POINTS

### The Bible and the Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit authored and superintended the writing of Scripture.
2. The Holy Spirit illumines the mind of the Christian with regard to Scripture.
3. The Holy Spirit uses Scripture to help believers grow spiritually.

### Sound Methodology

1. Observation—What does the text say?
2. Interpretation—What does the text mean?
3. Application—How can I apply the text to my life?

### Chapter Bible Study (Psalm 119)

1. God's Word is eternal, true and trustworthy.
2. Scripture blesses me and keeps me walking on the right path.
3. God wants me to know His Word, obey it, meditate on it and delight in it.

### Personal application

1. So what? What am I going to do about it?
2. How will I change my daily priorities?

## ACTION POINTS

1. Review Week 2 class notes: *How Can I Read and Understand the Bible?*
2. Look over the article ***Organization of the Bible***. (Attachment 5)
3. Read and answer the Week 3 preview questions.

- How would you describe or define prayer?
- 

- In the past, what has been your experience, if any, with prayer?
- 

- Who can guide and help us to pray? (*Romans 8:26*)
- 

- What should be our motive when we pray?
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### Growing On Your Own

Take time this week to look up each verse in your Bible and read it in context.

- What parameters or limits, if any, does God put on my prayers? (*1 John 5:14-15*)
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4. Read I Want to ***Get Closer to God. Tell Me How!*** See **Attachment 3** at the end of this lesson.

5. Read ***Keeping a Spiritual Journal***. (**Attachment 4**)

6. Listen to Lon Solomon's sermon on CD (Week 2), entitled ***Prayer***.

7. Learn memory verse #2.

- **Philippians 4:6**: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

## NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC

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*How Can I Communicate With God?*

# ATTACHMENT 3

## *I Want To Get Closer to God. Tell Me How!*

*Developing your devotional life by Richard Parke*

Perhaps of all the topics on our class syllabus, this one has been the hardest to prepare. The reason should not be surprising! Satan himself recognizes and fears the incredible power of prayer and Scripture when they are strategically combined in the life of a committed believer. He still remembers so vividly his encounter with Jesus in the wilderness! (Matthew 4:11)

Jesus Christ, the very Son of God, found it necessary to have definite and extended periods of fellowship alone with His Father. Who could be more busy than Jesus? His day was filled from morning to night, speaking to crowds, yet He found it necessary to have time alone with God. (Mark 1:32-33, 35)

Down through the years the biographies and writings of men of God who have done great things for God testify to the necessity of having a devotional time. Robert Murray McCheyne, one of the great spiritual leaders of Scotland, “though intent on accomplishing his work, kept by his rule ‘that he must first see the face of God before he could undertake any duty.’ He felt meditation and prayer to be the very sinews of his work.” He asked, “What plant can be unwatered and not wither?” And he concluded, “I ought to spend the best hours of the day in communion with God.”

Just as a child needs food to grow physically, so we need food to grow spiritually. We can miss a meal and not feel any ill effects, but if we don't eat for a week, we begin to weaken physically. So it is in our spiritual lives. The study of the Word of God and the practice of prayer are vitally important for spiritual growth. We may miss a day without prayer or feeding on the Word of God and not feel any apparent ill effects in our lives, but if we continue this practice, we shall lose the power to live a victorious Christian life.

Private prayer and personal Bible study, on a daily basis, are indispensable to spiritual growth and fruitful Christian ministry. Therefore, Satan will stop at nothing to neutralize or destroy our devotional life. Unfortunately, many of us have gone through hundreds of hours of “quiet times” experiencing nothing but quiet! Someone has said that “Satan rocks the cradle when we sleep at our devotions.” Too often we go out for spiritual exercise before we've had our spiritual breakfast. We march into the average day as a soldier going to battle without his weapons.

### I. A POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE

- A. We should earnestly desire to spend time with God. (*Psalm 27:8; 63:1*)
- B. We should have a sense of joyful anticipation, expectancy. (*Psalm 37:7; Hebrews 11:6*)

### II. A DEFINITE PURPOSE

- A. We need a purpose, goal, or reason for everything we do.
- B. Our purpose should be to develop an intimate relationship with God. (*John 17:3; Philippians 3:8, 10; James 2:23b; Revelation 3:20b*)
- C. Our lives must be on a high level because we cannot take others higher than we ourselves have gone. (*Luke 6:40*)
- D. The devotional time also is a time for self-examination, seeing where we've fallen short and rededicating ourselves to the task before us.

### III. A DEFINITE TIME

- A. Although each individual's schedule will vary, many have found that the morning hours are best, before the responsibilities of the day are faced. Someone has made the interesting observation that a soldier sleeps and then puts on his armor, and not vice-versa!
- B. Moses, whom God chose to lead His people out of Egypt, presented himself before God early in the day. (*Exodus 34:2-4*)
- C. King David, who was called a man after God's own heart, had a daily habit of starting his day with God. (*Psalms 5:3*)
- D. Jesus himself drew strength from early morning communion with the Father. (*Mark 1:35*)
- E. No one can say he doesn't have time. We can do anything we really want to do!
- F. Whether the period is long or short, set aside some time.
- G. A regular habit of eating is as important to our spiritual life as it is to our physical life. Fifteen minutes daily is better than one hour every four days!
- H. "Our devotions should not be measured by the clock. Hurried devotions make weak faith, feeble convictions, questionable piety." (E.M. Bounds)

### IV. A DEFINITE PLACE

- A. Find a quiet, private place of worship so as to avoid distraction.
- B. Suggested places: your bedroom, den, study or library; beneath a tree in a public park, etc.
- C. If privacy is impossible, then learn to concentrate.
- D. In the busyness of Jesus' schedule, He found it necessary to get away, alone with God, undistracted. (*Mark 1:32-35*)
- E. After feeding the 5000, Jesus withdrew and went up into a mountain by Himself to pray. (*Matthew 14:23*)

### V. A DEFINITE PLAN

- A. By "plan" we do not mean some mechanical routine! However, this time with God generally should include a combination of Bible study, prayer, personal worship and meditation.
- B. For example, we might begin by reading a psalm of praise or thanksgiving, e.g. Psalms 95, 100, 145-150. As our heart responds we might reflect on various things for which we thank God: our salvation; the Scriptures; our Christian friends; our political freedom; our health; food and shelter; employment, etc. Then we might turn to another portion of Scripture such as Romans 8, interrupting our reading so as to thank God for each truth that applies to us as a Christian. After praying and reading, we might just pause and remain quiet, listening for thoughts from God for us. Also, any sins that God's Spirit might bring to mind, we should jot down on paper, confess them to God (1 John 1:9) and then go on our way rejoicing!
- C. Supplementary content might also include printed devotional material such as *Our Daily Bread* or *The Daily Walk* or *Streams in the Desert*. None of these, however, should replace our own time of interacting with God and digging into His Word on our own.

# ATTACHMENT 4

## *Keeping a Spiritual Journal*

Throughout this course you will have experiences in your spiritual life that you will want to record for later reference. When God does speak to you, you will want to write down what was said. You should also take the opportunity to pray specifically for people you meet and for your church. You will need a notebook of some kind. Assignments in the notebook will fall into four large categories. You may choose to create other categories if you want to.

Sections in your journal should include:

1. **Testimonies.** This section is for diary accounts of what God is doing in, around and through your life and what you have learned about Him, His purposes and His ways.
2. **Daily Review.** As you review your daily Bible study, identify the most meaningful verse of Scripture and then respond to God. The daily review of your journal provides extra space for you to record summaries of what God is saying to you through His Word, prayer, circumstances and the church. It also can include summaries of adjustments you sense God wants you to make, directions you sense God is calling you to follow, steps of obedience called for and other responses God may be calling you to make for Him.
3. **Weekly Review.** Use the questions in the *Spiritual Journal Weekly Review* at the right to review what God has done during the past week.
4. **Prayer Requests.** This section will be used for recording prayer requests and answers to prayer for individuals and for your church. It can be divided to include requests such as:
  - Personal requests
  - Requests for group members
  - Requests for my church
  - Other special requests

### SPIRITUAL JOURNAL WEEKLY REVIEW

Keeping a spiritual journal will help you remember the important things God says to you and the things He does in your life. Use the following questions to review God's activity in your life each week during this course of study. You only need to respond to those questions that apply to what God has done or revealed.

1. What has God revealed to you about Himself? (*His name, His character, His nature*)
2. What has God revealed to you about His purposes? (*His will, His plans, His desires, His activity around you, His assignment to you, His goals, His objectives*)
3. What has God revealed to you about His ways? (*How He acts, what He does, how He responds in given circumstances, the kind of people He uses, the ways He involves people in His work, the ways He goes about accomplishing His purposes*)
4. What has God done in your life or through your life that has caused you to experience His presence?
5. What Scripture has God used to speak to you about Himself, His purposes or His ways?
6. What particular person or concern has God given you a burden to pray for? How has He guided you to pray for this person or concern?
7. What has God done through circumstances that has given you a sense of His timing or direction concerning any aspect of His will?
8. What word of guidance or truth do you sense God has spoken to you through another believer?
9. What adjustment is God leading you to make in your life?

