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Introduction

It's Time to Change the World!

Welcome to the revolution! Here is where we make our stand and now is the time we fight for the freedom of our nation!!



This booklet is meant to be a manual to teach you how to be a true follower and disciple of Jesus Christ. It is designed to teach you how to give your whole life to Jesus so that you will be able to say with all your heart both now and forever, "Here I am Lord, use me!! Whether in life or in death, I will glorify YOU!!"

Enough is Enough!!

Today in America we are watching the armies of darkness attempt to bring death to the Christian church and destroy the validity of the Bible and the truths it presents. We have watched prayer be taken out of our schools and be replaced with metal detectors. We have watched the result of godless pride bring death to literally millions of unborn children in abortion clinics.

We have seen the mass media present fundamental Christianity as a promoter of hate speech and intolerance, while the "wisdom of this age" has resulted in more depression, more suicide, more violence, and more broken lives and families than ever known to our country.

We need God to change our communities, our cities, and our nation. God's method of change is to use people, people like you and me who will rise up and be His disciples and go out into the world and preach His message.

Be a Disciple!!

Being a disciple means to be like Jesus. It is not enough to just "believe" in Jesus, you must live like Jesus. The word "Christian" is only mentioned 3x in the Bible. The word "believer" only 2x, but the word "disciple" is found over 250x!! It is clear how Jesus wants us to be, he wants us to be His DISCIPLES!!



From the very start of Jesus' ministry He set out to make twelve disciples who would live like Him and follow all of His teachings. After three years of intensive training He then told them to do the very same thing for others that He did with them. Jesus taught His disciples to go out and make new disciples.

Matthew 28:16-20

16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

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, 20 and **teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.** And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Jesus did not say, "go and make Christians" or "go and make believers", He said, "go and make DISCIPLES!!" Consider this, we are saved by grace through faith and therefore rightly called, "believers". When we identify our system of beliefs with the teachings of Christ [the Anointed One] we are then rightly called Christians. But we are only rightly called Jesus' "disciples" when we live like Jesus and become His students!

Here are some helpful statements that I believe will teach you the difference between just "believing" in Jesus and "living" like Jesus.

- *We give our free time to sports and entertainment, while Jesus gave His days to ministry and nights to prayer.*
- *We want the American dream, while Jesus wanted the power of God to change the world.*
- *We want comfort in life, while Jesus lived in constant conflict.*
- *We want to be taken in and accepted by the world, when Jesus was put out and rejected by it.*
- *We want to be thought of as reasonable and considerate with those who differ with us, when the Jewish leaders called Jesus demon possessed, crazy, and confrontational.*
- *We live for the praise of people, while Jesus lived only for the praise of God His Father.*
- *We will give to Jesus when it is most convenient and stop when it hurts or brings discomfort, but Jesus gave to us His entire life and in a gruesome bloody crucifixion He died for us all.*
- *We are consumed with our wants, our needs, our families, our desires, and our dreams, while Jesus was consumed with God's wants, God desires, and looked to others hurts, others needs and solved others problems.*

- *We wish to save our lives, Jesus came to lose His.*
- *Is it any wonder we fail to make the kind of difference that Jesus made?*

Being a Biblical Christian is Being a Radical Disciple!

Today I challenge you to read this booklet and become a true disciple of Jesus Christ. I challenge you to stop making excuses, to stop comparing yourself with others, and start talking, acting, and living like Jesus!! Decide right now that you will let God takeover your life and make you the disciple He wants you to be. Remove the line you may have placed between going to church and being the church. Take away the idea that only a few will preach or only the “super Christians” will witness or just the first disciples could do miracles, and start believing what Jesus said you can do and start being who Jesus said you can be!!

You have been chosen just like the first disciples Jesus picked 2,000 years ago. They were not any different than you. They could not do it by themselves, they needed to totally rely on the power of God and so will you. Sure you will make mistakes, so did Peter, James and John, but you will learn like they did, that Jesus has both the power of redemption and transformation.

