

Spirit and Word



Ten Basic Lessons



Bible studies to grow strong as a follower of Christ

(You will find some pages that are intentionally left blank. This is for printing these studies as a book so new sections begin correctly.)

Note!

Lesson Plans:

For teaching purposes each lesson has a built-in lesson plan.

This allows everyone to work the material in the strongest way.

Each lesson has the plan built in and you may be able to see each division in each lesson.

Follow the plans each time for maximum benefit.

Hook -

each lesson starts with a question or discussion or probing idea or interesting life-situation to start. Take time to create interest in the following lesson and build relationships with others who may be studying with you.

Book -

each lesson has Bible study as the core. Prepare the lesson by studying each Scripture and offering answers. This will cause each person to interact with the Bible itself more than just opinions.

Look -

the material in each lesson needs to be looked at in terms of everyday life. What might this teaching lead to? Take a moment to examine some possible impacts of the material.

Took -

this is the action step in each lesson. What will you actually do as a result of this material? How will you apply what you have learned? Before you move on to the next lesson, take real action on what this means.

TEN BASIC LESSONS

INTRODUCTION

Why should we study? What is the good in it? It usually isn't very exciting and it takes a lot of time and energy. This lesson aims at answering these questions and introduces the entire series of lessons to come.

I. PRETEST – *This quiz will help show where we are and where we are going.*

A. As far as my salvation goes:

1. I can never be absolutely certain that I am saved.
2. I can be absolutely certain that I am saved right now.
3. I can be quite sure but not absolutely certain until the end.

B. Jesus deserves to be Lord over me because:

1. He created me.
2. He sustains my life from day to day.
3. He is God.

C. The main purpose of Christianity is to:

1. Get me out of bed on Sunday morning.
2. Help me to serve God.
3. Restore me into fellowship with God.

D. People are, and so I am:

1. Basically good.
2. Morally neutral.
3. Naturally inclined toward evil

E. The Holy Spirit comes to dwell inside me when:

1. I accept Christ as my Savior.
2. I die and go to heaven.
3. I become totally committed to Christ sometime after salvation.

F. When I become a Christian:

1. I should be in general fellowship in the universal Body of Christ.
2. I am obligated to be an active participant in a local church.
3. I am free from the need to fellowship, but should freely enter in.

G. When I become a Christian, I should be baptized in water:

1. When I feel I am ready.
2. When I have grown to be a stronger Christian.
3. Immediately as an initial profession of faith.

H. The reason Jesus has not returned to Earth for me yet is that:

1. He wants more people to become Christians.

2. All the prophecies about Him are not yet fulfilled.
 3. He wants me and other Christians to grow and be ready.
- I. I should tell other people about Jesus:
1. Because if they don't know Jesus, they will die under the wrath of God.
 2. After I understand the Bible better.
 3. Only when they ask about Him.
- J. When I hear someone giving different or new religious teaching, I should:
1. Listen carefully and learn.
 2. Test it against the Bible and totally reject anything contrary.
 3. See if the person teaching shows the fruit of love, peace, and joy.

Here are ten Bible passages that address each of these ten questions. You can check them as you get started or just move into the first lesson. I John 5:13; Colossians 1:15-20; II Corinthians 5:18-19; Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 8:9; Hebrews 10:23-25; Acts 2:37-38; II Peter 3:8-13; John 3:36; Galatians 1:6-9

II. OVERVIEW

Here is a list of the topics covered in the Ten Basic Lessons. The pretest 10 questions ask about each of these ten areas in your life.

1. Assurance of Salvation
2. The Lordship of Christ
3. Fellowship with God
4. Temptation and Sin
5. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit
6. The Church
7. Church Ordinances
8. Final Events
9. Witnessing
10. True and False Teaching

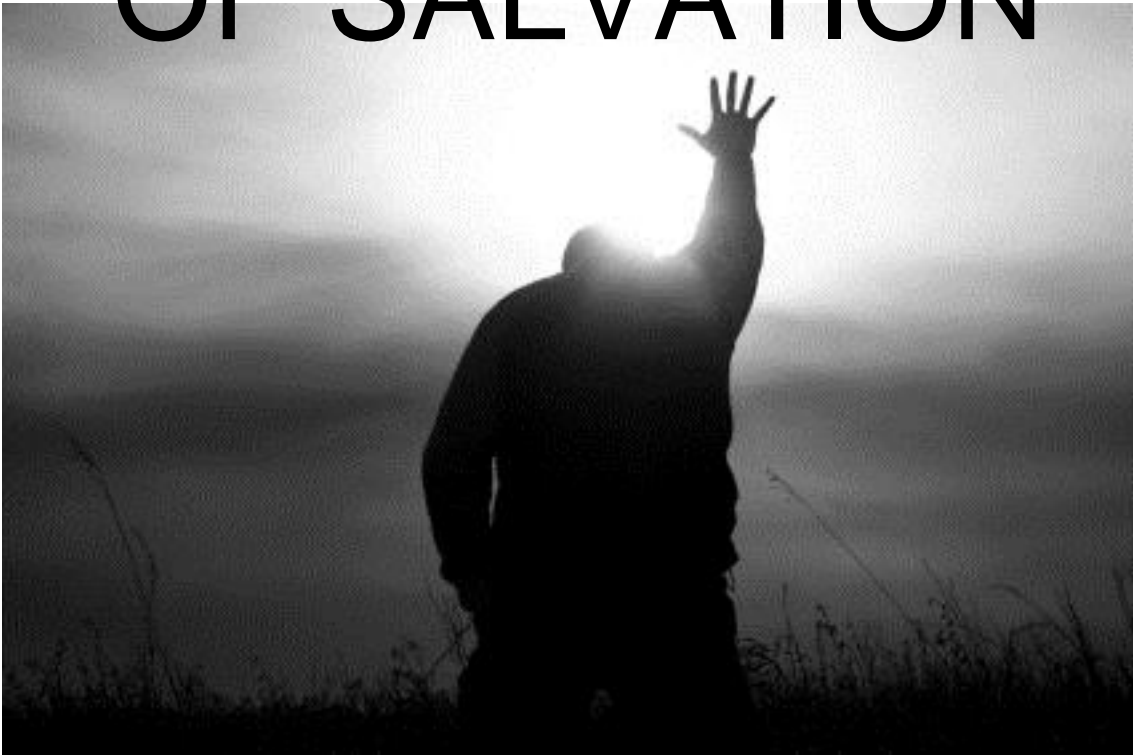
III. SOME POSSIBLE BENEFITS

This series of Ten Basic Lessons is very flexible and adaptable. Here are some of the many ways it can be used.

1. An orientation to the teaching of a specific local church.
2. A foundation for further study of the Bible and theology.
3. A tool for follow up with newer Christians.
4. A ready reference for teaching and scriptures on various topics.
5. A basis for Bible study with others.

Pray for great effectiveness and fruit as you study the Bible in a systematic and serious way. Trust that Christ will be formed in you with transforming power.

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION



TEN BASIC LESSONS #1

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ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Can we know for sure that we are accepted by God? Can we trust God not to cast us aside? For real stability in the Christian life, these questions need solid answers. This lesson looks at the Biblical response to these issues.

I. OUR NEW RELATIONSHIP

Becoming a Christian places you in a new relationship to God. Examine the following verses and list the elements of new relationship to God through Christ. John 3:16-18; 5:24; Rom. 5:1-11; 8:1

I have/am _____

Our relationship with God is the foundation of our assurances. We are already at one and at peace with God.

II. WE CAN BE SURE

Many scriptures are *if-then* propositions. Fill in the following blanks for these verses:

John 1:12 IF _____ THEN _____

John 3:16 IF _____ THEN _____

John 5:24 IF _____ THEN _____

It is possible to be sure of our new relationship with God (see I John 5:13). When we comply with the items in the “if” column, we can be sure of the items in the “then” column.

III. WE SEE EVIDENCE

As we live out our new relationship with God, we will see evidence, which will help us know that it is real. What clues do you find in the following verses?

PASSAGES

EVIDENCES OF NEW RELATIONSHIP

Ephesians 1:13,14; Romans 8:15,16

Galatians 5:22,23

I John 3:14

Hebrews 12:6-8

John 15:1-10,14,16

As the evidence stands up, we become increasingly more sure of our new relationship with God.

IV. WE CAN DEPEND ON GOD

Our relationship with God depends on what Christ has done for us. Christ is the “one way” to God. But can we trust God for the future? Think over these verses and write them out in your own words.

John 6:37: _____

John 10:27-29: _____

Hebrews 7:22-28: _____

Rom. 8:31-39: _____

We have the firm assurance from Scripture that God will never let us go.

V SO WHAT?

We can be sure of our salvation and we can be sure of our God, but more important than just believing this is seeing it working out in our lives. We can trust God. We can worship Him for His greatness. We can rest assured and be at peace inside.

We don't have to work to earn our continued relationship with God. He loves us and gives His grace freely to us. Yet we need to be alert. We should look for and cultivate the evidences of our new life.



THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

TEN BASIC LESSONS #2

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THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

John Smith has been a Christian for three weeks. He has a chance to invest and open a new business with a friend. It looks like a golden opportunity. How does John's new citizenship in God's Kingdom affect his decision? This lesson examines the impact of Christ's Lordship.

I. KING JESUS

All kingdoms have a king. When a person becomes a Christian, he enters a new Kingdom and serves a new King (Col. 1:13). These passages show the nature of this lordship.