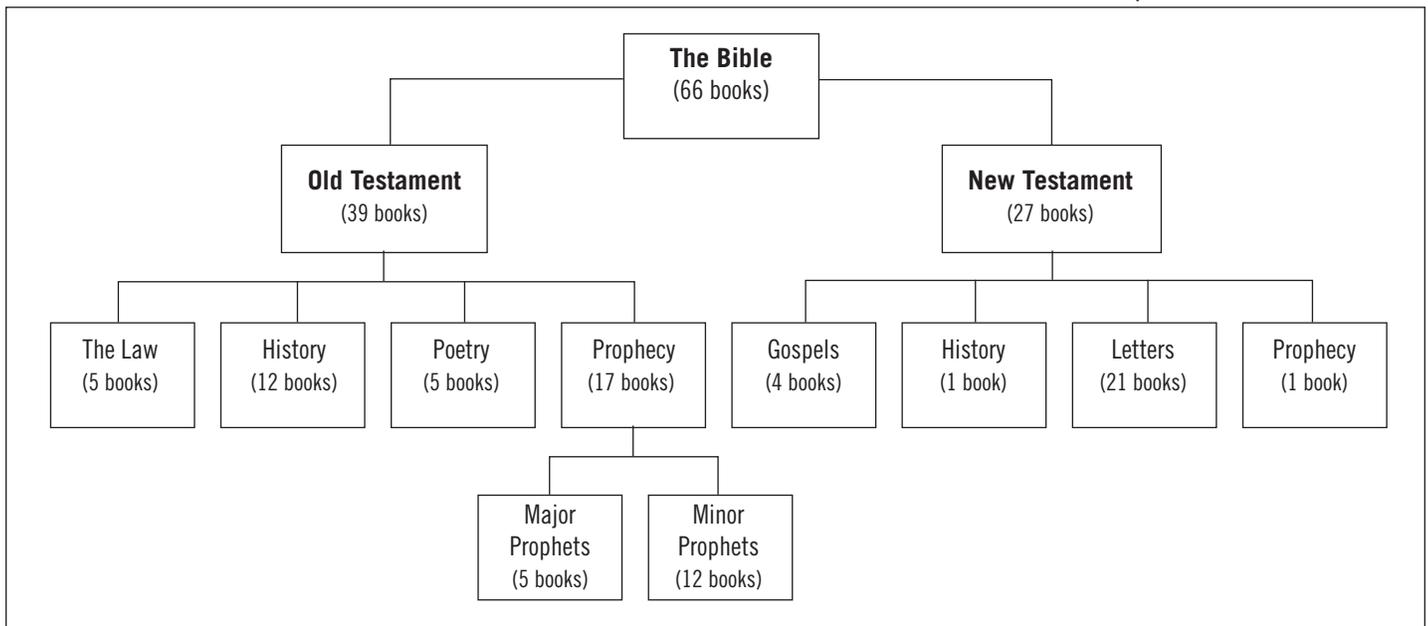
This guide was adapted from Blackaby, H. and King C., *Experiencing God - Leaders Guide* (LifeWay Press, Nashville TN: 1990) 21.

# ATTACHMENT 5

## *Organization of the Bible*

**THE BIBLE:** 66 BOOKS, DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS

### COMPOSITION OF THE BIBLE



At some point you may find it useful to memorize the sequence of books in the New Testament—and even in the Old Testament—to help you locate them.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the Old Testament there are 39 Books, revealed to the Jews and preserved by them until the time of Jesus. The Old Testament is divided into five parts:

#### The Law (Pentateuch, Five Books of Moses)

**Genesis** contains the creation of the universe and man. It shows how man was created to have fellowship with God, but chose to go his own independent way and fellowship was broken. It gives the first promise of the coming Redeemer (3:15) and shows the establishment of the Jewish nation through which He was to come.

**Exodus** is the story of Israel leaving the bondage of Egypt and the beginning of their journey to the Promised Land of Canaan. While on their journey, God gives the Law by which His nation is to live.

**Leviticus** contains the more detailed instructions of the Law. **Numbers** and **Deuteronomy** tell of Israel's wandering in the wilderness and coming to the Promised Land.

**Historical Books**

**Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings and 1-2 Chronicles** tell of the establishment of the Kingdom of Israel in their own land, of Israel's repeated turning from God to sin and finally, God's punishment: the destruction of the First Temple and Israel's exile by Assyria and Babylonia. The last three books—**Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther**—tell of the return of the exiles to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and build the Second Temple. The Apostle Paul tells us in the New Testament that these narrations of Hebrew history were given to be examples to us.

**Poetic Books**

**Job**—a tale of faith amidst incredible loss and misfortune and its reward by God.

**Psalms**—a collection of 150 prayers of praise, worship and supplication to God, many written by King David.

**Proverbs**—a collection of wise sayings and teachings emphasizing the importance of godly living and understanding the Word of God, most attributed to King Solomon.

**Ecclesiastes**—a poetic lament of a man who “had it all” but was bitter and empty because he had lost his closeness with God.

**Song of Solomon**—a poetic love song of the joys and heartaches of wedded love.

**The Major Prophets**

**Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Lamentations of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel** are considered the major books of prophecy in the Old Testament. They were written during the days shortly before Israel was taken into captivity and during the exile period. They warn of impending disaster if Israel did not turn from her wicked ways, as well as prophesy concerning world events. Some of these are still to be fulfilled. But, most importantly, the Major Prophets reveal prophecies concerning God's future provision of salvation through a Savior, the Messiah, the Anointed One, who would redeem mankind by sacrificing His sinless perfection while bearing all of our sins.

**The Minor Prophets**

**Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi** are called the minor books of prophecy in the Old Testament, not because they are less important, but because their writings are shorter. They are thematically similar to, but less extensive than the major prophets. Their prophecies mainly concern Israel and the coming Messiah.

**THE NEW TESTAMENT**

In the New Testament there are 27 Books, revealed to the Apostles and Disciples of Jesus within 75 years of His death and resurrection. The New Testament is divided into four parts.

**The Gospels (literally, the “good news”)**

The four Gospels tell of Christ's life and ministry and His death and resurrection.

**Matthew, *The Gospel of the Messiah***, is the first Gospel and is pivotal in introducing the Messiah and relating Him to the Old Testament. As such, it forms an essential link between the Old and New Testaments. This Gospel was written by one of the original Apostles primarily to Jewish readers. It includes the most complete record of the Sermon on the Mount, also the Lord's Prayer (chapters 5-7). Matthew presents Jesus as the Jewish Messiah and reminds the Jews of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies concerning a Savior whom God would send.

**Mark** is the second and shortest Gospel, written by John Mark, a disciple of Peter, primarily to Roman readers. This Gospel describes Jesus as the Son of God to Romans and other Gentiles, but it does not extensively discuss Old Testament prophecy or the birth of Jesus. Mark is more concerned with the movements and ministry of Christ than His thought or discourse; hence, this book is sometimes referred to as *The Gospel of Action*.

**Luke**, *The Gospel of the Savior of the World*, is the third and longest Gospel. Tradition tells us that Luke wrote this Gospel. He was a physician, a close associate and traveling companion of the Apostle Paul. Written primarily to Greeks and Gentile readers, this Gospel presents Christ as the Perfect Man, the Son of Man, the Man from heaven, virgin-born, who came to seek and save the lost of mankind. Luke is concerned with the mission of Christ as a whole: the outworking of the saving purpose of God. Luke records the largest collection of Jesus' parables and miracles. He may have been the only Gentile author in the New Testament.

**John**, *The Gospel of Belief*, is the last of the Gospels and was written to all mankind. John is the Apostle referred to as the "beloved Apostle" and was one of the closest to Jesus throughout His life and death. John's Gospel is strikingly different from the other three. It was the last to be written—probably around 90 AD—and seems to assume that the readers already know the facts about Jesus' life. John supplements the other accounts and concentrates on interpreting and bringing out the meaning of what took place. He explains God's motive of love as to why He sent His Son to earth. John's main objective is to bring the reader to faith, trust and commitment to Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (20:30-31).

### History of the Early Church

The **Acts of the Apostles** (*Book of Acts*), told by Luke, one of the Gospel writers, is the history of the early Church beginning with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. **Acts** describes Peter's ministry to the Jews and Paul's mission to the Gentiles.

### Epistles

These are letters from the Apostles to churches and individuals. **Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, 1-2 Thessalonians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians** and **Philemon** were all written by Paul while he was in prison at the end of his life. He also wrote **1-2 Timothy** and **Titus** to encourage and teach two of his key disciples in ministry. Next comes the book of **Hebrews**. We do not know the author, but its very content places it on the same level as other Scriptures. It is followed by the General Epistles: **James, 1-2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John** and **Jude**. These seven letters are named for the authors, not the recipients.

### Revelation

The last book of the Bible, also known as the Apocalypse (Greek word for *unveiling, revelation*), was written by Jesus' beloved disciple John, while he was in exile on Patmos, of Christ at His Second Coming.



# CHRISTIANITY 201 :: WEEK 3

## *How Can I Communicate With God?*

### REVIEW OF LAST WEEK'S TOPIC:

*How Can I Read and Understand the Bible?*

### KEY POINTS FROM LAST WEEK'S LESSON:

#### The Bible and the Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit authored and superintended the writing of Scripture.
2. The Holy Spirit illumines the mind of the Christian with regard to Scripture.
3. The Holy Spirit uses Scripture to help believers grow spiritually.

#### Sound Methodology

1. Observation—What does the text say?
2. Interpretation—What does the text mean?
3. Application—How can I apply the text to my life?

#### Chapter Bible Study (Psalm 119)

1. God's Word is eternal, true and trustworthy.
2. Scripture blesses me and keeps me walking on the right path.
3. God wants me to know his word, obey it, meditate on it and delight in it.

#### Personal application

1. So what? What am I going to do about it?
2. How will I change my daily priorities?

### MEMORY VERSE #2

- ☐ **Philippians 4:6:** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

### TODAY'S TOPIC:

*How Can I Communicate with God?*

God communicates His heart and His thoughts to us through our study of Scripture (last week's topic). Similarly, we communicate our heart and thoughts to God through prayer (this week's topic).

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What is prayer? How would you define it?

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2. When you think of someone praying, what words do you hear most frequently?