Remember, you are saved by God’s power, made a disciple by His power, and you live your life with purpose by His power. It is all about trusting and believing that God knows what He is doing and will do what He said He would do!!

I believe in you, and I know when you pray and ask God to use your life, He will. You will experience the power of God in ways you never thought possible. You will see others changed by the same power of God that is working in you. Get ready to launch out of your “natural” and into His “supernatural”!!

Pray this out loud:

Father, I come in the name of Jesus thanking you for the cross and for changing my life. I now pray that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead would give me power to live and die for You!! I ask that you will take away my compromise and comfort and bring me the Spirit of power and set my life on fire!

I do not want to be the same; I want to be like Jesus. Start right now and right here in my life, transform every part of me. I dedicate my life to being Your disciple. Teach me to preach Your Gospel, to function in the anointing, to tear down strongholds, and to build the Kingdom of God. I praise You and thank you for choosing me!! By Your strength I declare I will see this world changed!! I am Your DISCIPLE!!

How to Use this Booklet

The booklet is written in three main sections: **1. Disciples Are...** teaches what should be found in a disciple's spiritual life. **2. Disciples Have...** teaches what things should be in a disciples every day life. **3. Disciples Do...** teaches the things that a disciple should do in life for others.

The best way to use this booklet it to go one lesson at a time with your Bible and read all the Scriptures mentioned in the brackets []. Answer all the questions honestly and allow God to show you your strengths and weaknesses. Try to keep a prayer journal as well and write out your prayers and testimonies so that you will be able to see your progress and God's power working in your life.

Make time each day to pray and to seek God's face. Worship Him for who He is and fall in love with Him over and over again. Also, in your prayer time be open with your heart and let God know any struggles you may have because He cares for you. Remember, you are not alone, others around the world are going through the very same things you are facing and they are winning!! God is with you!!

I love you and believe in your calling!! Together we will accomplish great things for the Glory of God!!

Hebrews 12:1-2

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

In Him,

Joe Wyrostek
Pastor of Metro Praise

LESSON 1

Disciples are Free!

FREEDOM!

Disciples need to be free to bring freedom to others. If the devil cannot stop you from following Jesus, the next thing He will try to do is steal your purpose.



And the number one way the devil will try to destroy your destiny is to keep you in some type of sin, emotional distress, addiction, fear, bitterness, or have you

living in the past. (John 10:10)

By keeping you chained to your sin or weakness the devil can stop you from fighting and keep you away from helping others. No matter who you are, if you are not careful, the devil can put you into bondage. Just like a police officer can put someone in handcuffs and stop them from going somewhere, the devil comes and tries to arrest the disciple's calling and stop them from advancing the Kingdom of God.

That is why Jesus said He was anointed. Jesus came to set the prisoners free. And it doesn't matter how big the sin might be or how long the addiction has been in someone's life, when Jesus comes, He will set them totally free!!

Luke 4:18-19

18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. **He has sent me to proclaim**

freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Be Honest

Please take a moment to really examine your life. Is there anything in your life that the devil can use as a foothold against you? (Ephesians 4:27)

Ask the Lord to show you your heart and expose any areas that are taking you away from God. Here are some helpful questions to ask yourself.

1. Are you repenting for the same sin over and over again but are not experiencing a transformation of heart and mind?
2. Are you holding a grudge of unforgiveness towards someone that has hurt you?
3. Do you have a bad habit in your life that you cannot quit no matter how many times you have tried?
4. Do you have a reoccurring fear that overwhelms you and makes you powerless?
5. Are there things in your past that hold you back from your present? Such as low self-esteem from a bad relationship, lack of trust because of parental abuse, etc.

Well, if you have answered yes to any of the issues brought up by the above questions, you need to be set free by the power of God and experience total freedom in your life today!! And praise be unto God our Father through Jesus Christ because He wants to set you free right NOW!!

Jesus, Break These Chains!!

Now ask yourself this question, “Do I want to be free?” Be honest with yourself and really make up your mind. Are you tired of running from the devil in this area of your life? Have you had enough of the devil’s lies and deception? Are you fed up with the same ole’ issue coming up over and over again? Well if you are ready, then now is the time!! Jesus is going to set you free today!!