A. What is Christ's position now?

1. Philippians 2:9-11: _____

B. Why does Jesus deserve to reign?

1. Colossians 1:16,17: _____

2. John 8:42: _____

3. Ephesians 1:20-22: _____

4. I Corinthians 6:19,20: _____

C. Summarize in your own words what kind of Lord Christ is? (Read Matt. 11:28-30)

D. According to John 14:15,23, what is the Christian's appropriate response to the Lord Jesus Christ?

We must all learn to worship and serve the one who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

II. YIELDING TO THE KING

The Lordship of Christ should have a drastic effect on your priorities and attitudes in the areas of possessions, relationships, time, work, and service involvements. Match the scripture verses with the principles they teach.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| ____1. <i>You don't even own the shirt on your back. This is God's world and man is a steward, not an owner.</i> | A. I Peter 2:13-25 |
| ____2. <i>Christians should give generously.</i> | B. Mark 12:41-44 |
| ____3. <i>God is more interested in the heart attitude than the amount given.</i> | C. Psalms 24:1 |
| ____4. <i>Christians should not form intimate and inconsistent relationships with unbelievers.</i> | D. II Corinthians 6:14-18 |
| ____5. <i>A Christian's vocabulary and topics of conversation must be disciplined.</i> | E. Luke 14:25-33 |
| ____6. <i>Every relationship must have and every commitment we make must be subordinate to our commitment to God.</i> | F. Ephesians 4:29, 5:14 |
| ____7. <i>Christians ought to obey the government, employers, school administrators and other secular authorities over them.</i> | G. II Corinthians 9 |

Putting these principles to work is the way to experiencing the Lordship of Christ.

III FOLLOWING THROUGH

List three areas from your own life where you need to make adjustments to make Jesus Lord of your life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What adjustments will you make? BE SPECIFIC!



Water Baptism Orientation Notes

Congratulations on your decision to follow Jesus in Water Baptism!

Water Baptism is an important step in following Christ. It is foundational to a successful spiritual life as a believer. It indicates an early response of obedience to the Lordship of Christ. It should be entered into seriously and joyfully. The best timing is soon after a person starts a relationship with Jesus as personal savior, but after an age and certainty that each person clearly understands this valuable step.

Definition

Water Baptism is an ordinance of the local church. This means that it is a symbolic practice ordained by the Bible and given to the local church to vividly express a gospel truth and confirm it to the believer. It is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. It does not give a person salvation or confer any special holiness in itself. It manifests openly what has happened privately.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." **Matthew 28:18-20**

The Scriptures clearly teach that our salvation is based solely on God's unmerited favor and not any good works or righteous deeds we might perform (Ephesians 2:8, 9 and Titus 3:5 for examples). The Bible also makes it clear that the means for receiving God's grace is only through faith. Therefore, if faith is the means of grace, it clearly cannot be any rite we perform. Ordinances are meant to serve as visual aids illustrating on a concrete level some of the deep, spiritual truths and acts of God. God desires to clarify our understanding of what He does by giving us a physical reality we can see and experience. Water Baptism is a visualization of a person's personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Meaning

Note from Romans 6 that Christians are united with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection.

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin-- because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. **Romans 6:3-11**

The Bible says that when we became a Christian our “old self was crucified with him”. It says, “we died with Christ”. It says we are “baptized into his death”. What do we do with a dead person? We bury them. In Water Baptism a believer is laid down into a watery grave to demonstrate their union with Christ.

But Romans 6 also says that Christians are united with Christ in resurrection. The Bible says that “just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” It says, “we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection”. It says that “if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him”. So the person is raised out of the waters of baptism to walk in newness of life with Christ.

So Water Baptism means that a person has personally trusted Jesus to forgive and transform his or her life. This personal relationship with Jesus Christ means that the person is united with Jesus. Internally, the person has died to the old way of life before Christ, has turned away from sin patterns, and has been made ready for heaven by the work of God. Water Baptism offers a tangible way to show this to all who witness it.

Method

The word baptism comes from a Bible word that means to dip or immerse. When we read about the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist, he goes into the Jordan River and comes up out of the water. From the earliest days of the Church, water baptism was by total immersion of the person in water. We follow this practice because it is Biblical and because it best demonstrates our union with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection.

Preparation

Before you are baptized, it is important to ensure that you have a personal, saving relationship with God. Water Baptism does not make a person a Christian, rather it demonstrates that the person is already a Christian. You need the assurance that your sins are forgiven, that you are right with God, that God has given you a new life, that you are ready for heaven.

As you prepare for Water Baptism, you should examine your relationship with Jesus as Lord. This is a step of obedience. Are you fully prepared to obey God in every matter? Are you faithfully responding to his direction?

As you prepare for Water Baptism, you should also examine your relationships with the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Bible says that Water Baptism demonstrates that in Christ you have died to these negative influences. Are you full prepared to renounce any touch of these old enemies on your life? Are you taking a strong stand against anything that is devilish, demonic, occult, or of the world system apart from God?

Another preparation is to make sure your Water Baptism is public. It is wise to invite family members, friends, co-workers, and others to witness your baptism. It doesn't matter if they do not yet have a relationship with the Lord. It is your public declaration of allegiance to Jesus. Ask key people to attend and use this opportunity to witness for the Lord.

There are a few things to prepare for physically. Bring a change of clothes and a towel. Be sure your clothing is modest and will not become see-through when wet. It may be good for both men and women to wear a tee shirt under whatever top is chosen. White, tight, short, or advertisement items are generally not appropriate. Come on time and ready to participate. Follow the other instructions that are given to you for specifics about timing, rooms to use, who to look for, and other details.

Procedure

You will come out from the door on the right side of the platform as you look at the tank from the seats. Go up the steps and step down into the water. Sit down on the front edge of the seat with your feet touching the wall of the tank in front of you. You will be asked if you have trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You will be asked if you renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil to live only for God. Then you will be held and laid back into the water until you are covered. You will be raised back up. Then you can stand up and climb on the steps out of the tank. Someone will assist you with your towel. You can then go to change.

Expectations

Congratulations, again, on your determination to follow the Lord.

This is a time that God can cement some things in your life. You may not be sure when or where you crossed the line of faith, but you will always remember the day of your baptism. It will be a concrete building block in your walk with Jesus.

Some people like to fast and pray for a few days before being baptized. However you decide to press into God, this is a good time to break any old attachments to the world, the flesh, and the devil. It is a good time to get close to God. Many people find deliverance in the process of Water Baptism. Some people release the Baptism in the Holy Spirit when they are baptized. Do not be surprised if some people praise the Lord, speak in tongues, or sense God's love in remarkable ways. You may only feel wet, but God will help you make progress in ways that are best for you as an individual.

“In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.” **Romans 6:11**

Next Steps

What are you going to do after your Water Baptism? Your relationship with Jesus does not end here. Release the Baptism in the Holy Spirit for your life. Discover the giftings, callings, and anointings that God has given you. Connect with the local church as a supporting member. Do your part in building up others. Continue to share your new life in Christ with others.



FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

TEN BASIC LESSONS #3

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FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

The main purpose of Christianity is to (1) help men live in peace with each other, (2) show us how to serve God, (3) restore man into fellowship with God, (4) get us out of bed Sunday mornings.

The right answer is number three. Everything else is a glorious by-product. This fellowship is begun through His Holy Spirit, Bible study, prayer, and the practice of spiritual disciplines. By studying this lesson we should gain practical insight and direction in developing and growing in our communion with the Lord.

I. ABIDING IN CHRIST

Our fellowship with God begins with our relationship with Jesus Christ. Read John 15:1-11 and answer these questions.

- A. What is the nature of the relationship between you and Christ as seen in this passage? _____

- B. What does it mean to “abide” in Christ? (see especially verses 7, 10) _____

- C. What are the results of “abiding” in Christ? (see especially verses 5,7,8)

It is as we take the time and energy to abide in Christ that we grow and experience new life.

II. THE WORD

Living in Christ involves a close relationship to the Bible. Our attitude towards Scripture needs to be the same as that of our Lord. Jesus regarded the Old Testament as inspired and authoritative. He said, “*Scripture cannot be broken*” (John 10:35) referring to the Old Testament (see also Matthew 5:17,18). He established the New Testament by approving the apostles who are tied to every book in the New Testament. These apostles understood that they wrote with divine authority. Paul for example, called his message “*The*

Word of God” (I Thessalonians 2:13). Thus Christians need to regard the Bible as their ultimate and final authority in all things. In growing, the Christian needs to both read scripture devotionally and study the Bible in depth.

A. Read and study II Timothy 3:14-17. List some reasons from this passage why God has given us the Scriptures. _____

B. Read and study James 1:22-25. From these two passages what can we do to accomplish these purposes? _____

Matthew 4:4 “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”

III . PRAYER

Prayer is our lifeline of communication with God. It is through prayer that we give and receive the most intimate fellowship with God.

A. Some basic elements of prayer can be easily summarized with an acrostic based on the word *ACTS*.

Adoration for who God is
Confession of our sins
Thanksgiving for what God has done
Supplication or asking for something for ourselves or others.

Place each letter of the acrostic in the space before the verses it relates to. For some verses more than one letter may be appropriate.

___ I John 1:9 ___ Psalms 103:1-4 ___ I Thessalonians 5:18
___ John 14:13,14 ___ Psalms 51:1-7 ___ Philippians 4:6,7
___ Psalms 29:2 ___ Ephesians 6:18

B. Worship and communion with God should be spontaneous, creative, varied, and involve the total person. I Cor. 14:15 refers to using both our _____ and our _____ in prayer. The following list includes tools, helps, and modes of expression appropriate for one’s fellowship with God:

Bible	musical instruments
ACTS (above)	hymn books
Tongues	crying/laughing/shouting
Singing in tongues	devotional books
Singing in English	varied body positions (sit, kneel, stand, etc.)

You are encouraged to use these and others in your communion with God.

The book of Psalms is full of excellent examples and instruction in the area of prayer. It is hoped you will take time to read the Psalms with the intent of letting them teach you about prayer.

There are several other spiritual disciplines that you will want to practice. Fasting, journaling, solitude, meditation, and others will help you grow in intimacy and fellowship with the Lord.

IV. PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

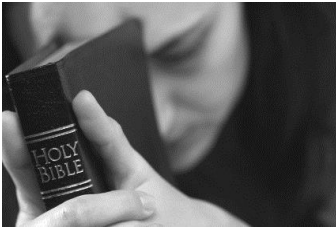
Why not implement the material presented here by making the following agreement with the Lord:

I promise to spend at least 15 minutes each day for the next week in Bible study and prayer. As I do this:

I will study (not just read) at least a paragraph but not more than a chapter each day.

I will use a notebook and jot down notes on meaning and application.

I will pray daily using the elements listed.