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3. In your opinion, what are some reasons why people do not pray?

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## DEFINITION OF PRAYER

### *What It Isn't*

1. Not a \_\_\_\_\_ for God.

- Matthew 6:5a:** *And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men.*

2. Not lots of \_\_\_\_\_ .

- Matthew 6:7a:** *And when you pray, do not keep babbling like pagans . . .*

### *What It Is*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ between you and \_\_\_\_\_ that is  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .

- Matthew 6:6:** *But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

**OUR PART IN PRAYER**

- 1. God created and designed us to \_\_\_\_\_ to Him!
- 2. Prayer is like \_\_\_\_\_ to someone we \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3. Prayer is acknowledging to \_\_\_\_\_ what is \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ us.
- 4. The four dimensions of prayer are:  
 A \_\_\_\_\_  
 C \_\_\_\_\_  
 T \_\_\_\_\_  
 S \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. We need to \_\_\_\_\_ on God, not just our \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**GOD’S PURPOSE IN PRAYER**

In the Scriptures, prayer focuses upon God and His work on the inside of us! *God’s objective for our prayers and His answers is to change us, not simply our circumstances!*

Jesus regularly modeled the practice of prayer in His personal life.

**Mark 1:35:** *Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.*

Jesus also taught His disciples how to pray. The Lord’s Prayer is simple but profound. Each verse covers an important aspect of prayer: God and His character; purpose for living; personal needs; personal relationships; Satan and spiritual warfare.

**OUR EXAMPLE: THE LORD’S PRAYER (MATTHEW 6:9-13)**

***God and His Character***

Verse 9 .....Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

We should pray to \_\_\_\_\_ heavenly Father and remember that His name is \_\_\_\_\_.

***Purpose for Living***

Verse 10 .....Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Extending His \_\_\_\_\_ is God’s \_\_\_\_\_ !

***Personal Needs***

Verse 11 .....Give us today our daily bread.

I should pray about my \_\_\_\_\_ needs.

**Personal Relationships**

Verse 12 .....Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Just as God has forgiven my \_\_\_\_\_, I also need to \_\_\_\_\_ others (including myself).

**Satan and Spiritual Warfare**

Verse 13 .....And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

I should pray for strength during times of \_\_\_\_\_ and ask God to protect and deliver me from \_\_\_\_\_ attacks.

**SCRIPTURE AND PRAYER**

Last week's lesson on the study of Scripture and this week's lesson on the practice of prayer fit together like hand and glove. Because Scripture is the written revelation of God's will and God's ways for our lives (*Psalm 119:9-16*), prayer and Scripture are interconnected and must always go together. ***Without Scripture, our prayers have no foundations, no guidelines and no examples.***

- Romans 15:4:** *For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

With this premise—that our prayers must be grounded upon and in accord with Scripture—let's look at some additional truths and principles about prayer.

In this exercise as you examine these blocks with verses of Scripture—whether alone by yourself or in a small group or corporately as a class—ask yourself, “*What does this tell me about prayer, and how can I apply it to my life?*”

1. First and foremost, God is most concerned about the \_\_\_\_\_ of our \_\_\_\_\_.

- Psalm 51:16-17:** <sup>16</sup>*You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.* <sup>17</sup>*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God you will not despise.*

2. Our prayers must be in accordance with God's \_\_\_\_\_ (and they will be when in alignment with God's Word). When we pray within God's will, notice **(a)** we have \_\_\_\_\_ as we approaching God, and **(b)** we have \_\_\_\_\_ of God's answer!

- 1 John 5:14-15:** <sup>14</sup>*This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.* <sup>15</sup>*And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we have asked of him.*

3. Also, when we pray within God's will, then we will \_\_\_\_\_ pray with \_\_\_\_\_ motives!

- James 4:3:** *When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

4. We must lean on the \_\_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_\_ and guides us and \_\_\_\_\_ for us when we pray.
- 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 . . .*
- Ephesians 3:16:** *I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.*
5. We should pray in the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.
6. God wants our prayers and Jesus' answers to bring \_\_\_\_\_ to Him.
7. " \_\_\_\_\_ " and " \_\_\_\_\_ " show that God does not limit our prayers of faith as long as they honor and enhance God's name [reputation].
- John 14:13-14:** *<sup>13</sup>And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. <sup>14</sup>You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.*
8. God's desire is that we should pray \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and not give up.
- Luke 18:1:** *Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.*
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17:** *Pray continually.*
9. Pray about \_\_\_\_\_, and God will give you \_\_\_\_\_.
- Philippians 4:6-7:** *<sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
10. Pray that God will \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ so we can tell others about Jesus.
- Colossians 4:3:** *And pray for us, too, that God may open the door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.*
- 2 Thessalonians 3:1:** *Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it is with you.*
11. Because we're in an ongoing spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_ and his forces, we need to put on the full \_\_\_\_\_ of God and pray for \_\_\_\_\_ from wicked and evil men.
- Ephesians 6:11-12:** *Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*
- 2 Thessalonians 3:2:** *And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith.*
12. We should pray that we might understand and experience the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.
- Ephesians 3:17b-18:** *<sup>17b</sup>And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup>may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ . . .*

13. Scripture urges us to practice all aspects of prayer and to include those in \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ over us.

- 1 Timothy 2:1-2a:** *<sup>1</sup>I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for everyone—<sup>2</sup>for kings and all those in authority.*

## APPLICATION

### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why is prayer vital for the healthy Christian?

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2. What are the top 2 or 3 principles you learned today about prayer?  
Why are they important to you?

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Prayer is an essential component of a believer's life and walk!

But **knowing** and **doing** are two different things! Without regular, spontaneous prayer our lives become dry and fruitless. The Holy Spirit and the Word of God will make our prayer life what God wants it to be, but we must do our part.

### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Review *7 Minutes with God* from Week 2 *Action Points*.
2. Ask a Christian friend, whom you respect, to pray for you and with you.
3. Join a small prayer and study group.
4. Make a prayer journal. (See Attachment 4 in last week's class notes.)

**WRAP-UP: SOME KEY POINTS**

1. We communicate our heart and thoughts to God through prayer.
2. God created and designed us to relate to Him!
3. The four dimensions of prayer are adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication.
4. Jesus is our role model for prayer.
5. Scripture must be the measuring stick, foundation, resource, handbook and example for our prayer life.

**ACTION POINTS**

1. Pray each day this week using the **ACTS** concept.
2. Draft a prayer list, especially names of family members and friends whom you desire to come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
3. Review Week 3 class notes: *How Can I Communicate with God?*
4. Listen to Lon Solomon’s sermon on CD (Week 3) entitled **Lead us Not Into Temptation**.
5. Learn memory verse #3.

□ **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.*

6. Read and answer the Week 4 preview questions.

- How would you define temptation?
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- Are we alone in this struggle against temptation? How does God figure in?  
*(1 Corinthians 10:13)*
- 

- How would you define sin?
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- How many of us have committed at least one sin?  
*(Romans 3:10-12, 23)*
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- To which three target areas of temptation does John refer in 1 John 2:16?
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- How does God want us to respond after we have sinned?  
*(1 John 1:9)*
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**NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC**

*How Do I Handle Temptation and Sin?*

# CHRISTIANITY 201 :: WEEK 4

## *How Do I Handle Temptation and Sin?*

### MEMORY VERSE #3

- **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'S TOPIC:

#### *How Do I Handle Temptation and Sin?*

When someone becomes a member of God's family, he or she becomes more aware of and sensitized to temptation and sin—our topic today. The new spiritual nature, that God gives you, is totally alien to the old sin nature you are born with! There is bound to be conflict. It is important to know that you now have, through the Holy Spirit, the ability to conquer any sin in your life. God's Word, the Bible is the standard for right living. Through prayer we communicate with God to understand sin in our lives and ask for forgiveness.

Today we will explore this topic by asking five important questions.

### FIVE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CONCERNING TEMPTATION AND SIN

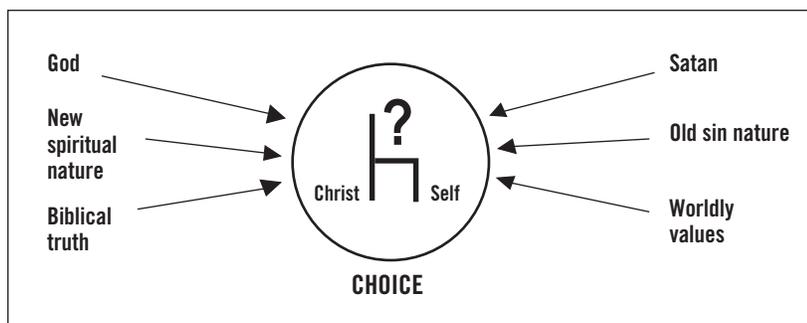
1. What is temptation?
2. How do I handle temptation?
3. How does temptation differ from sin?
4. If I give in to temptation, what effect does sin have on my spiritual life?
5. How do I handle sin?

### QUESTION #1: WHAT IS TEMPTATION?

#### A. Definition of temptation

- **James 1:14:** *But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.*

***Temptation is when we are enticed and presented with an opportunity to choose a path that is not God's way.***



**B. All of us are tempted.**

**1 Corinthians 10:13a:** *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man . . .*

**C. How and when are we tempted?**

**James 1:13-15:** <sup>13</sup>*When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone; <sup>14</sup>but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. <sup>15</sup>Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*

What are some ways a person can be tempted?

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What are some times when we are most vulnerable to temptation?