Take a moment to read this Scripture and prepare yourself to wage war with the devil and win!!

2 Corinthians 10:3-4

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, **they have divine power to demolish strongholds.**

The weapons you are going to use against the devil have divine power to demolish the strongholds you are facing. Your weapons are prayer, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit. Begin to use these weapons right now. Take some time to read the prayer I have prepared for you and then pray it for yourself. Spend as much time as you need in prayer and use the power of God to destroy your strongholds!!

Father, I come to you in the name of Jesus and I ask you to set me free. I repent of any sins I may have committed that have brought this issue upon myself (Pray specifically if the issue involves sin).

I stand on your Word that says, “I am a new creation in Christ”. I believe that “who the Son sets free is free indeed.” I rebuke the

power of Satan that has come against me and I declare that I am free from the prison of His bondage. (Rebuke the devil specifically in the areas you have been bound in.)

I declare today is a new day, I am a new creation, and I will live in freedom!! I am more than a conqueror!! I am a blessed child of God!! Satan you are defeated and I place you under my feet in the Name of Jesus!! Go and never come back!!

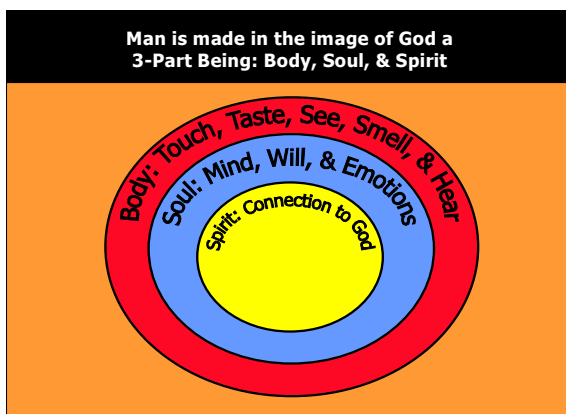
Holy Spirit, I welcome you into my life, fill my life with the power of God!! I hunger and thirst for you!! Fill my mind, my soul, and my spirit with the presence of Jesus!! I AM FREE IN JESUS NAME!!! (Now begin to praise God and shout out loud!!)

Living Free

To live free and stay free from this day forward I am going to teach you a real simple lesson on the “Battle for Your Mind”. The mind is the battlefield you will have to fight on everyday.

You are a three part being: body, soul, and spirit. [1 Thessalonians 5:23] Your soul is made of three parts: the mind, the will, and your emotions.

Since your spirit is born again and is with the Holy Spirit, the devil knows He cannot defeat you there. So he will try to attack your soul. He will go for the center of your soul, which is your mind. He will try to attack your thoughts.



Every Christian experiences the battle for their mind. Satan even attacked Jesus in this way. Let us look to Jesus as our example of how to defeat the daily attacks the devil brings against our minds.

Luke 4:1-12

1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, 2 where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

3 The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." 4 Jesus answered, "**It is written:** 'Man does not live on bread alone.'"



5 The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. 6 And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. 7 So if you worship me, it will all be yours." 8 Jesus answered, "**It is written:** 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"

9 The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. 10 For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; 11 they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

12 Jesus answered, "**It says:** 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Jesus defeated the devil by quoting Scripture. The way to defeat the attacks of the devil is to use the Word of God as a

weapon against Him. In our life it will be a daily battle for the mind, but we will win if we choose to have the mind of Jesus!! Here is a list of verses that will encourage you to have your mind set on the things of God and thus have a Christ-like mind. Ephesians 4:23, Philippians 2:5, Colossians 3:2, 1 Corinthians 2:16, & Romans 8:5 & 12:1-2.

The devil can only have a stronghold in our lives when we allow him to come and place us in chains. Do not let sin have control over your life, fight the temptation in your mind with the Word of God. Don't let fear control your life, resist fear with the Word of God. Learn to fight your thoughts and temptations with the Word of God and you will live in freedom everyday!!