How To Slow Down To Commune With God

Solitude

- Intentional withdrawal from the pace of life
- No “people” noise

Journaling

- “Yesterday....”
- Tune into what you are doing, thinking, feeling....

Worshiping

- Minister to the Lord
- I Corinthians 14:14, 15

Bible Reading

- Read for connection, not study for content
- Read longer passages

Praying

- Pray Scripture
- ACTS prayer

Fasting

- Set priorities
- Use your body for spiritual purposes

Meditating

- Sit comfortably, close eyes, relax, be aware of breathing, repeat a word
- Continue of 10 to 20 minutes, open eyes to check time, but no alarm

Listening

- Silence the voices of world, devil, demons, distractions, imagination, mind
- Ask God to speak, “What is my next step....”



A PATTERN FOR PRAYER

*Many people find it helpful to have a plan for their time spent with God. The key word **ACTS** can serve as a pattern. Four essential aspects of prayer begin with the letters of this word. The scriptures listed can help focus your attention in each area. Make notes on what the Lord is saying to you.*

A DORATION

- Psalm 100
- Psalm 150

C ONFESSION

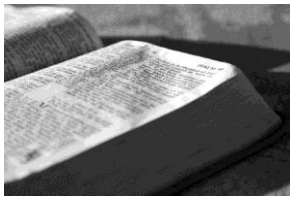
- I John 1:9
- Psalm 51

T HANKSGIVING

- I Thessalonians 5:18
- Psalm 103:1-5

S UPPLICATION

- Ephesians 6:18
- Philippians 4:6,7
- John 14:13,14



Inductive Bible Study

Always keep in mind the three basic questions which are the key to effective Bible study:

1. *What does it say?*
2. *What does it mean?*
3. *What does it mean to me?*

Ask for help from the Holy Spirit.

Study one paragraph at a time.

Read carefully two or three times – try other translations.

Then ask these questions.

I. OBSERVATION: What does it say?

Terms:	<i>Who, What, Where, When, Why, How,</i>	List
Structure:	<i>Relationships, Grammar</i>	Watch the verbs
Form:	<i>Type of literature—history, poetry, parable</i>	
Atmosphere:	<i>Empathy, Emotion, Setting</i>	

II. INTERPRETATION: What does it mean?

- Define terms
- Check context
- Why? Reasons
- So? Implications
- Principlize—cross the bridge from then to now
- Paraphrase—note main truth; summarize

III. APPLICATION: What does it mean to me?

- Be specific
- Examples to follow, errors to avoid, commands to obey, promises to claim, Prayers to echo
- Timeless truths



TEMPTATION AND SIN

TEN BASIC LESSON #4

TEN BASIC LESSON #4

TEMPTATION AND SIN

What, in your opinion, makes something wrong? Before you work through this study, write your own definition of sin.

This lesson should help to define sin and show the Biblical defenses that are available to overcome it.

I. RECOGNIZING SIN

What is sin? Am I a sinner? These passages offer the Lord's view of sin.

A. *Underline the correct answer* Individuals are (1) basically good, (2) morally neutral, (3) naturally inclined toward sin, selfishness and evil. *Look up underlined verses; others are for personal interest.* Eph 2:1,3, Jer. 17:9, Ps. 51:5, Gen. 6:5; 8:21, Isa. 64:6.

B. Sin occurs at many levels and manifests itself in many ways. Match the right Scripture with the phrase it illustrates or proves.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| ___ <i>a state of being</i> | (1) I John 2:15 |
| ___ <i>wrong thoughts</i> | (2) Galatians 5:19-21 |
| ___ <i>wrong actions</i> | (3) Psalms 51:5 |
| ___ <i>improper motives</i> | (4) Matthew 5:28 |
| ___ <i>wrong affections</i> | (5) Romans 14:23 |
| ___ <i>lack of action</i> | (6) James 4:17 |

C. What are the three main sources of enticement to sin which control people, according to Ephesians 2:2,3?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

To grow in grace and godliness, we need to be sensitive to sin in our lives and recognize the many ways it touches us.

II. OVERCOMING SIN

What can we do when we recognize the approach of sin? How can we keep ourselves pure? These passages teach us our spiritual defenses.

- A. Read Romans 6 and answer these questions from what it teaches. As Christians, what should our relationship to sin be? _____

Why? _____

- B. Someone has said: *Opportunity may knock only once, but temptation keeps banging for years!* What comfort and hope does the Bible give us when we are tempted? See I Cor. 10:13 and Heb. 4:14-16. _____

- C. Being tempted is not equal to sinning; temptation will come in our lives and we must be ready to combat it. These verses contain some practical suggestions to help you resist temptation. Write them down in your own words.

Matt. 26:41: _____

II Tim. 2:22: _____

Eph. 6:10-18: _____

Phil. 4:8: _____

James 4:7: _____

- D. What should you do when you yield to temptation or find that you have sinned? I John 1:9 _____

What two things has God promised to do in response?

_____ and _____

The Lord has given us the spiritual tools to overcome sin.

III. LOOK AT YOUR LIFE

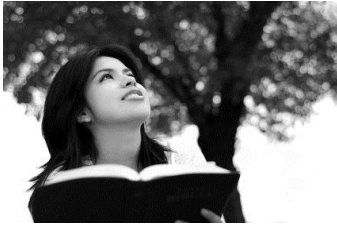
List three areas where you are frequently tempted and write down a brief strategy to deal with each one. BE SPECIFIC!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Look again at the definition you wrote at the beginning of this study. Has the study caused you to alter this definition? How?



Discovering God's Will

“Is it right or isn't it??? Should I or shouldn't I??? The Bible doesn't come right out and say I can't do it.”

Christians, whenever in doubt about a situation, ask the following questions:

1. Will this honor and please God or will it grieve Him? Likewise my earthly father and mother? My mate?
2. Will it be in total harmony with all of Scripture?
3. Will Jesus be pleased with my true motives?
4. Would I want to continue with this in heaven on a forever basis?
5. Will this build up the kind of character and spiritual life that glorifies Him?
6. Will this identify me with His followers, or with the world's crowd?
7. Will this help or hinder my prayer life? Fellowship with believers? Telling others about Jesus? My Bible study?
8. Will it stand the test of His eyes and holiness at the judgment seat of Christ?
9. Will the body of believers agree with my decision?
10. Am I willing to seek and obey the counsel of the church and elders and other mature Christians?
11. Would Jesus do this?
12. Is my attitude one of *how much can I get away with without sinning*, or doing what is God's highest will for me?
13. Do I really trust God's judgment and love for me?



Some Notes on Guidance

A personal, redemptive relationship with God is at the heart of all guidance.

“All our wisdom, insofar as it really deserves the name

wisdom

and is sure and reliable, comprises basically two things—the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves.” John Calvin

I. KNOW GOD

John 10:1-5, 11,14,15

- A. Your relationship with the Lord is like what other relationship? _____
- B. How well does Jesus know you? _____
- C. Does Jesus love you? _____
- D. In guidance, who is responsible to set the course? _____
- E. In guidance, who is responsible to communicate the direction? _____
- F. How does this make you feel? _____

II. KNOW YOURSELF

Knowing yourself is essential for guidance. God only made one you. As you learn about your unique set of strength and weaknesses, gifts and goals, dreams and desires, needs and priorities, you discover what God had in mind when he created you and what you can do to get there.

Psalms 37:4; Proverbs 13:12,19

What is the most important objective you could achieve in your lifetime?

Write your own epitaph. _____

III. MAKE A PLAN

Anyone who fails to plan, plans to fail.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Willingness | Psalm 32:8,9 |
| Word of God | II Timothy 3:16,17 |
| Witness of the Spirit | Colossians 3:15 |
| Works of Providence | Isaiah 28:23-29 |
| Wise counsel | Proverbs 11:14; 15:22 |

IV. TAKE A STEP

You can't steer a bicycle if you're not peddling.

Praise Plan Prepare Plant Proclaim



THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

TEN BASIC LESSONS #5

TEN BASIC LESSONS #5

THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

What was the quality of life for early New Testament Christians? Let's take a look at the Book of Acts. Match those passages with what the Holy Spirit did in the early church.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| ___ Acts 2:1-13 | A. People were raised from the dead. |
| ___ Acts 3:1-10 | B. There was direct dialogue with the Lord. |
| ___ Acts 9:10-19 | C. People spoke in languages they never learned. |
| ___ Acts 9:36-42 | D. Angels came and ministered to people. |
| ___ Acts 12:1-11 | E. People were healed. |

This is only a sample of the ways the Holy Spirit works in and through Christians. Who is the Holy Spirit? What ministries can the Holy Spirit perform in our lives? How can we appropriate the Holy Spirit in our lives? This lesson seeks to answer these questions.

I. THE IDENTITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Before we can grasp the work of the Holy Spirit, we need to know who he is and what he is like. These passages introduce this very special person.

A. Put the appropriate letter in front of the verse that demonstrates:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit belong in the same category. | ___ Matthew 28:19
___ John 14:26
___ Acts 5:3,4 |
| 2. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit have a distinct separateness of persons. | ___ I Peter 1:2
___ Matthew 3:16,17
___ Acts 15:28 |
| 3. The Holy Spirit must be considered as Deity, that is, fully God. | ___ II Corinthians 13:14
___ Romans 8:9 |
| 4. The Holy Spirit must be considered as a personal being. | |

B. Match these attributes of the Holy Spirit with the Scripture that illustrates them. (Note that these qualities are one which a personal being has, illustrating #4 in the question above.)

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| ___ has a mind | 1. I Corinthians 12:11 |
| ___ teaches | 2. Romans 15:30 |
| ___ wills | 3. I Corinthians 2:11 |
| ___ loves | 4. John 16:8 |
| ___ guides | 5. John 14:26 |
| ___ speaks | 6. I Timothy 4:1 |
| ___ convinces | 7. Romans 8:27 |
| ___ has knowledge | 8. John 16:13 |
| ___ has strength | 9. Acts 1:8 |

The Holy Spirit is a divine person with all of the attributes, qualities, that implies.

II. WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES IN CHRISTIANS

Jesus promises the ministry of the Holy Spirit to His people. In John 14, 15, and 16 He says the Holy Spirit will work in His place and do the things He did during His earthly ministry. Here are some of the ways the Holy Spirit helps us.

A. The Holy Spirit helps us develop a character like Jesus.

1. Explain in your own words what the Holy Spirit does to bring salvation initially into our experience according to Titus 3:5. (A dictionary may be helpful to define terms.) _____

2. Sanctification in the New Testament means set apart to God and holy living. When we view it from the perspective of God's provision in Christ, it is accomplished. But when viewed from our experience it is an on-going process. From the list in Galatians 5:22,23 list the three attitudes in which you would most like to grow in the next few months. Make this a matter of prayer.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

B. God has work for you to do in His Kingdom, and it is the Holy Spirit who gives you the strength and ability to do the tasks.

1. Arrange the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in I Corinthians 12:8-10 into the appropriate categories.

GIFTS of
POWER
or *DOING*

GIFTS of
UTTERANCE
or *SAYING*

GIFTS of
UNDERSTANDING
or *KNOWING*

a. _____

a. _____

a. _____

b. _____

b. _____

b. _____

c. _____

c. _____

c. _____

2. Do you know Christians who have any of the ministries listed in Romans 12:6-8? Write down their names followed by the ministries you think they have and ask the person or a leader for confirmation.

3. What will the Holy Spirit do to help us communicate our faith in Christ to Others? (See Acts 1:8) _____

C. The Holy Spirit also has a ministry of giving us direction in our lives. Put the appropriate number of the concept before the verse it illustrates.

1. *Guidance*

2. *Teaching*

3. *Prayer*

___ Romans 8:14

___ I Corinthians 2:9-16

___ John 16:13

___ Jude 20

___ Galatians 5:18

___ Ephesians 6:18

These areas form part of the Holy Spirit's job description. He will do these things in the life of any Christian who allows him to. Ask Him to bring to you the help and resources you need for your faithfulness and fruitfulness in your life with God.

III. APPROPRIATING THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT

The goal is to have the Holy Spirit ministering to and through us. What can we do to encourage this?

- A. According to Romans 8:9 and Ephesians 1:13, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us in His entirety: (1) when we die and go to heaven, (2) when we accept Christ as our Savior, (3) at some point after salvation when we become totally committed to Christ.
- B. (*True or False*) The big problem is not getting the Spirit into us, but our openness to let him work through us.
- C. (*True or False*) Because the Holy Spirit resides in us, all the gifts potentially reside in us.
- D. (*True or False*) We should actively seek gifts and ministries to be manifested through us. (I Corinthians 14:1)
- E. (*True or False*) It is our maturity in Christ, not our ministry which determines what gifts are actually manifested through us.
- F. We can do things that hinder the work of the Holy Spirit.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ not do what He wants us to | 1. Matthew 12:31 |
| _____ do what He doesn't want us to | 2. Ephesians 4:30 |
| _____ lie | 3. Acts 5:3, 4 & 9 |
| _____ resist | 4. I Thessalonians 5:19 |
| _____ rebel | 5. Acts 7:51 |
| _____ blaspheme | 6. Isaiah 63:10 |

Identify the greatest roadblocks to the work of the Holy Spirit in your life, then make the necessary steps to break them down.

God wants all of us to lay the foundation of a relationship with Jesus as Baptizer in the Holy Spirit. Supernatural power is available for all. Study John 7:37-39, Acts 2, and Ephesians 5:18-20. Read Luke 11:11-13 and pray asking the Father to minister directly to you. Then do not be satisfied until you find a personal release of the Holy Spirit in and through you. Welcome the personal presence of God. Listen to the whisper of God to you. Yield yourself to worship and spiritual language. Expect God to use you to help others with supernatural power.



Releasing the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

- Holy Spirit activity brings Power for living:
 - ◆ Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8, I Corinthians 4:20, II Timothy 1:7
- Three kinds of People (I Corinthians 2, 3):
 - ◆ Natural, Carnal, Spiritual
- Resources of the Holy Spirit (what He brings to us):
 - ◆ Awareness of God's presence
 - ◆ Increased intimate worship
 - ◆ Bubbling up guidance
 - ◆ Speaking in tongues
 - ◆ Quickening of Scripture
 - ◆ Clarity regarding sin
 - ◆ Open to supernatural power
- Some steps to take to welcome and release the Holy Spirit:

(1) Hunger and Thirst	Matthew 5:6
(2) Salvation	Ephesians 1:13,14
(3) House Cleaning	Mark 3:22-27
(4) Repentance	Acts 5:32
(5) Prayer	Luke 11:5-13
(6) Receive	John 7:37-39
(7) Respond	Ephesians 5:18



Bible Study Notes

Speaking in Tongues

Descriptive names:

- Speaking in tongues
- Glossolalia
- Prayer language
- Prayer tongue
- Other tongues
- Unknown tongues
- Praying in the spirit

Definition:

- Acts 2:4-11
- I Corinthians 13:1
- I Corinthians 14:14-15

Ability to speak in a language (known on earth or otherwise) that has not been learned.

Heaven you can hear by way of your heart.

Note:

- Acts 2:4

Who is speaking? = We must act!

Functions:

1. Worship:

- Acts 2:4-11
- Acts 10:46
- Romans 8:15
- I Corinthians 14:14-17
- Ephesians 5:18-20
- Colossians 3:16

Vocal and sung praise

2. Intercession:

- Romans 8:26, 27
- I Corinthians 14:2
- I Corinthians 14:14, 15

Prayer at all times, according to God's will

3. Warfare:

- Ephesians 6:18

Spiritual weapon

4. Personal Growth:

- I Corinthians 14:4
- Jude 20

Building, strengthening, refreshing

5. Taming the tongue

- James 3:6-12

Speech that is lit by heaven or hell

6. Ministry gift or manifestation to others:

- I Corinthians 12:10
- I Corinthians 12:28
- I Corinthians 14:6
- I Corinthians 14:26

Help and bless believers and unbelievers

7. Guidance from God:

- Romans 8:27
- I Corinthians 2:10-16
- John 14:26
- John 16:13-15

Leading, telling, teaching

8. Opens other gifts

- Romans 12:6

Builds spirit and faith

9. Intimacy with God

- Jude 20

Fosters closeness, personal experience of divine reality

10. Obedience:

- I Corinthians 14:1
- I Corinthians 14:5
- I Corinthians 14:14, 15
- I Corinthians 14:18
- I Corinthians 14:39
- Ephesians 6:18
- Ephesians 5:18-20
- Colossians 3:16
- Jude 20

Commanded/Exhorted for our response

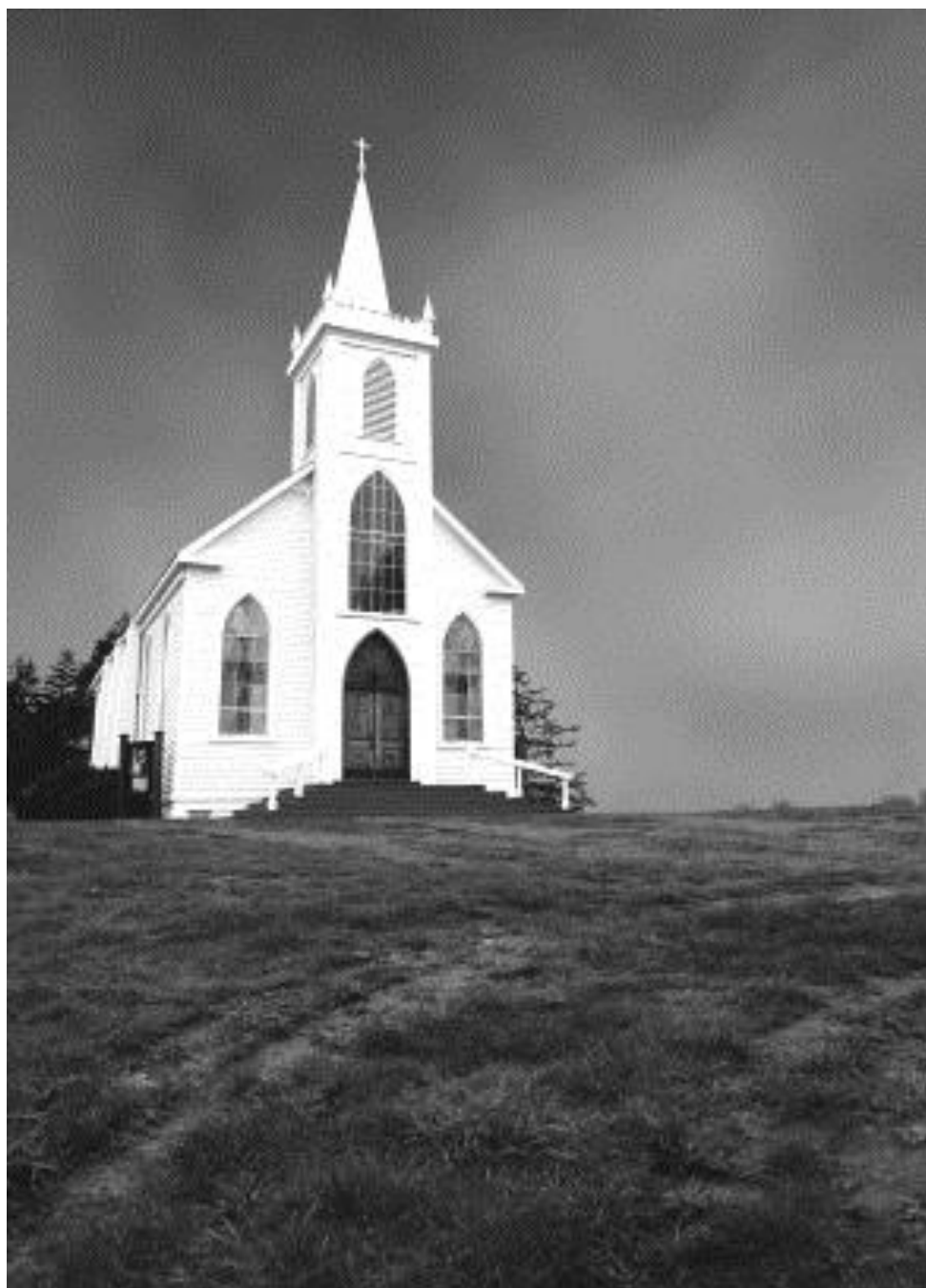
Receive and release:

- Expect God's grace
- Ask with repentance and faith
- Obey promptings

Individual evaluation:

- I believe in speaking in tongues.
- I spoke in tongues.
- I speak in tongues.