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**D. Three target areas of temptation**

**1 John 2:16:** *For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world.*

What three target areas of temptation does he mention?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ : "the \_\_\_\_\_ of sinful man"
2. \_\_\_\_\_ : "the \_\_\_\_\_ of his eyes"
3. \_\_\_\_\_ : "the \_\_\_\_\_ of what he has and does"

**E. Jesus faced and defeated temptation**

**Matthew 4:1-11:** <sup>1</sup>*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." <sup>4</sup>Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" <sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. <sup>6</sup>"If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" <sup>7</sup>Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" <sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. <sup>9</sup>"All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" <sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.*

Jesus was tempted in the same three areas:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 3)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 6)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ (verses 8-9)

Jesus experienced temptation, but how was He different from us?

- Hebrews 4:15:** *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.*
- 1 Peter 2:22:** *He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.*

How did Jesus respond to each of Satan’s temptations? \_\_\_\_\_ (verses 4, 7, 10)

Notice that Jesus’ key to victory over temptation was the authoritative use of Scripture!

**F. Three sources of temptation**

What is the first source of temptation? \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 John 2:15:** *Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

What does John mean by “the world”? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Galatians 5:17, what is the second source of temptation? \_\_\_\_\_

- Galatians 5:17:** *For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.*

What is the third source of temptation? \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 Peter 5:8:** *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

**QUESTION #2: HOW DO I HANDLE TEMPTATION?**

The verses which follow will help us discover how we can experience victory over temptation.

***How can I overcome temptation?***

1. Like David, I need to hide \_\_\_\_\_ in my heart, and I need to use it with \_\_\_\_\_ !

- Psalm 119:11:** *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*
- Matthew 4:3-4:** *The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”*

**The World**

*The worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.*

*Mark 4:19*

**Spiritual Warfare**

From day one, followers of Christ enter a spiritual battlefield and will be in daily spiritual conflict as long as they reside in this world.

**The Armor of God**  
(Ephesians 6:14-17)

- Belt (truth)
- Footwear (gospel)
- Breastplate (righteousness)
- Shield (faith)
- Helmet (salvation)
- Sword (Word of God)

**Foothold**

Foothold is translated from the Greek word **topos**—place—that is, a small piece of territory, a small area, limited in size. In other words, “Don’t give Satan one inch of territory in your life or he’ll take a mile!”

2. I must put on the full \_\_\_\_\_ of God.

**Ephesians 6:11, 14-17:** *Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. . .<sup>14</sup>Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup>and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup>In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup>Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

3. God is always \_\_\_\_\_. He will give us a \_\_\_\_\_.

**1 Corinthians 10:13b,c:** *And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

What are some “ways out” that God provides when we face temptation?

4. I need to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ so I’m not caught off guard.

**Matthew 26:41:** *Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.*

5. I must not give the \_\_\_\_\_ a foothold.

**Ephesians 4:27:** *And do not give the devil a foothold.*

What do you think this means? \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_ to God first is the key to \_\_\_\_\_ the devil!

**James 4:7:** *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

7. \_\_\_\_\_ evil desires is not enough. We need to \_\_\_\_\_ righteousness!

**2 Timothy 2:22:** *Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

8. It is Jesus Christ who \_\_\_\_\_ and enables me to be victorious over sin and temptation.

**Philippians 4:13:** *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (New King James Version)*

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

What do you think? Will facing temptation get easier or more difficult as a person moves ahead on his or her spiritual journey?

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Which of the previous principles on handling temptation will you employ when needed?

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**QUESTION #3: HOW DOES TEMPTATION DIFFER FROM SIN?**

Having defined temptation as *enticement to choose a way that is not God’s way*, we need to make one important clarification and distinction before we answer the question “How does temptation differ from sin?”

Often the English words *test* and *temptation* are used interchangeably in the Bible, so how can we know which is which? Context and good theology!

**Test**

A *test* or trial comes from God to examine and refine our faith.

- Deuteronomy 8:2:** *Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.*
- 1 Peter 1:6-7:** *6In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

**Temptation**

A *temptation* comes from Satan who tries to get us to sin.

- James 1:13:** *When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.*

Having made this clarification and distinction between testing and temptation, how then is temptation different from sin?

1. Being tempted is not a sin, but temptation may \_\_\_\_\_ to sin. Sin is the act of \_\_\_\_\_ in thought, word or deed.
2. With every temptation there are two \_\_\_\_\_ : right and wrong, God’s way or my way, but sin involves only the \_\_\_\_\_ choice: my way.
3. Whereas temptation involves a moral and spiritual choice, sin is a moral and spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. Temptation is \_\_\_\_\_ and inevitable, but sin is \_\_\_\_\_ .
5. Sin always causes \_\_\_\_\_ and results in \_\_\_\_\_ from God. Temptation does not.

**Temptation**

*Temptation is enticement to choose a path that is not God’s way.*

**Sin**

*Falling short of God’s moral and spiritual target.*

Someone has said, “You can’t stop birds from flying over your head, but you can stop them from landing and building a nest in your hair.”

#### QUESTION #4: IF I GIVE IN TO TEMPTATION, WHAT EFFECT DOES SIN HAVE ON MY SPIRITUAL LIFE?

##### **A. Sin CANNOT affect a believer’s RELATIONSHIP to God.**

If we cannot earn salvation by good works, it’s quite logical that we cannot lose our salvation by bad works!

No, it’s not a performance thing we do. Religion is spelled **D-O**. Christianity is spelled **D-O-N-E**. Jesus has **done** for us what we were unable to **do**.

So if salvation is something God Himself accomplishes and guarantees to His children, then you and I cannot undo it! Otherwise God’s Word, God’s character and God’s power would be violated and compromised.

##### **B. Sin DOES affect a believer’s FELLOWSHIP with God.**

As we answer the next question—“How do I handle sin?”—we will learn some biblical principles that a Christian can apply anytime he or she senses that fellowship with God has been broken. It’s God’s desire that we strive to walk in fellowship with Him daily!

#### QUESTION #5: HOW DO I HANDLE SIN?

##### A PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION FROM SCRIPTURE

Luke 15 includes the story of the Prodigal Son. It’s not our objective today to interpret this parable. Rather, we want to focus upon the steps we need to take—like the Prodigal Son—to restore our fellowship with God our Father whenever we have sinned.

☐ **Luke 15:11-24:** <sup>11</sup>Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons.” <sup>12</sup>The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup>“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. <sup>14</sup>After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup>He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! <sup>18</sup>I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.’ <sup>20</sup>So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup>But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup>For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

### ***The Foundation—His Relationship With His Father***

First and foremost, he was a son. This father-son relationship was permanent, secure, unchanging. Similarly, a believer has a permanent, secure, unchanging relationship with God, the Heavenly Father. We are God's spiritual children because of Jesus Christ.

☐ **Luke 15:11:** *Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons."*

### ***The Fall—His Fellowship With His Earthly Father and His Heavenly Father . . . Broken***

He sinned. Whether in thought, word or deed, sin is always the first step in breaking fellowship with God and others.

☐ **Luke 15:13:** *Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.*

### ***The Turning Point: A Crisis***

It got his attention! In the midst of this crisis, the Prodigal Son saw his need and his own inadequacy. Similarly, when we are spiritually distant from God—out of fellowship with Him—God uses some crisis or problem to get our attention and reveal our need to restore our fellowship with Him.

☐ **Luke 15:14-16:** *After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.*

### ***The Restorative Process***

He changed his attitude and his actions. Likewise, we need a change of heart and mind toward God. Each of the following steps must be as true for us as it was for the Prodigal Son.

#### **1. He came to a point of brokenness.**

☐ **Luke 15:17:** *When he came to his senses, he said, "How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!"*

#### **2. He acknowledged his sin.** (He took personal responsibility for it.)

☐ **Luke 15:18-19:** <sup>18</sup>*I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.*

#### **3. He took action and repented.**

He made a spiritual U-turn. He made a decision to abandon his unrighteous lifestyle that got him into trouble in the first place.

☐ **Luke 15:20:** *So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.*

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#### **Brokenness**

☐ **Psalm 51:17...** *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

*The word **contrite** literally means **worn down**, hence remorseful, regretful, sorry for one's sin and therefore disposed to correction.*

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#### **Repentance**

*Means a change of mind. Whereas brokenness leads to a **mental disposition** toward correction and change, repentance leads to a **volitional decision** for correction and change.*

*Sometimes repentance involves **restitution** (where our sin has hurt someone else).*

*But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of all my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham." Luke 19:8-9*

*Salvation came to Zacchaeus because his faith in Jesus was proven by his actions: restitution.*

**4. He confessed his sin to God and to his father.**

He recognized his sin—that his thoughts and actions were wrong—and agreed with God about it. He also agreed to accept whatever consequences his father chose because he accepted total responsibility for his actions.

- ❑ **Luke 15:21:** *The son said to him, 'Father I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'*

***The Result—Restoration***

He was restored to fellowship with his earthly father and with his heavenly Father. Likewise this needs to happen between us and God and between us and others. And God rejoices whenever it does!

- ❑ **Luke 15:22-24:** *But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.*

**APPLICATION**

- ❑ **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.*

Memory verse #3 for today is God's answer for us as well as for the Prodigal Son. God says to the Christian, "I love you! If you confess your sins, I'll forgive you and restore you to fellowship with Me."

**WRAP-UP: SOME KEY POINTS**

1. Every one of us is tempted.
2. We are tempted by the world, by our old sin nature, and by the devil.
3. God wants us to experience victory over temptation.
4. Being tempted is not a sin, but temptation may lead to sin.
5. Sin cannot affect my relationship to God, but it does break my fellowship with Him.
6. Whenever I sin, God wants me to take biblical steps to restore my fellowship with Him (and with others whom my sin has affected).