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—**think about such things.**

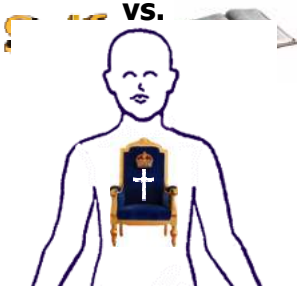
Questions:

1. What areas of your life did you need to receive freedom in?
2. Explain why Jesus came to set prisoners free?
3. What are the three weapons we have against the strongholds of the devil?
4. How did you receive freedom from your bondage?

5. How does the Bible teach us to remain free from bondage?
6. Examine the illustrations below and explain each one in regards to the subject, "The Battle for the Mind."

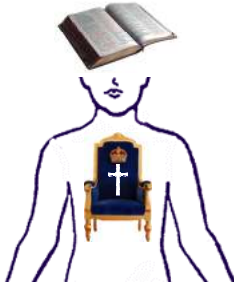
Until the believer reaches heaven there will be a continual fight within himself between the Spirit of God and his old sinful mind.

VS.



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."

For the old sinful mind to change into the mind of Jesus it must be daily renewed by the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.



Romans 12:2, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

LESSON 2

Disciples are Anointed

You're Covered

In the Old Testament Moses was commanded by God to anoint the priests for service in the Tabernacle by pouring oil over their heads and letting it run down their beards and their robes. [Exodus 28:41 & 29:7]



The word “anoint” simply means to “cover or to smear”.

Moses was commanded to cover the priests with oil as a sign to the people that the priests were set apart for the work of the ministry.

God’s reason behind covering the priests with oil was because He was giving them a physical sign of how His Spirit was going to be upon them and give them the ability to minister in the Tabernacle.

When Jesus came He was called both the Christ and the Messiah. “Christ” is Greek and “Messiah” is Hebrew, but both words mean “The Anointed One”. Jesus was the Anointed One!! The Jewish people had been waiting a long time for the Anointed One to come and display God’s power upon the earth.

When Jesus was baptized the Bible records that the Holy Spirit came upon Him in the form of a dove. John explains in His Gospel that from that time on Jesus was given the Holy Spirit without measure. (John 3:34)

Because of the Holy Spirit residing in Jesus He was given an anointing to serve God. And Jesus was not only anointed, but He was the Anointed One, meaning He could give God's power to His followers. Therefore, after Jesus' resurrection He gave the disciples the Holy Spirit so they could be anointed like Him. It was Jesus' desire that all of His disciples would have the same power and authority that He had.

John 14:12

12 I tell you the truth, **anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing.** He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Jesus wanted His disciples to carry on the work of the ministry just as He had done. He wanted them to continue to preach with power, heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out devils and have authority over the devil. (Acts 1:8)

When you received the Holy Spirit you were anointed with the same power that Jesus and the first disciples had. Now when you go to preach and do the work of the ministry you will not go in your own strength, but in the power of God. The anointing in your life is God's ability to do what you could never do alone. Therefore, if God is for you, who can stand against you!! And greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world!!

Three Ways to Operate With the Anointing

1. Talk Like Jesus Talked

When Jesus walked the earth he did not ask sickness to leave, He commanded it to go. When Jesus cast out demons, He did not have a negotiation with the demons, He simply told them to leave and they would flee. Jesus knew who He was and who His Father was. Jesus knew He was anointed and that the power of God in Him was unstoppable, therefore what He spoke happened!



But it cannot stop with Jesus. As a matter of fact Jesus commanded us to go and do the very same thing. You might

think that talking like Jesus is just for pastors or evangelists, but that is 100% wrong. Jesus said all who would believe would see the power of God follow their preaching.

Mark 16:15-18

15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

17 And these signs will accompany **those who believe**: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.

20 Then the **disciples went out and preached everywhere**, and the **Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.**

So the first thing you need to do to operate in the anointing is begin to talk like Jesus. Believe the Word and speak it with authority. God will do the rest!

Mark 11:22-24

22 "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. 23 "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.