Next steps:



THE CHURCH

TEN LESSONS #6

TEN LESSONS #6

THE CHURCH

The white building on the corner? The Thursday night prayer group? The place I grew up in Sunday School? What is a church?

Before you begin this study, write out your own definition:

This lesson focuses on what the Lord has in mind in building his church.

I. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

In Christ we are linked with all other Christians. Study I Corinthians 12:12-14 & 27.

- A. The group of Christians is called the _____ of Christ.
- B. How many people who accept Christ as Lord and Savior are in the Body of Christ? *Very few*____ *Some*____ *Most*____ *All*____
- C. What does it mean to be a member of the Body of Christ? _____

When we become a Christian, we have a general, spiritual union with other believers in the universal church. However, we cannot let our fellowship and involvement stop here.

II. THE LOCAL CHURCH

Not just any group of believers constitutes a church. Believers must come together according to Christ's laws to be considered a church. This involves sound doctrine, proper observance of the ordinances, proper organization, etc. This is the only church you can see, and the only church that can do anything.

- A. The local church should minister to God, to itself and to the world around it. What functions to the church that do this are found in Acts 2:41-47? _____

B. I Corinthians 14:26 offers a pattern for believers' meetings. What implications does this pattern have for church services today? _____

C. What does Hebrews 10:23-25 tell us about our proper attitude toward the local church? _____

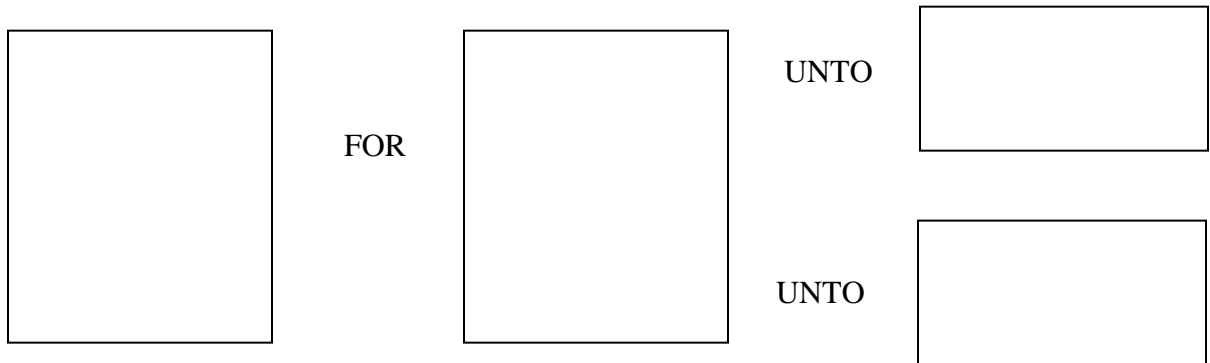
D. From Matthew 18:15-17, how should sin in the church be dealt with? _____

Each Christian has the responsibility to be attached to a local church and to be functioning in it as an active participant.

III. CHURCH ORDER

The church is not only an organism, it is an organization. The organization involves individual ministries under the leadership of recognized leaders in the offices of deacon and elder.

A. Individual ministries. Fill in this diagram from Ephesians 4:11 & 12.



Every believer has a place in the Body of Christ and has a unique ministry to perform based on the gifts and abilities God has given him. The Christ-given five-fold ministries bring the blessings of equipping to the church.

B. Deacons.

1. Read Acts 6:1-6. What is the purpose of this office in the church? _____

2. From I Timothy 3:8-13, list the main requirements for this office: _____

C. Elders.

1. Match these functions of elders to the scriptures that mention them:

_____ feeds church

A. I Peter 5:1-3

_____ combats heresy

B. Ephesians 4:11&12

_____ teaches church

C.. Titus 1:7-9

_____ rules church

D. Acts 20:28

_____ equips church

E. Acts 20:29-31

2. From I Timothy 3:1-7, list the main requirements for this office: _____

God has established proper order for the church. Whether it's an individual ministry or in a role as a deacon or elder, each of us must find our place and work together as God planned.

IV. GOING TO CHURCH

It is wrong not to enter into fellowship with other believers (Hebrews 10:23-25). Rather, it is God's will for each Christian to become a functioning member of a local church. Connecting to your spiritual home, relating to your spiritual leaders, and serving with your gifts and ministries is God's plan for every believer.

A. Now, again, answer the first question of this study: What is a church? _____

B. With what local church are you fellowshipping? _____

C. In what ways can you "do the work of the ministry" and "upbuild the body of Christ" in your church? _____

D. List the elders who are your spiritual authority. _____



Your Church Involvement

I. IS IT A LOCAL CHURCH?

A. Constituency

1. Regenerate, born again people (Acts 2:47; 20:28)
2. Identifiable group committed to each other and the Lord (Acts 11:26; 14:27)

B. Organization and Government

1. Regular meetings (Acts 20:7)
2. Elections – appointments (Acts 6:5 & 6; Titus 1:5)
3. Biblical officers (Philippians 1:1)
4. Contributions – finances (I Cor. 16:1 & 2)
5. Discipline (Matthew 18:17)
6. Local autonomy (Matthew 18:17)
7. Uniform ethical and religious customs and practices (I Corinthians 11:16)

C. Functions

1. Love *(to God in spirit and truth and to others)*
2. Instruction *(apostle's teaching, Bible)*
3. Fellowship *(sharing gifts and ministries)*
4. Evangelism *(service and outreach)*-Acts 2:42-47, I Corinthians 14:26
5. Proper observance of the ordinances -Acts 2:41, I Corinthians 11:20-32

D. Doctrine

1. Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice (II Tim. 3:15-17)
2. Promote, defend, and protect Biblical truth (I Tim. 3:15)

II. ARE YOU COMMITTED?

A. Time (Hebrews 10:23-25)

1. Attendance at services
2. Prayer, preparation, and ministry

B. Finances (II Corinthians 8:1-7)

1. Tithes
2. Offerings

C. Leaders (Hebrews 13:17)

1. Submit
2. Obey

D. Sharing (I Peter 4:10)

1. Gifts
2. Ministries

E. Relationships (I Corinthians 13)

1. Love
2. Edify



Some Biblical Ways to Bless the Lord

One of the joys of the Christian life is being involved with worship. Expressive worship is part of the vision of a Bible-based local church. As a participant, you have a role in ushering in the presence of the Lord.

Psalm 103 is a great starting point and Psalm 150 offers great encouragement for worship. The Bible instructs us to bring all of our being together to worship God. You can be an example of these expressions and encourage other participants to follow the leading of the Lord in a particular moment of engagement.

- **Aloud** **Heb. 13:15**
- **Bow** **Ps. 95:6**
- **Kneel** **Phil. 2:10**
- **Prostrate** **Rev. 4:10**
- **Stand** **Ps. 134:1**
- **Instruments** **Ps. 150:3-5**
- **Sing** **Ps. 68:4**
- **Tongues** **Ac. 2:1-11**
- **Clap** **Ps. 47:1**
- **Lifting Hands** **I Tim. 2:8**
- **Shout** **Ps. 35:27**
- **Dance** **Ps. 149:3**

Come prepared to model expressive worship. Come ready to join in with what the Lord is doing in a particular gathering. Come to boldly enter the presence of God.



CHURCH ORDINANCES

TEN BASIC LESSONS #7

TEN BASIC LESSONS #7

CHURCH ORDINANCES

How should I understand the various activities of the church? What are they and how do they relate to me?

The term *ORDINANCE* means symbolic rite ordained by Scripture for the church whose purpose is to vividly express a gospel truth and confirm it to the believer. The term *SACRAMENT* usually views these (and other) symbolic rites as actually conferring grace and producing holiness all by themselves with or without faith.

Scripture clearly teaches that our salvation is based solely on God's unmerited favor and not any meritorious works or righteous deeds we might perform (Ephesians 2:8 & 9; Titus 3:5). The Bible also makes it clear that the means for receiving God's grace is only through faith (Ephesians 2:8). Therefore, if faith is the means of grace it clearly cannot be any rites we perform. Rites are meant to serve as visual aids illustrating on a concrete level some of the deep, abstract spiritual truths and acts of God. God desires to clarify our understanding of what He does by giving us a physical reality we can see and experience. Unfortunately, some people have misunderstood this and tried to make something mysterious, magical, and confusing out of these simple visualizations.

This lesson will focus on the Scriptural understanding of church ordinances. Though strictly speaking, water baptism and the Lord's supper are the only true ordinances, other church visual aids have been included in this study.

I. WATER BAPTISM

When should I be baptized? How should I be baptized? Why should I be baptized? The Bible clearly answers these questions.

A. Match the verse with the statement about baptism that it teaches or illustrates.

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| _____ A command of Christ and a necessary part of discipleship | A. Romans 6:1-5 |
| _____ Speaks of Jesus "going into" and coming "up out of" the water | B. Acts 2:38; 8:36 |
| _____ Baptism signifies being united with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection | C. Mark 1:5; 8-10 |
| _____ For believers, as part of their initial profession of faith | D. Matthew 28:19 |

B. Questions you might be asking . . .

Q. Do I have to be baptized?

A. You don't have to, you get to. It's something Jesus told us to do. If you aren't willing and eager to do anything and everything Jesus commands, you have good cause to doubt whether you have made the type of commitment He requires of His disciples. (Matthew 28:19 & 20)

Q. Shouldn't I wait until I'm a stronger Christian?

A. No. Baptism is a sign of a person's commitment to Christ, not the maturity.

Q. What is the right mode: sprinkling, pouring, or immersion?

A. The usage of the Greek word *BAPTIZO*, which is the word translated into baptize, requires the meaning "immersion." Sprinkling or pouring, while they may be useful practices for individuals with certain disabilities or limitations, are not indicated in the Bible. The contexts of the baptism passages also strongly indicate immersion. (see Mark 1 for example)

Q. Does that mean that my infant baptism doesn't count?

A. That is correct. It is not a true Christian baptism since (1) it is the wrong mode, and (2) baptism is for believers who have personally exercised faith to trust Christ and infants are not old enough to understand, let alone believe.