**ACTION POINTS**

1. Review today's notes and Scripture references.
2. Listen to Lon Solomon's sermon on CD (Week 4) entitled ***Being a Witness For Jesus***.
3. Get alone in a quiet place this week. Prayerfully ask God to make your heart responsive. With paper and pen in hand, write down every sinful thought or action the Holy Spirit brings to mind. Then re-read 1 John 1:9 and ask God to forgive and cleanse your heart. Then put a large "X" over the list you have written and thank God for what He has done!
4. Read the booklet ***My Heart—Christ's Home***.
5. Learn memory verse #4.
  - **Matthew 4:19:** "Come follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."
6. See Attachment # 6. Read ***Guidelines for Preparing Your Testimony***.
7. Read and answer the Week 5 preview questions.
  - What does the Bible say about verbalizing my faith in Jesus?  
*(Romans 10:10, 13-15; Ephesians 6:19; 1 Peter 3:15)*

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  - What key items do I need to cover when I share my faith?  
*(1 Corinthians 15:3-4)*

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  - What role does the Holy Spirit play in sharing my faith? *(Acts 1:8)*

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  - Name two key ingredients and prerequisites for sharing your faith. *(Acts 4:31)*

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  - Name one characteristic of an effective witness according to Ephesians 6:19 and Acts 4:31.

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  - How do you think Matthew 28:19 applies to you?

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**Growing On Your Own**

*Take time this week to look up each verse in your Bible and read it in context.*

***My Heart—Christ's Home***,  
Robert Boyd Munger (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986)

# ATTACHMENT 6

## *Guidelines for Preparing Your Testimony*

1. Ask God to give you wisdom and guidance as you share your story of how you came to put your trust in Christ.
2. Give enough details so someone else can understand how to become a follower of Jesus Christ after listening to you. Use some verses from Scripture.
3. Because Jesus Christ is the only way to eternal life, be sure to make this point clearly. (John 14:6)
4. Follow this simple three-point format:
  - **Life before I trusted Christ** (*Without sensationalizing or overly colorful detail, explain your spiritual background.*)
  - **How I came to trust in Christ** (*Be specific. This section needs the most emphasis and detail.*)
  - **Life since I trusted Christ** (*Give examples of changes He has made, what He means to you now.*)
5. Write out your story in such a way that others will identify with your past and present experiences. This will prepare you not only for public situations (baptism, etc.) but also for future one-on-one opportunities that God may give you.
6. Avoid . . .
  - Using statements which reflect negatively on people or other religions and church denominations.
  - Preaching at people. This is a testimony, not a “preachimony.”
  - Using words that are meaningless to non-Christians. e.g., “saved,” “born again,” etc.

Now you're ready to prepare your story. Using the outline on the next page, quickly list the major points as they come to mind. Later you can write it out in more detail, but try to keep it short and to the point. This will help you keep it to three or four minutes when you actually share it aloud later. Some people find it helpful to share their story first with a friend who can identify and jot down the major points in outline form.

As you begin, ask God to give you the right words and approach. Trust Him to do it. This is as much His story as it is yours.

*My Story*

1. **Before I trusted Christ** *(Be general. Avoid sensationalizing and negative statements.)*

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2. **How I trusted Christ** *(Remember, this section needs the most detail.)*

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3. **Since I've trusted Christ** *(Discuss the changes He has made in your life and what He means to you now.)*

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# CHRISTIANITY 201 :: WEEK 5

## *How Can I Share My Faith?*

### MEMORY VERSE #4

□ **Matthew 4:19:** *“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”*

### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. When you get some good news, with whom do you share it first and why?

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2. If entrusting your life to Jesus Christ is life’s most important decision, then what is the most important thing you can do for someone else?

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3. Who introduced you to Jesus Christ? What was it in them or in their approach that helped make the message of Jesus Christ attractive to you?

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4. In your opinion, what are some reasons why people do not share their faith?

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## WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The gospel is “good news” that God intends for us to share with others. The Apostle Paul explains that the gospel centers around Jesus Christ. The heart of the good news is Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection.

- ☐ **1 Corinthians 15:1, 3-4:** *<sup>1</sup>Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand . . . <sup>3</sup>For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>that **He was buried**, that **He was raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures.*

## WHAT IS EVANGELISM?

### 1. Evangelism is a verbal witness.

- ☐ **Matthew 28:5-7:** *<sup>5</sup>The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. <sup>6</sup>He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup>Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”*
- ☐ **Romans 10:13-14:** *...<sup>13</sup>for, “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” <sup>14</sup>How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? **And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?***
- ☐ **1 Peter 3:15:** *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. **Always be prepared to give an answer** to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect . . .*

What’s the message we need to verbalize?

- God loves you and wants a personal relationship with you!
- God offers forgiveness for your sins through Jesus Christ.
- God offers you eternal life.
- God wants you to allow Him to manage and direct your life.

### 2. Evangelism is a lifestyle.

Of course, sharing one’s faith must be more than verbal. It’s a lifestyle. It’s who we are as believers in Jesus Christ. ***This means evangelism is a full-time job!***

***Our mission field is wherever God has placed us*** . . . in our neighborhood, in our workplace, in our home, shopping, playing ball or on a walk.

***We should always be looking for opportunities*** to share the good news. God’s plans and God’s ways for reaching the world with the gospel are exciting! We should be asking, “Lord, how do you want to use me in your plan of redemption?”

- ☐ **2 Corinthians 5:20a:** *We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors . . .*

- What is an **ambassador**, and what are his or her duties?
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- How are **we** ambassadors for Jesus Christ?

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## WHY SHOULD WE SHARE OUR FAITH?

If entrusting your life to Jesus Christ is life's most important decision, then what's the most important thing you can do for someone else?

Sharing good news—telling God's message about Jesus—motivates and energizes us. But it does more than that!

1. It fulfills Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - Luke 19:10:** *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.*
  - Matthew 4:19:** *"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."*
2. It obeys Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - Matthew 28:19:** *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*
  - Acts 1:8:** *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*
3. It changes someone else's \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - 2 Corinthians 5:17:** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*
4. It changes \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - 1 Thessalonians 2:19:** *For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?*
5. It brings great \_\_\_\_\_ to God.
  - Luke 15:7:** *I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.*
  - Luke 15:10:** *In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.*

## HOW DO WE SHARE OUR FAITH?

1. Learn from the example of first century Christians.

Their message and their preaching were not with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ words.

Their message and their preaching were with a demonstration of the \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

- 1 Corinthians 2:4:** *My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power.*

The content of their preaching was \_\_\_\_\_ .

- 1 Corinthians 1:23a:** *But we preach Christ crucified . . .*

The content of their preaching also including the fact that God \_\_\_\_\_ Him from the \_\_\_\_\_ .

- Acts 2:24:** *But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.*

Those who heard Peter and John were greatly \_\_\_\_\_ . The gospel does stir people up!

- Acts 4:2:** *They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.*

Their efforts in bearing witness for Christ often brought personal \_\_\_\_\_ and insults as well as strong \_\_\_\_\_ .

- 1 Thessalonians 2:2:** *We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition.*

The gospel message was \_\_\_\_\_ and brought response because God's Word is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and judges the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the heart.

- Acts 2:37:** *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"*
- Hebrews 4:12:** *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

Their witness was effective for many who heard the Word of God \_\_\_\_\_ , and many lives were changed!

- Acts 4:4:** *But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.*

They \_\_\_\_\_ first! Before they talked to people about God, they talked to God about people!

Because they were filled with the \_\_\_\_\_ , they spoke the Word of God \_\_\_\_\_ .

- Acts 4:31:** *After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.*

Their testimony was ongoing. Day after day, they \_\_\_\_\_ teaching and proclaiming the good news about Jesus Christ!

- Acts 5:42:** *Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.*

Because they were faithful with the gospel message, God always brought some \_\_\_\_\_ !  
"A few men became followers of Paul and \_\_\_\_\_ .

- Acts 17:32,34a:** <sup>32</sup>*When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." . . .* <sup>34</sup>*A few men became followers of Paul and believed.*

2. Learn by going out there and doing it!

The suggestions for sharing your faith, which follow, all assume that your life is distinct and different because of Jesus Christ. Remember, evangelism is a life style, not just a task or series of steps to take when we happen to recognize a given opportunity. God is constantly providing opportunities. Sadly, most of the time for one reason or another, we don't see them or we're afraid to step out of our comfort zone to take a risk for Jesus. We should love Jesus Christ so much and have such an eternal focus that what others think or how they respond should become insignificant by comparison.

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. What are some of the obstacles that keep you from sharing your faith?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. For each obstacle, what can you do to eliminate it?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SOME PRACTICAL HOW-TO'S FOR SHARING YOUR FAITH**

1. Remember, evangelism is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .
2. Go to God in \_\_\_\_\_ right at the \_\_\_\_\_ !
3. Just be \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. Don't be \_\_\_\_\_ .
5. Find things you can \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ on them.
6. Mention \_\_\_\_\_ of your \_\_\_\_\_ early on.
7. Think of the \_\_\_\_\_ first.
8. Catch their \_\_\_\_\_ . Cause them to \_\_\_\_\_ by asking a casual \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - "Do you ever think about spiritual things?"
  - "Where do you think you are on your spiritual journey?"

9. Start \_\_\_\_\_ .
10. Share your \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ .
11. Stay \_\_\_\_\_ !
12. Use \_\_\_\_\_ with confidence and authority.
13. Know when to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ back graciously.
14. Remember, it's \_\_\_\_\_ responsibility to \_\_\_\_\_ hearts to respond to the gospel!
- Acts 16:14:** *One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.*
15. \_\_\_\_\_ their responsiveness. Are they \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to respond to the gospel?
- “Have you come to the point of putting your trust in Jesus Christ, or are you still in process?”
  - “Where would you say you are right now in the process?”
16. Don't be afraid to help someone make a \_\_\_\_\_ .
- “Is there any reason right now why you couldn't ask God to forgive your sins and become the Manager of your life?”