24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

2. Walk Like Jesus Walked

The Bible shows us that Jesus was always on the move. If you want to see miracles you need to be in a place where miracles can and will happen. You can't sit on your couch and expect to see people with AIDS healed, you need to get up and go to the places where those with AIDS are. You need to go to the streets and find the drug addicts and the prostitutes and then you will begin to see the power of God displayed.



I remember when I first began to preach, it wasn't in front of a church or a youth group, it was in the inner city, in the housing projects. I would take some of the money I had made from

working construction and I would go and buy as many groceries as I could and I would find the most needy families and give them the food and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them!! It was in those roach infested projects that I first saw people saved, delivered from drugs, slain in the Spirit, and struck by the power of God.

You have to get up and begin to walk like Jesus to begin to see what Jesus saw. Go where Jesus would go, Jesus was around prostitutes, lepers, thieves, and the poor and destitute. He wasn't afraid to go where the need was great. He never backed down from an opportunity to display the power of God.

John 5:1-9

1 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades.

3 Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. 5 One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?"



7 "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."

8 Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." 9 At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

Jesus crossed racial barriers, He went where nobody would go, He spoke to people that others hated, He wasn't afraid to be seen with the "out group". Jesus was where the needs were the greatest. To be a true disciple of Jesus you must get up and go to where the hurts are the deepest and bring the healing power of God. Go to where the needs are the greatest and bring the answer-JESUS!! You can do it because you are anointed!

3. Be Filled Like Jesus Was Filled

Jesus had a close intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit. Jesus knew how to be filled and overflowing with God's power. He said that we were to be filled the same way.

John 5:37-39a

37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.

Paul also talked about being continually filled with Holy Spirit in Ephesians 5:18. We are not able to operate off of yesterday's filling; we need to be filled daily with the power



of God. Jesus knew that to be filled with the power of God, He had to spend time with the Father.

Jesus had the habit of spending the night in prayer. If Jesus knew the need of prayer, how much more should we? It is in our times of prayer and worship unto God that He is able to fill us with His Spirit. (Luke 6:12)

You must make time to be with God in times of prayer and fasting. These times alone with God will open the rivers of the Spirit and God will flow through your life to the world around you. You need to learn how to touch heaven and change earth. What an honor and privilege we have to spend time in God's presence and to be His jars of clay that He fills with His precious oil. What a joy to know the Lord of the Harvest and to share in His work! (Matthew 17:21)

On the day of Pentecost the disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit, but many days after that the Bible records they were filled again when they met together for prayer.

Acts 4:29-31

29 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

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.

When you have the desire to be used of God, He will fill you with His mighty power. God always desires to pour out His Spirit upon His people. God is looking for people who will take Him at His Word and allow Him to use them for His glory! (2 Chronicles 16:9)

Pray this prayer:

Father I come to You in the Name of Jesus and I ask you to set my heart on fire for YOU!! Fill me with your power and your authority; let my life be used for the glory of Your Kingdom.

Holy Spirit, I welcome you into my life and ask that You will give me your gifts and use me to preach the Gospel with signs and wonders following. Holy Spirit, I need You more today than ever before, fill my soul with the Word of God and send me to bring freedom to the captives, sight to the blind, healing to the sick, and strength to the weak!!

I receive a fresh anointing from the rivers of God within me! I declare I am anointed and appointed to be a disciple and to do the work of the ministry like my Lord and Savior Jesus. In Your name Jesus I will walk, talk, and live like You!! Hallelujah!!

Go!! The World is Waiting!!

Take Jesus at His Word and believe what He said He would do in your life. Begin to talk like Jesus, walk like Jesus, and be filled with God's power like Jesus. You have been chosen to be a world changer. You're not alone, God is with you. His anointing covers you like the oil that covered the priest's clothes.

You have been given power to trample on serpents and scorpions, you have been sent to heal the sick and raise the dead. By the power of God you can cast out demons, see blind eyes opened, drug addicts set free, and bring freedom to the prisoners!! Now is your time to shine for Jesus!! Go get your shine on!!