All Christians should follow Jesus' teaching and example in water baptism.

II. THE LORD'S SUPPER

What does the Bible teach about the Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus during the last meal with his disciples. Read the account as recorded in Mark 14:22-24.

B. The Lord's Supper was a common element in the meetings of New Testament church. For example, read Acts 2:42, 46 and 20:7.

C. Read and study I Corinthians 11:23-43. Then fill in the blanks.

These symbols:

these realities:

represent

and

and

What is the warning in this passage? _____

D. List three themes or passages you might meditate on in a service of the Lord's Supper. _____

The passages used above give us God's plan for the proper observance of the Lord's Supper and show us how to partake together in faith.

III. LAYING ON OF HANDS

The practice of laying on of hands is a church "visual aid" that has a wide background. For each of these passages write in the letter that fits best.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| _____ Acts 28:8 | A. Impartation of authority for service & ministry |
| _____ Acts 6:3-6 | B. Impartation of healing to the sick |
| _____ Genesis 48:8-20 | C. Impartation of blessing |
| _____ Deuteronomy 34:9 | D. Impartation of gifts for service and ministry |
| _____ Mark 10:13-16 | |
| _____ II Timothy 1:6 | |
| _____ Acts 13:2 & 3 | |
| _____ Luke 4:40 | |

We can understand laying on of hands as the church community's involvement, participation, and identification with the person who receives this blessing.

IV. ANNOINTING WITH OIL

Why would anyone be anointed with oil in the church today? Here are some Scriptural guidelines.

A. Anointing with oil was used in the Bible for many reasons.
Match the reason with the appropriate scripture.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| _____ Acts 10:38; Isaiah 61:1-3 | 1. Standard medicinal treatment |
| _____ I Samuel 16:12 & 13 | 2. Beauty aid |
| _____ Revelation 3:18 | 3. Figurative of the Holy Spirit |
| _____ James 5:14-16 | 4. Consecrate for service |
| _____ Matthew 6:17 | 5. Healing |

B. Read James 5:14-16 carefully, then answer the following questions:

1. (*True or False*) Every time the elders hear that someone is sick, they should take the initiative and go to the bedside.
2. (*True or False*) Confession of sin is encouraged because some (though not by any means all) sicknesses develop as a result of sinful attitudes, thoughts, and lifestyles.
3. (*True or False*) The elders should confess their sins also (“to one another”) to clear up their communication channels with God.
4. The promised healing is brought about by (1) the oil, (2) prayer offered in faith, or (3) a magical incantation.

C. List two reasons why a Christian today might be anointed with oil:

1. _____
2. _____

Anointing with oil may be appropriate at times in your life in the church.

V. FASTING

Fasting is not a mystical, magical rite through which we placate, ingratiate, or coerce God into fulfilling our wishes. Rather it is a way for us to manifest, cement, and confirm our concern to ourselves and to God. It is a way of saying, *“I am more concerned about this matter than my necessary food.”* It is a time of setting aside basic needs (food) for a while to focus our attention and prayer on a matter of deep concern.

A. Describe the reasons why some of the people mentioned in scripture fasted.

1. Ezra 10:6 _____

2. II Samuel 1:12 _____

3. II Samuel 12:16 & 17 _____

4. Joel 1:13-20 _____

B. What are some specific reasons you might have for fasting?

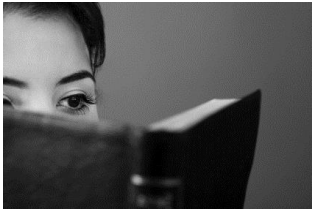
Practicing various kinds of fasting (Total -- Esther 4:16; Complete -- Matthew 4:2; Pleasant Bread -- Daniel 10:3 et al.) is a Biblical tool for spiritual growth.

VI. REVIEW

The church practices we have studied are important. Every church which claims to follow Christ should be involved with these ordinances on a regular basis. Is the church you fellowship with following these Biblical guidelines?

Perhaps more importantly, each individual needs to regularly and actively participate in these church activities. These are Scriptural marks of a believer. Are there any ordinances you have overlooked in your life? What was the time and place of your baptism? When do you plan to partake of the Lord's Supper next?

Water baptism is particularly important. This is the way God has established for believers to make a public declaration of their relationship with Christ. It cements the Lordship of Christ with concrete, observable behavior. It clarifies the individual's union with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection. Be sure to take advantage of this foundational step of relating to Jesus as Lord.



Guidelines For Fasting

Fasting is a radical, non-worldly way to heat up your spiritual life, hear from God in a fresh way, and hasten His coming kingdom.

Benefits of fasting:

1. Scriptural fasting has a specific goal in view, and is a way of expressing keen desire to the Lord (Esther 4:16, Daniel 9:3).
2. Every Christian must fast in order to fulfill all the words of Jesus (see Matthew 9:15). When you know you're obedient, it increases your faith and expectancy from God.
3. Fasting frees up extra time to pray (time spent in meal preparation, eating, and clean-up).
4. Fasting is a way to humble ourselves (Ezra 8:21) and we know that God gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5).
5. Hunger reminds you to pray.
6. Fasting strengthens your self-control over bodily appetites (1 Peter 4:1).
7. Fasting strengthens our ability to resist temptation (Matthew 4:1-2).
8. Fasting helps with guidance (Acts 13:2,3; Acts 14:23).

Normal fast:

Drink water, eat no food
Complete fast, up to about 40 days, Matthew 4:2

Total fast:

Nothing to eat or drink
Acts 9:9, Ezra 10:6, Esther 4:16; 2-3 days

Partial fast:

Refrain from some foods and/or beverages, "pleasant bread" (fruit juice fast)
Daniel 10:3

Supernatural fast:

God sustains
Exodus 34:27, 28; I Kings 19:8

Health caution:

If you have an ailment such as diabetes, take regular medication, or are an expectant mother, consult your physician before beginning a fast. Perhaps you can engage in a partial fast.

At the beginning of a fast you may experience discomfort such as headaches (this may be withdrawal from caffeine), nausea or dizziness. These symptoms will usually disappear in a day or two. If you are going on an extended fast it is helpful for digestive purposes to eat fruits (fresh or dried) and foods rich in natural fiber both a few days before and a few days after the fasting period.

For scriptural guidelines for fasting, see Isaiah 58:1-12, Mat. 6:16-18, Luke 5:33-39, and Luke 18:9-14.

Take time to nourish and feed your inner life!



FINAL EVENTS

TEN BASIC LESSONS #8

TEN BASIC LESSONS #8

FINAL EVENTS

Have you ever wondered . . .

What happens to people when they die? Why do some go to heaven and some to hell? Who decides? When Jesus comes again, what will things be like?

This lesson examines some scriptures that relate to these basics of final events.

I. THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

Where do people spend their time after death, but before the end of the world?

A. What hopes did these people who came to Christ have?

1. The thief on the cross (Luke 23:43) _____

2. The Apostle Paul (Philippians 1:23; II Corinthians 5:6-8) _____

B. What will those who have rebelled against God experience? (II Peter 2:4, 9; Luke 16:19-25, especially 23) _____

C. How do passages like John 5:24 and Hebrews 9:27, 28 refute the concept of purgatory or a limbo intermediate state? _____

The Bible teaches an immediate, conscious, and irreversible presence in and awareness of heaven or hell upon death.

II. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Christians agree that Christ will come again – this time not as a babe, but in the sky, with great power and glory to bring an end to the world (II Peter 3:10). He comes again to resurrect the dead, some to eternal life and some to eternal damnation (Matthew 25:46). He will then establish a new heaven and a new earth for the redeemed (II Peter 3:13). Some believers have disagreed throughout history about the exact sequence and nature of the events that will occur surrounding His second coming. There are some Bible basics that we can all agree upon.

- A. (*True or False*) While the thought of the end of the world scares many people, it should really be a source of comfort for Christians.

- B. (*True or False*) Once a Christian has thoroughly studied Matthew 24, Revelation, Daniel, and other passages about the end times, he should be able to pinpoint when Christ will come again. (Matthew 24:44)

- C. It has been almost 2,000 years since Christ gave the promise that he would return. According to II Peter 3:9, why is he taking so long? _____

Jesus is coming back! We win! We may not know all the details, but we take comfort in God having everything under control. Jesus is our soon-coming King.

III. THE RESSURRECTION, JUDMENT AND FINAL STATES OF RIGHTEIOUS AND WICKED

When Christ comes again, many astounding changes will take place. According to Scripture, what will happen to:

- A. The earth and universe? II Peter 3:10, 12, 13 _____

- B. The living and dead? John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15 _____

- C. The bodies of the righteous? Philippians 3:20, 21; I Corinthians 15:50-54 _____

D. The future of the righteous? Matthew 25:46; Revelation 21:3, 4; Revelation 22:3

E. The future of the wicked? II Thessalonians 1:6-10; Matthew 25:41, 46; Daniel ___

In the end, justice will prevail. God is going to set all creation right for all eternity.