God is much more interested in the condition of our hearts than our words. If someone seems responsive and ready, suggest that you bow your heads, then lead him or her in prayer phrase by phrase as follows or prompt him to pray the same things in his own words:

*Dear God, I know I'm separated from You because of my sin. Thank you for sending Your Son Jesus as the Lamb of God to die on the cross in my place, to shed His sinless and perfect blood to pay for my sins. Thank You for raising Him from the grave on the third day, that He's alive and desires to give me eternal life.*

*Today—by faith—I'm choosing to make a spiritual U-turn: away from sin and towards Jesus. Please forgive all my sins and give me eternal life. I'm trusting only and completely in what He has done for me.*

*Dear Jesus, I want to know You and to thank You personally. I open the door of my life right now and ask You to come in. Please manage and redirect my life. Make me the kind of person You created me to be. From this day forward, I want my life to bring honor and glory to You. Amen.*

1. Acknowledge his or her decision and celebrate it!
  - Luke 15:10b:** “. . . there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”
2. Talk about what this decision means.
  - 2 Corinthians 5:17:** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*
  - Help the person take the next step.
  - Encourage him to tell someone else right away.
  - Invite him to sit with you next Sunday at the worship service.
  - Mention the next Christianity 101 class.

APPLICATION

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. If appropriate, share with your group about someone who needs to hear your testimony. How do you plan to approach them?

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1. Review *Guidelines for Preparing Your Testimony* from last week’s notes.
2. Finish writing your testimony (if you have not already done so).
3. Share your story with someone this week: *“I have a homework assignment. Would you be willing to help me out?”*

**WRAP-UP: SOME KEY POINTS**

1. The gospel is “good news”—namely our salvation which is based upon faith in Christ’s death, burial and resurrection.
2. Evangelism is . . .
  - A verbal witness.
  - A lifestyle.
3. We learn how to share our faith by going out there and doing it!
  - Remember it’s a process.
  - Begin with prayer.
  - Depend on God’s power.
  - Be yourself.
  - Be gentle and respectful.
  - Find things in common.
  - Use Scripture.
  - Stay on track.
  - Ask for a response.
  - Leave the results to God.

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**ACTION POINTS**


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**Growing On Your Own**

Take time this week to look up each verse in your Bible and read it in context.

1. Review Week 5 class notes: *How Can I Share My Faith?*
2. Register now for **Christianity 301: Sharing the Message of Jesus Christ**. This course includes role-playing, real-life video dramas and lots of practical how-to information and illustrations.
3. Read Attachment #7 **Key Verses to Communicate the Gospel**.
4. Glance at and read later Attachment #9 **Twelve Reasons People Hesitate To Follow Christ and What To Say**.
5. Read and answer the Week 6 preview questions.
  - Is God interested in growth and fruitfulness? Explain!  
(2 Peter 3:18; John 15:8)
  - What is the relationship between reading the Bible and spiritual growth?  
(Romans 10:17; 2 Peter 2:2)
  - Think back to previous lessons and list any steps or disciplines you need to begin (or continue) so you can keep on growing in your walk with God.
  - Do I need other believers to help me stay on track?  
(Hebrews 10:24-25)
  - Do I have to give an account to anyone?  
(Romans 14:12)
6. Listen to Lon Solomon's sermon on CD (Week 5) entitled **Giving to God**.
7. Learn memory verse #5.
  - ☐ **2 Peter 3:18:** *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

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**NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC**


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*How Do I Keep on Growing?*

# ATTACHMENT 7

## *Key Verses to Communicate the Gospel*

Remember the first verse (John 3:16) and start your conversation there. Next to John 3:16 in your Bible write John 17:3; next to John 17:3 in your Bible write John 10:10 . . . and so on.

### **God's Love and Plan**—*He created us to know Him personally.*

- God's love ..... John 3:16
- God's plan..... John 17:3; John 10:10

### **Our Problem**—*We are sinful and separated from God.*

- We are sinful..... Romans 3:23
- We are separated..... Isaiah 59:2
- We have strayed..... Isaiah 53:6
- Judgment is certain..... Hebrews 9:27

### **God's Remedy**—*Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin.*

- He died in our place..... Romans 5:8b
- He died for our sins..... 1 Corinthians 15:3
- He rose from the dead..... 1 Corinthians 15:4
- He is the only way to God..... John 14:6
- He takes away our sins..... Psalm 103:12; John 1:29

### **Our Response**—*Individually we must receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.*

- We must receive Christ..... John 1:12
- We receive Him through faith..... Ephesians 2:8-9
- When we receive Christ, we experience a second birth..... John 3:1-8
- We receive Him by personal invitation ..... Revelation 3:20

### **Assurance of Salvation**

- Know you have eternal life..... 1 John 5:13
- We receive salvation through faith ..... Ephesians 2:8-9
- God will never leave you..... Hebrews 13:5b
- Faith in Jesus is the issue..... John 5:24

### **Don't Depend on Feelings for Your Salvation**

- The promise of God's Word..... 1 John 5:9

# ATTACHMENT 8

## *Twelve Reasons People Hesitate to Follow Christ and What to Say by Paul Barger*

### 1. "I DON'T WANT TO GIVE UP ALL THE FUN IN MY LIFE."

This is primarily a misconception. Jesus Christ changes a person's desires in life so he or she finds a new and deeper joy in things that are really important and significant in life. Scripture is full of examples of joy, enjoyment, celebration and laughter, and gives clear guidelines for living that reflects God's best for us. Jesus said, "I came that they might have life and have it abundantly." (*John 10:10b*)

### 2. "I'M AFRAID I WILL LOSE CONTROL OF MY LIFE."

A large part of this concern is based on an inadequate understanding of God's character of love, kindness and desire for man to exercise free will (see also question 8). Another part of this concern is that we feel we know what is best for us. It is important to realize that the God of the Bible is someone who knows everything about your life and has your very best welfare in mind.

In addition, being in control of your life is largely a myth anyway. Could you control when or where you were born? Or how you look? Or what family or culture you come from? Think of all the things about your life that you really can't control!

God will never force you to submit to His plan for you. He has given us free will. To surrender control to Him is to acknowledge the reality that He alone is really in control of the events of our lives. To willingly trust Him with the direction of our lives results in the very best for us.

### 3. "I DON'T WANT TO GIVE UP MY CAREER AND PURSUIT OF SUCCESS."

Actually, the Bible talks a lot about success. It does, however, couch the concept in terms of one's relationship with Jesus Christ and not how much money one makes. God most likely wants your "light to shine" in whatever field you find yourself in. Of course, God may have a plan for your life that includes a career change. But if so, it will be something you find a growing desire for and will experience God's very best in it.

### 4. "I'M AFRAID I WILL BECOME A 'WEIRD' PERSON."

Do we have a personality change? Actually, no. We find a new reason and strength for living. What happens is that Christ changes us from the inside out—in ways that liberate who we really are. He enables us to become what He designed us to be, not something weird, but a person who reflects the beauty and ingenuity of the Creator.

### 5. "MY FRIENDS WILL OSTRACIZE/REJECT ME."

There is certainly a grain of truth in this. As a new Christian's values change, sometimes his friends don't know what to think. Depending on how the new Christian expresses his feelings about this he can either send the wrong message to his friends or draw out their interest in what they see happening in his life. Some new Christians coming out of destructive lifestyles may need to limit their time spent with old buddies simply to minimize the influence of the old lifestyle they wish to escape. This can lead to feelings of rejection on both sides, but as the

believer stands firm and relies on Christ, his old friends will see someone with new strength and realize that they too can be free of some of the destructive things that drag them down.

#### **6. “I’M TURNED OFF BY ALL THE HYPOCRITES IN THE CHURCH.”**

Unfortunately, there are a lot of hypocrites in the church! But there are hypocrites in all walks of life. It is important to realize that we cannot evaluate the claims of Christ based on the lives of those claiming to follow Him. The honest seeker and skeptic needs to look at the life of Christ and see if He lived consistently with His claims. If He is the way, truth and life, then we must grapple with Him and not be led astray from the truth by the inconsistencies of those claiming to be His followers.

#### **7. “CHRISTIANITY IS JUST A PSYCHOLOGICAL CRUTCH FOR WEAK PEOPLE.”**

Far from being a crutch, Christianity in truth is more like an iron lung. We are designed to live in a vital relationship with the living God. To try to fill one’s life with anything less than that is an exercise in futility. Jesus does not want to be your crutch, He wants to be your life! Only one thing can really fill the “God-shaped vacuum,” and that is Jesus Christ. Some people come to Him in a time of difficulty because that is the only thing that breaks through their shell of pride and self-dependence.

#### **8. “I’M NOT SURE THAT I CAN TRUST GOD WITH MY LIFE.”**

Frequently, this concern can stem from a limited or distorted view of God. For others, their negative view of God is shaped by the closest authority figures in their lives, their parents. Unfortunately in some cases, their parents may have been harsh, abusive, absent or withdrawn. If so, children grow up learning not to trust God because they project on God those qualities of the parent.

Some people tend to see difficult circumstances in life as a sign that God is unloving, angry with them or punishing them. While the Bible does not fully explain this paradox, it is clear that regardless of circumstances, God is compassionate, forgiving, and accepting.