Luke 10:17-19

17 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

18 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 I **have given you authority** to trample on snakes and scorpions and **to overcome all the power of the enemy**; nothing will harm you."

Questions:

1. What was the anointing used for in the time of Moses?
2. When was Jesus anointed?
3. How are you anointed?
4. Name and describe the three things you must do to operate in the anointing.
5. Write out places you can go and bring the power of God. Keep a journal of how God uses you to see the following: the sick healed, people saved, demons cast out, and freedom to prisoners.

LESSON 3

Disciples are Holy

Be Holy

The word “holy” means to be “set apart or pure”. Both the Old and New Testament teach that God is holy. The book of Revelation says there are angels that fly around the throne of God declaring His holiness.



Revelation 4:8-11

8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: **"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."**

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

11 "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

When Jesus came to this earth He walked in holiness. He lived a life that was separate from the world. Jesus taught His disciples to come out from the world and live like Him. For you

to truly be the disciple Jesus wants you to be you must desire to be holy like Him. (2 Corinthians 6:17)

Holiness is not just following “rules”, though God’s commandments are to be obeyed, but the heart of holiness is to desire to be like God in character, thought, and deed. Jesus said to be perfect like your Father in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:48)

God knows that none is perfect that is why He sent His Son Jesus to die for man’s sins. But why does Jesus say we must be perfect like God the Father? Because God’s plan was not only for us to be saved from our sins but also to be sanctified from our sin. Jesus told us to be perfect because He not only came to give us salvation, but He also came to give us sanctification. “Sanctification” means “to be made holy”.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, **you were sanctified**, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

You probably did not even know that when you asked Jesus to forgive your sins that you were not only forgiven of sin, but you were set free from the power of sin. The power of sin was broken in your life and the presence of sin was totally removed. Therefore, because you are in Christ, God no longer sees your sins, but He sees Jesus and His righteousness. And by the righteousness of Jesus you are able to live a holy life free from sin!! Now that’s good news!!

2 Corinthians 5:21

21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

The Beauty of Holiness

Now that you have learned that God is holy and because of Jesus' death on the cross you have been made holy, I would like to take the next couple of paragraphs and teach you how to live holy. The Bible says when we live holy before God it is worship unto Him. David said in Psalm 29:2, *"worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."*

Remember, being holy is not about your good works. You can



not make yourself holy. Only through the blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit can you be made holy. And when you were saved you were made holy. The part that you now play is to choose holiness everyday and to allow

God to give you the power to do good works.

Many people have fallen into condemnation, which is a trap of the devil. Satan will try to make you feel like you are not good enough to please God, or everytime you sin he will say you are worthless and unable to change. The devil is a liar!!

When we choose not to live holy and operate in God's power we will fall, but there is grace and forgiveness for our sins. This grace is not an excuse to sin, but the comfort to know if we sin, we are covered. So your heart should always want to

please God and be holy, So be confident that if you sin, the blood of Jesus will wash you white as snow!!

1 John 2:1-2

1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

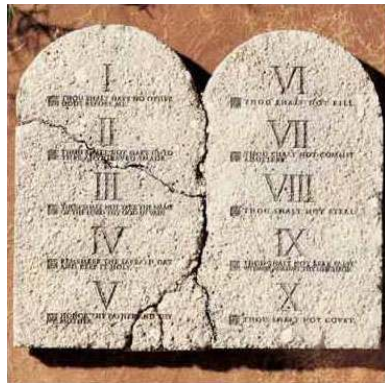
2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Three Ways to Live Holy

1. See the person, not just the rules

One of the keys to living holy is to always remember, “holiness is about being like Jesus, a real person, not just following rules”.

Here is a good example to consider. Imagine if one Sunday evening I was absent from church, but I chose to put a slide on the screen that read, “Pastor Joe says, ‘Please be seated at 7:30pm and don’t talk or move around.’” What do you think the people would do?