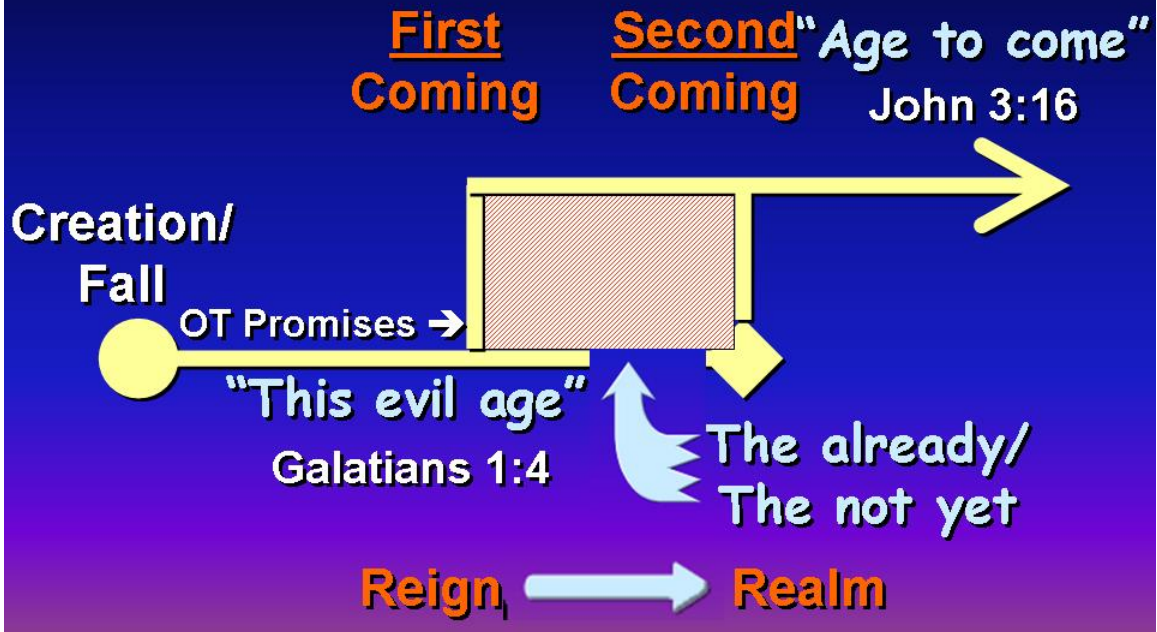
IV. CONCLUSIONS

God has a plan. God is in control. God is good. Jesus is coming back. There is a real heaven and a real hell. Hebrews 9:27 says, “. . .*it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment.*” Are you ready? Are you living in a way that is prepared for Christ’s return?

This study has presented the basics of the end times, the facts that we can be sure of. God has not left us ignorant of what to expect but neither has He given us every detail. There are several different ideas regarding exactly what will happen at the close of the age. Most of them are sound theologically, but some are not. If you want to study the area more deeply, be sure you consult sound, scholarly works. Avoid the “pop” theological works, which sometimes amount to little more than Christian speculation.

The most important aspect of all of this is our personal relationship with Christ. He is the One who holds the keys to death and the afterlife (Revelation 1:18). He is the one who will sit in ultimate judgment. You can draw confidence and joy from your personal relationship with Jesus as your coming King.

The Conflict of the Ages





WITNESSING

TEN BASIC LESSONS # 9

TEN BASIC LESSONS # 9

WITNESSING

If you are a Christian, someone in your life witnessed to you. In fact, all Christians are “led to the Lord” by someone else. Now what is your responsibility for passing on the faith? From the beginning, Christianity has been dependent upon the testimony of those whom God has saved for its growth.

I. MOTIVATION

Why should we witness and tell others about Christ? Match these motivations with their scriptures.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ___ The Glory of God | A. Matthew 28:19&20; John 14:15 |
| ___ The “lostness” of man | B. Philippians 2:9-11; Exodus 34:14 |
| ___ Obedience to Christ | C. John 3:36 and 14:6 |

Our motivation to share Christ begins with the new life we have bubbling up inside. When these other motivations are added in, we need no other push to become an active witness.

II. HOW TO GET STARTED

The method of personal evangelism is to be in contact with God and to be in contact with people. We must relate to non-Christians socially to share the gospel effectively. Isolation, as with a disease and quarantine, is one of Satan’s most effective tools in stemming the spread of Christianity.

But how can we bring the conversation from the hockey game to Christ? We need to be alert for opportunities to “throw out the bait”. There are many ways to do this.

Here is one simple method using three questions.

- A. Are you interested in spiritual things?
(with either yes or no you can go on)
- B. What do you think a real Christian is?
(answers will usually relate to what a Christian does – goes to church, reads the Bible, does good. Then you can point out what a real Christian is.)
- C. Would you like to become a real Christian now?
(here you can draw the net)

There are many other ways to throw out the bait. Using literature, sharing your testimony, and offering Christ as the solution to problems are just a few examples. Find at least one method of getting started that you feel comfortable with and become adept at using it.

III. THE MESSAGE

That is the heart of Christianity? What is the “good news” that we have to proclaim? Make your own outline of the gospel by putting the truth of these verses in your own words.

A. John 3:16; 10:10: _____

B. Ephesians 2:1; Romans 3:23: _____

C. Isaiah 53 (*esp. vv. 5 & 6*); Romans 5:8: _____

D. Ephesians 2:8&9; Romans 5:1: _____

There are many different ways to outline and organize the message. You must have one that you know well and can share with its scriptural backing.

IV. QUESTIONS AND BLOCKS

Sometimes people have questions they would like answered before accepting Christ. I Peter 3:15 tells us we should be ready with a sensible defense of Christianity. Here are seven typical questions non-Christians may ask.

- A. What about the heathen?
- B. Is Christ the only way to God?
- C. Why do the innocent suffer?
- D. How can miracles be possible?
- E. Isn't the Bible full of errors?
- F. Isn't the Christian experience only psychological?
- G. Won't a moral life get me to heaven?

Struggle with these questions yourself and be prepared. It must, however, be pointed out that the real problem is not intellectual but moral. Often the problem is not that people can't believe. The real problem is that they won't believe.

V. THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

After you present the message and answer questions, the time comes to reap the harvest. Before we do this, however, it is imperative to present the cost of discipleship. Match these responsibilities with their biblical texts.

____ Confess Christ

A. Romans 10:9&10

____ Repent

B. Luke 14:25-33

____ Put Christ first

C. Acts 2:38

VI. RESULTS

Sharing the gospel involves a transfer of responsibility. We begin as responsible for sharing the gospel. In the end others are responsible for responding to the gospel. The job is not done when someone responds, but rather when someone becomes responsible for making an intelligent decision. We can't evaluate our effectiveness on the basis of immediate results. In your own words, what does each of these scriptures teach about effectiveness and results?

A. Acts 1:8: _____

B. I Corinthians 3:5-9: _____

C. John 6:44: _____

D. Mark 4:1-20: _____

In being a witness, we need to faithfully do our part and then step back and let God do His part.

VII. FOLLOW UP

The time comes in our witnessing when we need to draw the net. We need to be ready to finalize our witnessing by praying with someone to accept Christ as Lord and Savior.

But what can we do if someone does accept Christ? We need to be ready with a program to follow up. The following outline should help.

A. Immediate Follow Up

1. Assurances of salvation (I John 5:13, etc.)
2. First steps (confession before others)
3. Meet again (call, write or visit)

B. Subsequent Follow Up

1. Relationship with God (explain what has happened)
2. Relationship to church (get involved in fellowship)
3. Relationship to world (friends, family, sin, etc.)

C. Ten Basic Lessons

More than a plan or a program, follow up is a person. As you tell others about the Lord, be available to be with that person to help establish them in their relationship with Jesus.

VIII. READY, SET, GO

Witnessing for Jesus is our privilege and responsibility. We need to become a part of God's pattern of reproduction.

A. Write out your testimony and present it to someone.

B. Make a list of people you are socially related to whom you can witness.

C. Pray daily for these people, your witness, and Christian outreach around the world.



How To Use Your Personal Testimony

Suppose you were talking with a stranger in a bus depot and had just three minutes in which to explain what a real Christian is, how one becomes a Christian, how Christ can change a life, and offer evidence for the validity of Christianity. An impossible task? Not really, for all those elements can be brought out through use of your own personal testimony. How Christ has changed your life is the most powerful sermon you can preach.

The apostle Paul made tremendous use of his own testimony in Acts 26. The entire talk can be outlined in three major points:

- I. Before he became a Christian (Acts 26:4-12)
- II. How he became a Christian (Acts 26:13-19)
- III. Life after he became a Christian (Acts 26:19-23)

WRITE UP your own testimony in OUTLINE FORM USING Paul's format as a pattern. You might want to keep some of these suggestions in mind:

- Memorize your opening and closing sentences.
- Weed out all material which, although interesting, does not directly relate to the basic theme, or which may confuse the listener.
- If you became a Christian as a child, emphasize your life since your commitment.
- Avoid glittering generalities, exaggeration, and trite Christian jargon which others may not understand (*saved, under conviction, sanctified, backslide, etc.*)
- Don't mention or tear down any church, denomination or organization. Center on preaching Christ.
- Use scripture, but not more than three verses and then quote a modern translation.
- Watch your delivery at public meetings – avoid odd mannerisms; use good posture; speak clearly, loudly, and in a conversational manner; don't use vocal pauses (*and, ah, uh, or*).
- BE HONEST! If it isn't a true expression of you and your experience, keep quiet!
- Leave the person knowing exactly how he can accept Christ into his own life by telling how you did.

As you share your personal story, pray and expect that God will use you to introduce others to a life-giving relationship with Jesus.



Friendship Evangelism

What people were significant in your becoming a Christian? _____

What is your “audience” today? _____

I. PRINCIPLES OF FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM:

(These can be found in the interaction of Jesus with the woman in John 4)

1. Contact others socially
2. Establish a common interest
3. Arouse interest
4. Don't go too far
5. Don't condemn
6. Stick with the main issue
7. Confront him directly

II. AN ILLUSTRATION OF FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM:

THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

	WITHOUT CHRIST	WITH CHRIST
N O W		
E T E R N I T Y		

(insert your friend's name)

	WITHOUT CHRIST	WITH CHRIST
N O W	Ephesians 2:1-3	John 10:10
E T E R N I T Y	Matthew 25:46	John 5:24

What are your next steps? _____



TRUE AND FALSE TEACHING

TEN BASIC LESSONS #10

TRUE AND FALSE TEACHING

How should I understand the many different religious groups today? What's the difference? As a Christian you need to be sure of what you do believe and what you don't believe. It is a function of the church and its leaders to warn about and refute false teaching (Titus 1:9&10; Acts 20:28-31). This lesson points out typical approaches and teachings of false teachers.