Christ’s death on the cross is the ultimate display of the love and grace of God. All other circumstances must be evaluated in light of the cross. If God loved us enough to send His Son to die for us, then we can trust Him with every area of our life. The measure of His trustworthiness was demonstrated at the cross. (See Romans 5:7-10)

#### **9. “I’M TOO UNWORTHY TO BE ACCEPTED BY GOD AND OTHER CHRISTIANS.”**

People who have made a lot of mistakes in their lives feel completely unworthy of God’s love. They know what is inside them and feel beyond help. This attitude, of course, is based on the idea that somehow we can merit God’s love and forgiveness, if only we can “clean up our act.” We are ALL unworthy. As a matter of fact, the Apostle Paul wrote that as a persecutor of the Church he was “chief among sinners.” And yet Christ forgave him and made him a prime example of the grace of God.

Some people also use this “I’m too unworthy” argument as an excuse to reject Christ, when in reality they don’t want to take responsibility for their past actions, nor are they willing to grapple with the attitude and behavioral changes they will need to make in partnership with God.

**10. "I CAN'T LIVE UP TO THE COMMITMENT REQUIRED."**

Many look at their lives and feel that they could never live up to the high standards of the Christian life. As a matter of integrity they don't want to accept Christ and then not follow through on the commitment. The Bible clearly tells us that just as there is nothing we can do to merit God's acceptance of us, neither can we live up to God's standards in our own human strength. That is the good news of Christ. Jesus doesn't ask us to struggle in our own strength to live the Christian life, but to trust in Him to produce His life in us. Again, this "I can't" statement may just be a ploy and a rationalization to excuse oneself from coming to Christ ("The standard is just too high, so why try?").

**11. "I FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN THE CHURCH; I DON'T FIT IN."**

Churches come in all kinds of different styles. Some are very traditional, some very contemporary. People need to find the kind of church where they feel accepted and comfortable with the style of worship and teaching which at the same time puts a high value on studying the Bible and following Christ.

**12. "I THINK YOU SHOULD JUST DO WHAT FEELS GOOD."**

We need to operate not on the basis of what feels good, but what is right. Feelings are not reliable. They can change. People have felt "good" about "bad" systems as well as "good" ones. Nazism, communism and the cult of Jim Jones all began with good feelings. These examples show that the notion that truth is relative to the cultural setting or situation is inaccurate. Adultery, for example, is never right no matter what the cultural values are. According to the Bible, there are absolute standards given by God. God has given us clear guidelines for living that are for our very best and reflect a morality that is right and true.

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# CHRISTIANITY 201 :: WEEK 6

*How Do I Keep on Growing?*

## REVIEW OF LAST WEEK’S TOPIC:

*How Can I Share My Faith?*

### KEY POINTS ON SHARING YOUR FAITH

1. The gospel is “good news”—namely our salvation which is based upon belief in Christ’s death, burial and resurrection.
2. Evangelism is . . .
  - A verbal witness.
  - A lifestyle.
3. Sharing the gospel . . .
  - Fulfills Christ’s mission.
  - Obeys Christ’s command.
  - Changes someone else’s life.
  - Brings great joy to God.
4. We learn about sharing our faith from the example of first century Christians.
5. We learn to share our faith by going out there and doing it!

## TODAY’S TOPIC:

*How Do I Keep on Growing?*

### MEMORY VERSE #5

☐ **2 Peter 3:18:** *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and forever! Amen.*

### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you? What pieces of evidence could someone point out in the courtroom?

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**SOME WARM-UP QUESTIONS**

- What does the word “catalyst” mean in the realm of science?
- How do you think we could apply this word catalyst to the spiritual realm? Specifically to spiritual growth?

**TWELVE CATALYSTS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH****1. GOD’S WORD**

a. **Scripture is the agent of God’s** \_\_\_\_\_ .

- Acts 20:32a:** *Now I commit you to God and the word of His grace . . .*

God’s Word tells us that Jesus was “full of grace and truth”. (John 1:14,17)

b. **Scripture brings about spiritual** \_\_\_\_\_ **and** \_\_\_\_\_ .

- Acts 20:32a:** *Now I commit you to God and the word of His grace which can build you up . . .*

- 1 Peter 2:2:** *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.*

Want some practical how-to’s for studying the Scriptures? Also consider some other class opportunities that the church offers: How to Study the Bible, Searching the Scriptures, Basic Bible Study Methods and Precept Upon Precept.

c. **Hearing and obeying God’s Word increases a believer’s** \_\_\_\_\_ .

- Romans 10:17:** *Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*

In the Hebrew language and culture, the word **hear** includes and assumes the word **obey**.

- Deuteronomy 6:3a:** *Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you.*

This leads us directly to the second catalyst for spiritual growth.

**2. OBEDIENCE**

a. **Put God’s Word into** \_\_\_\_\_ **in your life!**

- James 1:22:** *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says!*

b. **God reveals Himself to those who** \_\_\_\_\_ **Him and** \_\_\_\_\_ **His Word.**

- John 14:21:** *Whoever has my commandments and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.*

**3. BAPTISM**

a. **Baptism is one of Jesus’** \_\_\_\_\_ .

- Matthew 28:19:** *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

b. **Jesus set the** \_\_\_\_\_ **for believers by being baptized.**

- Matthew 3:13:** *Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.*

For more detail on baptism, see **Attachment 10** entitled *First Things First: Baptism* at the end of this lesson. Consider attending the next Baptism Information Class at MBC. The class is offered once per month. The schedule is available online at [www.mcleanbible.org](http://www.mcleanbible.org).

#### 4. THE LORD'S SUPPER (Holy Communion, Eucharist)

a. The Lord's Supper \_\_\_\_\_ us of and \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus' death until He returns.

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26:** *For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*

b. The bread and the cup symbolize Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Matthew 26: 26-28:** *While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the (new) covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."*

c. God wants us to partake of the Lord's Supper in a \_\_\_\_\_ manner. Therefore we ought to \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves beforehand.

**1 Corinthians 11:27-28:** *<sup>27</sup>Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup>A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.*

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances that Jesus commanded His disciples to pass along and to carry out faithfully until his return.

#### 5. PRAYER

a. God wants us to stop \_\_\_\_\_ and to present our \_\_\_\_\_ to Him.

**Philippians 4:6:** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

b. The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ us and \_\_\_\_\_ for us in our prayer life.

**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 . . .*

#### 6. FELLOWSHIP

a. Scriptural example shows we must make \_\_\_\_\_ a priority.

**Acts 2:42:** *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to this fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

**Acts 2:46:** *Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.*

b. Regular fellowship stimulates and \_\_\_\_\_ believers spiritually and promotes \_\_\_\_\_ and good deeds.

- Hebrews 10:24-25:** <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. <sup>25</sup>Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

In order for you to experience Christian fellowship in a more intimate setting, try connecting with a small group or ministry team as soon as possible.

## 7. SHARING YOUR FAITH

a. The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ believers to bear \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.

- 1 Corinthians 2:3-5:** <sup>3</sup>I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. <sup>4</sup>My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, <sup>5</sup>so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

b. Sharing your faith is not an \_\_\_\_\_ for spiritual growth.

- John 15:26-27:** <sup>26</sup>"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. <sup>27</sup>And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."

c. Make Christ \_\_\_\_\_ in your life and always be prepared to give an \_\_\_\_\_ with gentleness and respect.

- 1 Peter 3:15:** But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

Want some practical how-to's for sharing your faith? Register for **Christianity 301—Sharing the Message of Jesus Christ**.

## 8. GIVING

a. Giving shows where my \_\_\_\_\_ is spiritually.

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

b. Giving is a \_\_\_\_\_ that every believer should carry out by God's \_\_\_\_\_.

- 2 Corinthians 8:7:** But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

For biblical teaching and practical application in regard to financial matters, be sure to sign up and attend **Christianity 501A—Discovering God's Way of Handling Money** or **Christianity 501B—the Crown Financial Ministries** small group study. Also, be sure to listen to the CD's of Lon Solomon's sermon entitled **Giving to God**.

## 9. SERVING

a. Serving and \_\_\_\_\_ go hand in hand. Both involve \_\_\_\_\_.

- Matthew 20:28:** Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life a ransom for many.

b. God expects me to be faithful in using my spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ to serve

\_\_\_\_\_.

- 1 Peter 4:10:** *Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.*

c. \_\_\_\_\_ we serve must be our focus.

- Colossians 3:23:** *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.*

Stop by the MBC Connect Room (Room 1605, next to the Journeys coffee shop) to learn about opportunities to serve. The Connect Room is open after each weekend service and our staff is available to assist you.

## 10. RIGHTEOUSNESS IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE

a. Keep a pure \_\_\_\_\_ and a good [clear] \_\_\_\_\_ before God.

- 1 Timothy 1:5:** *The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

Regular spiritual check-ups, humility, confession of sin, repentance, restitution, and seeking of forgiveness—all these play a role in maintaining a good conscience.

b. Choose godly, \_\_\_\_\_ friends.

- Proverbs 13:20:** *He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.*
- 1 Corinthians 15:33:** *Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."*

Time spent in the regular company of serious God-fearing Christian friends will assist us in staying right with God.

c. Keep away from anything that \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_  
Jesus as your number one priority.

- 1 John 5:21:** *Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.*
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9b:** *They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.*

Our monthly credit card statement, our checkbook register and our personal calendar tend to reflect our priorities.

## 11. ACCOUNTABILITY

a. I must give an \_\_\_\_\_ to God for my life.

- Romans 14:12:** *So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.*
- Hebrews 4:13:** *Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

b. There is a need for \_\_\_\_\_ accountability within the body of Christ.

- Hebrews 10:24:** *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.*

There is great value and importance of being accountable to another person: someone you can share your burden with; someone who can give you wise counsel; someone you can pray for and with, and someone who will pray for you; as well as someone whom you can truly trust and can share your deepest concerns and issues. This is why our church stresses the importance of getting involved in a small group!

**12. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

By this we mean committing yourself to formal, active, participating membership in a local assembly of believers where the other eleven catalysts for spiritual growth may take place.