I. DECEPTION

There are common tactics that false teachers use to deceive people.

- A. They use the same terms but redefine them. We must maintain natural, historic, Biblical definitions.
- B. They use poor hermeneutics (*rules for interpreting scripture*). See II Peter 3:16. We must not violate language laws or historical contexts.
- C. They mix truth with error. A glass of good milk with just one teaspoon of arsenic becomes deadly poison.
- D. They use non-essential come-ons (mysterious truths and great promises) to build up interest and trust.
- E. They insist on a precise answer for all sticky problems and difficult issues.
- F. They counterfeit truth as with Moses and the magicians of Egypt.
- G. They blow one truth out of proportion to the exclusion of others.

II. HERESY

Even a sincere and honest Christian teacher may make an occasional error. There is a difference between these minor deviations and heresy or false teaching. Heresy, or ungodly false teaching, perverts or distorts one or more of the doctrines of salvation which center around the "lostness" of man, the nature of the God, the person of Christ, and the work of Christ. False teachers and false groups will deviate in one or more of these areas.

A. The “Lostness” of Man

Man, apart from God, is lost and in a fallen, sinful condition. In Romans 1, 2, and 3, God explains this topic in depth. One conclusion is found in Romans 3:23: “*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*” Ephesians 2:1-3, and many other passages, substantiate this view. Man is not basically good and cannot bring about his own salvation.

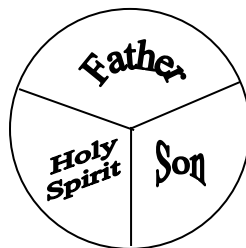
B. The Nature of the God Himself

1. God is One. Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; John 10:30
2. Three are addressed as God in Scripture:
 - a. The Father is recognized as God. John 6:27; I Peter 1:2
 - b. Jesus is recognized as God. John 1:1, 14; 1:18; 5:18, 23; 20:28; 10:30; Titus 2:12; Hebrews 1:8; Isaiah 9:6
 - c. The Holy Spirit is recognized as God. Acts 5:3&4; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19
 - d. These three are put on the same plane in Scripture. Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14; I Peter 1:2; I Corinthians 12:4-6
3. These three are Distinct Persons as Personal Beings. Matthew 3:16&17 . . . all are active and distinct at Jesus’ baptism. John 14:16&17 . . . Jesus prays to the Father for another (*Greek allos: separate but of the same kind*) Comforter.
4. We must accept all these facts without confusing the persons or dividing the substance.

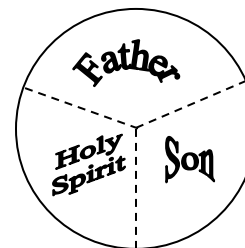
WRONG



WRONG



RIGHT



C. The Person of Christ

1. Jesus Christ is fully God.
 - a. John 1:1 “*the Word was God.*”
 - b. John 1:14; 3:16&18; I John 4:9 “*only Begotten*” (*monogenes*) from *genos* – kind or class; NOT from *gennao* – beget or born, “one of a kind”.
 - c. John 3:13, 8:58, 10:30, 20:28; Romans 9:5; Colossians 2:9; Titus 2:13; Philippians 2:6 (*from Greek morphe – essential attributes/specific form*).
 - d. II Peter 1:1&2 Jesus is given the OT title of Jehovah, see Joel 2:32 and Romans 10:13.

2. Jesus Christ existed before his incarnation for all eternity as the Word. Philippians 2:6&7; Hebrews 1:2; 8:12; John 1:1&14; 8:58; 17:5; I Corinthians 8:6; II Corinthians 8:9; Ephesians 4:10.
3. Jesus Christ is fully human. John 1:14; Acts 2:22; Romans 5:15; Philippians 2:7; I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 2:14; I Peter 3:18; I John 1:1; 4:2.
4. Neither the full humanity nor the full deity of Jesus should be ignored or diluted.

D. The Work of Christ

1. The deity of Christ was essential: an infinite debt requires an infinite sacrifice beyond that of man's gifts or man himself to satisfy the holiness and justice of God. Hebrews 9:13&14; 9:23-28; 10:4&5; I Peter 1:18-21.
2. The humanity of Christ was essential that he might suffer the sinners' fate in their behalf. Luke 24:26; Acts 17:3; Romans 3:24-26; Galatians 3:13; 4:4&5; II Corinthians 5:14, 19, 21; Hebrews 2:9&10, 14-18; I Peter 3:18; I Timothy 2:5&6.
3. Christ's "sinlessness" in nature and deed qualified him as an acceptable sacrifice. John 8:46; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; I Peter 1:18&19; 2:21&22; I John 3:3.
4. Christ's atonement, his substitution sacrifice, is the one and only basis for our redemption. Ephesians 2:8&9; Titus 3:5; Acts 13:38-40; Galatians 2:16; Romans 3:20.

This section is not comprehensive, but deals with areas of teaching that are essential to salvation and often distorted.

III. BEWARE

Many sections of the New Testament warn about the coming of false teachers and groups. Peter wrote his second letter primarily to combat false teaching. His conclusion is better than any other we could share.

"You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, beware lest you be carried away with the error of lawless men and lose your own stability. But grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen" II Peter 3:17 & 18



Is Jesus Really God?

I. THE OLD TESTAMENT – MESSIANIC PASSAGES

- A. He is one with Yahweh – yet he is distinct from Yahweh.
- B. He is called “the Lord,” the Sovereign and other titles reserved for God.
- C. He comes as proprietor of the temple.
- D. He is pre-existent and eternal.
- E. See Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; Psalm 45:6&7; Malachi 3:1; and others

II. THE NEW TESTAMENT – TEACHING PASSAGES

- A. Jesus is called God – John 1:1; John 20:28; Romans 9:5; Hebrews 1:8&9; I John 5:20; John 1:18.
- B. Jesus is called the “only begotten” *monogenes* from *genos* kind or class – John 1:14; 3:16&18; I John 4:9 meaning that He is unique.
- C. Grammar rule – Titus 2:13; Ephesians 5:5; II Thessalonians 1:12; II Peter 1:1.
- D. Colossians 2:9
- E. Philippians 2:6 from “*morphe*” -- essential attributes
- F. Old Testament descriptions applied to Jesus.
 - 1. Matthew 3:3 – Isaiah 40:3
 - 2. John 12:41 – Isaiah 6:1
 - 3. Ephesians 4:7&8 – Psalm 68:18
- G. Possesses attributes of God.
 - 1. Eternity: John 8:58; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:11
 - 2. Omnipresence: Matthew 28:20; Ephesians 1:23
 - 3. Omniscience: Matthew 9:4; John 2:24&25; John 16:30; Acts 1:24; I Corinthians 4:5; Colossians 2:3
 - 4. Omnipotence: Matthew 27:18; Revelation 1:8
- H. The works of God ascribed to Him.
 - 1. Creation: John 1:3; I Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:10; Hebrews 3:3&4; Revelation 3:14
 - 2. Upholding: Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3
 - 3. Raising dead – judging the world: John 5:27-29; Matthew 25:31
- I. He receives honor and worship due only to God – John 20:28; 5:23; 14:14; Acts 7:59; Romans 10:9; I Corinthians 11:24&25; Hebrews 1:6; Philippians 2:10&11; Revelation 5:12-14; II Peter 3:18; II Timothy 4:18; Hebrews 13:21; Titus 2:10
- J. His name is associated with that of God on an equal footing.
 - 1. Baptism formula: Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3
 - 2. Benedictions: I Corinthians 1:3; II Corinthians 13:14

III. JESUS’ LIFE – HE CLAIMED DIVINITY

John 5:12; John 5:18; John 10:30-44; John 12:44&45; John 14:7-11; John 13:13

IV. PRAGMATIC EVIDENCE – CORROBORATION BY CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Some Groups Promoting False Teaching

BAHAI: Christ was a prophet as was Mohammed, and many others. All of the prophets spoke of the same God. Baha'u'llah is the prophet of today superseding Christ. Christ did not die for our sins. Sin is simply our imperfections. Hell is not a place of punishment.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE: Scripture contains many errors and must not be taken literally. Mary Baker Eddy's works are elevated to a position of divine inspiration. God is not a person. He is a principle, not a Creator. He is all that exists. Sin and matter do not exist, they are only in the mind. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Science. Christ was only God's son. Christ did not atone for our sins; the way to salvation is to stop sinning. There is not eternal retribution as we know it.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES (Russelism): The Holy Spirit is only the invisible active force of God, not a person. Christ was created by God, and is not equal with Him. Jesus is not fully God. A man must faithfully carry out the will of God to have eternal life. Salvation is achieved through works. Most people are annihilated at death (no hell) and only a few go to heaven.

MORMONS (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints): Three other entire books are needed to complete revelation besides the Bible. They are depended upon heavily and interpret the Bible. God was once a man, and we shall someday become gods. There are many gods, Christ being only one of them. The Holy Spirit is not God. Christ's death did not make atonement for all sins, so salvation must be gained by faith and works.

TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION: TM is dishonest in claiming not to be a religion. It is a part of Hinduism. The initiation ceremony is a worship of past masters of TM. Many mantras are praises to idols. The leader claims TM is a path to God and a type of prayer, and as such is condemned by scripture. It is a system of salvation by works.

THE UNIFICATION CHURCH (Moon): Christ did not make full atonement for men. He only established spiritual salvation, but was unable to establish physical salvation because he died before he could be married. The second Christ (many believe it to be Moon) will accomplish this through his marriage to the Holy Spirit. Marriage is essential for salvation. The Holy Spirit is feminine and Christ is masculine. They will be married. Moon's writings are elevated to the level of scripture.

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY: Scripture is not the ultimate, unique source of revelation. God is a principle, not a person. All men are reincarnated, Christ was the reincarnation of David. Sin and evil do not exist. Everything is a manifestation of God. Hell and Heaven simply refer to our reincarnated states.

ALSO: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Shintoism, Scientology, Eckankar, Hare Krishna, Spiritualism, Theosophy, New Age groups, occultism, and others.