**a. Every local church must have \_\_\_\_\_ .**

**Acts 14:23:** *Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.*

**b. Believers should obey—and voluntarily place themselves under—the \_\_\_\_\_ of the leaders of their own local assembly.**

**Hebrews 13:17:** *Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*

Simply contact the church office or visit our web site for information about the next Membership Orientation. The orientation is scheduled three times per year.

**APPLICATION**

Do you really want to keep on growing spiritually? Are you truly hungering after God? Then our Wrap-up section reminds us of twelve elements—twelve catalysts—that are vital to keep you moving forward on your spiritual journey.

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. What commitment are you making today that will keep you moving forward on your spiritual journey?

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2. What is your next step in furthering your spiritual growth?

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**YOUR NEXT STEP***Christianity 301: Learning How to Share Your Faith*

**Week 1:** What is My Style of Evangelism?

**Week 2:** How Can I Build Relationships?

**Week 3:** How Can I Tell My Story?

**Week 4:** How Can I Tell Jesus' Story?

**Week 5:** How Can I Help Someone "Cross the Line" of Faith?

**Week 6:** How Do I Deal With Objections?

**WRAP-UP: SOME KEY POINTS ON GROWING**

## Twelve Catalysts for Spiritual Growth

1. God's Word
2. Obedience
3. Baptism
4. The Lord's Supper
5. Prayer
6. Fellowship
7. Sharing your faith
8. Giving
9. Serving
10. Righteousness in your personal life
11. Accountability
12. Church membership

**ACTION POINTS**

1. Review *Christianity 201* Week 6 class notes: How Do I Keep on Growing?
2. Listen to Lon Solomon's sermon on CD (Week 6) entitled *Hungering after God*.
3. Read the article *First Things First: Baptism*. See **Attachment 10**.
4. Look over the information about small groups and serving opportunities.
5. Tell a friend about *Christianity 101* and *201*.

# ATTACHMENT 9

## *First Things First: Baptism*

Baptism is the first step in showing God your desire to grow spiritually and move forward on your spiritual journey.

Baptism doesn't make you a believer. It shows that you already are one! Nor does it get you into the kingdom of heaven. Only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring—it's the outward symbol of the commitment you have already made in your heart.

### 1. WHY BE BAPTIZED?

#### a. Because you want to follow Christ's example

*At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan river. (Mark 1:9)*

#### b. Because Christ commanded it

*Jesus said, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19, 20)*

#### c. Because it shows you are a believer

*. . . many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized. (Acts 18:8)*

#### d. Because obeying Christ's command shows you know Him and love Him

*We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. (1 John 2:3)*

*Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father and I too will love him and show myself to him. (John 14:21)*

### 2. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF WATER BAPTISM?

#### a. It is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection and of our spiritual baptism—our identifying with Christ in our salvation.

*Christ died for our sins . . . he was buried . . . and he was raised on the third day. (1 Corinthians 15:3,4)*

*. . . having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. (Colossians 2:12)*

#### b. It is the symbol of your new life as a Christian.

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

*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. (Romans 6:4)*

### 3. HOW ARE WE TO BE BAPTIZED?

- a. In the same way as Jesus was baptized—by immersion in water.

*As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. (Matthew 3:16)*

- b. In the same way as other baptisms in the Bible—by immersion.

*. . . Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water . . . (Acts 8:38, 39)*

- c. The English word “baptize” is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizo* which means dip or immerse under water.

- d. Immersion is the best way to picture a burial and resurrection.

As the person being baptized goes under the water, he is identifying himself with the death and burial of Jesus. As he comes up out of the water, he is identifying himself with the resurrection of Jesus.

- e. Christian leaders in history agree:

*Martin Luther . . . “I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the Word imports and the mystery signifies.”*

*John Calvin . . . “The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient Church.”*

*John Wesley . . . “Buried with Him, alluding to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first Church.”*

### 4. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

- Every person who has believed in Christ.

*Those who accepted his message were baptized. (Acts 2:41)*

*But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (Acts 8:12)*

The one requirement for baptism is belief in Jesus Christ. We baptize individuals whenever they are old enough to understand and believe the gospel message.

### 5. WHEN ARE WE TO BE BAPTIZED?

- As soon as you have believed! There is no reason to delay.

*Those who accepted His message were baptized . . . that day! (Acts 2:41)*

*Then Philip began with the Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! Why shouldn’t I be baptized?” . . . Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. (Acts 8:35-38)*

*He said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved — you and your household.” They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and his family were baptized. (Acts 16:30b-33)*

**6. WHAT ARE MY NEXT STEPS?**

- a. Review these notes.
- b. Inform your instructor or class assistant of your desire to be baptized.
- c. Prepare your personal testimony.  
(Use *Guidelines for Preparing Your Testimony* given to you last week)
- d. Attend the next baptism instruction class.
- e. **Pray!** Pray about family members and friends to invite to your baptism.

## APPENDIX A

### *Christianity 201 Memory Verses*

#### Memory verse #1 for Week 2

**2 Timothy 3:16-17:** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

#### Memory verse #2 for Week 3

**Philippians 4:6:** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

#### Memory verse #3 for Week 4

**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.*

#### Memory verse #4 for Week 5

**Matthew 4:19:** *“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”*

#### Memory verse #5 for Week 6

**2 Peter 3:18:** *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

## HINTS FOR MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE

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- Read the verse in its context.
- Seek to understand it.
- Write out the verse and its reference on an index card.
- Recite the verse aloud one phrase at a time. Do this several times.
- Repeat the process several times daily during slack periods: while riding on the bus or subway; commuting to work in your car; coffee time or lunch break.
- After memorizing the verse, review it later on a regular basis to keep it fresh in your mind!

## APPENDIX B

*Christianity 201 Recommended Books, Bibles and  
Web Sites Recommended Books*

(Many are available at the MBC BOOKstore)

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- Abide in Christ***, Andrew Murray (Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1979)
- Basic Christianity***, John Stott (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1971)
- Bible Knowledge Commentary, The***, John F. Walvoord/Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Chariot Victor Books, 1987)
- Biblical Answers to Contemporary Issues***, Charles C. Ryrie (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1991)  
(Deals with issues such as abortion, alcohol and drugs, capital punishment, civil disobedience, demonic activity, divorce, homosexuality, race, situation ethics, suicide, women's rights. Excellent paperback!)
- Born Again***, Charles Colson (Tarrytown, NY: Revell, 1976)
- Case for Christ, The***, Lee Strobel (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998)
- Case for Faith, The***, Lee Strobel (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000)
- Great Divorce, The***, C.S. Lewis (New York, NY: MacMillan, 1982)
- Holy Spirit: Key to Supernatural Living***, Bill Bright
- How to Give Away Your Faith***, Paul Little (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988)
- Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret***, Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor (Chicago, IL: Moody Press)
- I'm Glad You Asked***, Kenneth Boa and Larry Moody (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1982)
- Know What You Believe***, Paul Little (Wheaton, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1987)
- Know Why You Believe***, Paul Little (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968)
- Knowing God***, J. I. Packer (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973)
- Knowledge of the Holy, The***, A. W. Tozer (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1961)
- Lost Art of Disciple Making, The***, Leroy Eims
- Master Plan of Evangelism, The***, Robert Coleman (Tarrytown, NY: Revell, 1963)
- Mere Christianity***, C. S. Lewis (New York, NY: MacMillan, 1952, paperback, 1984)
- More Than a Carpenter***, Josh McDowell (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1977)
- My Utmost for His Highest***, Updated Edition in Today's Language, Oswald Chambers (Oswald Chambers Publications Association, Ltd. 1992)
- New Evidence That Demands a Verdict, The***, Josh McDowell (Nashville, TN; Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999)
- New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable, The***, F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1960)
- Power Through Prayer/Purpose in Prayer***, E. M. Bounds (Westwood, NJ: Christian Library)
- Ready Defense, A***, Josh McDowell (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1993)
- Reason Why, The***, Robert Laidlaw (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1972)
- Screwtape Letters, The***, C. S. Lewis (New York, NY: MacMillan, 1961—paperback, 1982)
- Survey of Bible Doctrine, A***, Charles C. Ryrie (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1972)
- Survey of the Old Testament***, Jensen's, Irving L. Jensen (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1978)
- Survey of the New Testament***, Jensen's, Irving L. Jensen (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1981)
- Unger's Bible Handbook***, Merrill F. Unger (Chicago, IL: Moody Press)

# CHRISTIANITY 201

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## RECOMMENDED BIBLES

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*Life Application Bible*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991)

*NASB Zondervan Study Bible*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000)

*New American Standard Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1977)

*New International Version (NIV) Study Bible*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985)

*Ryrie Study Bible, Expanded Edition*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1994) NASB, NIV, NKJ, KJV.

## RECOMMENDED WEB SITES

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*aomin.org*—Christian apologetics

*ariel.org*—Ariel Ministries (Jewish focus)

*biblegateway.com*—Scriptures (all versions) on-line

*boundless.org*—Christian teen issues

*breakpoint.org*—Christian worldview issues

*campuscrusade.org*—Campus Crusade for Christ

*christianbook.com*—Christian books, videos, music

*crosswalk.com*—Christian portal

*equip.org*—Christian Research Institute

*family.org*—Focus on the Family

*familylife.com*—Family Life Ministries

*frontline.to*—Frontline

*gty.org*—Grace To You

*icr.org*—Institute for Creation Research

*intouchministries.org*—In Touch Ministries

*jewsforjesus.org*—Jews for Jesus

*mcleanbible.org*—McLean Bible Church

*oneplace.com*—Christian portal

*precept.org*—Precept Upon Precept

*promisekeepers.org*—Promise Keepers

*reasons.org*—Reasons To Believe

*willowcreek.org*—Willow Creek Community Church

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