Our service generally starts at 7pm, so they would probably talk a little and ask the leaders what it all meant. But if the leaders hadn’t heard from me either, they would probably say, “Well, let’s start service at 7pm and if he is not here by 7:30pm lets just sit and wait like the screen says.”

So imagine they have a time of praise and worship and it is 7:30pm and I am still not there. The leaders might say, "Okay, were sorry about the confusion, but there was a sign that Joe left on the screen that said we should be seated at 7:30pm and remain quiet. Let us follow his instructions until he comes."

How long do you think they would remain quiet and seated without me being there? Maybe five minutes, ten minutes at the most. Why? The church would only see my "rules", and not "me", a person.

But now think about how every Sunday evening when I am at the church and after we have had praise and worship I begin to preach and I ask the people not to move around or to talk. Why is it they can sit there for 30-60 minutes without any trouble? Because the difference between the two scenarios is a person is present, that is why they can sit and follow the simple rules.

Now apply this example to our life of holiness. If all you see are the "rules" of the Bible, "do not steal", "do not commit murder", etc, then you are missing the point. I stopped stealing not just because of "rules" that Moses was given by God; I have stopped stealing because I know Jesus, the Law Giver, is with me.



I see Jesus first, and then the rules He gives. I am aware at all times that the God of the universe is living in me. I choose to follow Him because I know when I sin, it is not just "breaking a rule", it is "breaking His heart". I have fallen in love with a person, Jesus Christ, not

just rules. I want to be like my Father in heaven. For you to see the joy in living holy, you must look passed the laws and see the Law Giver. Desire to be like Him.

Being holy is not just a person who does not lie, cheat or steal, it is a person who is in love with God and wants every part of their life to reflect the nature of who He is. Read how Jesus taught His disciples to first love Him and then by loving Him they would keep His commandments.

John 14:15

15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command."

This simple verse says it the best, when you truly love Jesus you will keep His commandments. And then you will love and

understand His laws and His rules, because you have first fallen in love with Him.



Remember, when you do not follow His rules, your real problem is not

with "sin", but with "love", because those who really love Him, obey Him. So if you find yourself struggling with sin and having a bad attitude about serving God, check your heart, because you probably lost your first love and have started to become "religious". Being "religious" means following a certain religion's "guidelines and beliefs". But being religious doesn't make you holy, loving Jesus with all your heart does.

1 John 2:3-6

3 We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.

4 The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

2. Live with a healthy fear of God

The Bible teaches in Proverbs 14:27, *"The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a man from the snares of death."* The "fear of the Lord" means to "have terror and dread of facing God in judgment". You might have been told that the "fear of the Lord" just meant, "respect for God as a Father" or "to be mindful of His great power."

Though both of those definitions have some truth, the writer of Proverbs is not just saying, "think about God as a disciplinarian", he is saying, "you better have terror and fear about facing God on Judgment Day if you're not living right, because hell is real!!"

I think today in the American church we have many people who think about God more as Mr. Rodgers than the All Powerful Creator of the Universe who is going to judge the world in righteousness.



Yes, Jesus loves us, and yes the Bible teaches, "God is love." But the angels do not fly around His throne saying, "God loves everybody, God's loves everybody." The angels fly around the throne saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY!!"

The foundation of God's character is holiness. His love comes from His holiness, without holiness love would be just a feeling or emotion, holiness gives the boundaries to God's love. God's love will not excuse sinners on Judgment Day. His holiness will demand justice and eternal punishment in hell fire.

God's love will not welcome Satan back into His Kingdom, it is His holiness that will demand vengeance and bring everlasting damnation to Satan along with all of his fallen angels. Brothers and sisters, we need a healthy fear of God again both in our churches and in our lives. Disciples have a fear of God that helps remind them of the cost of turning back to the world from where the left.

The Bible teaches us to serve the Lord with "fear and trembling". (Philippians 2:12) It also says that because of the "terror of the Lord" we should try to persuade men to accept Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:11) And all throughout the book of Proverbs the Bible teaches about the benefits of truly having a healthy fear of the Lord.

Some of my favorites verses in Proverbs are:

1. **Proverbs 8:13**, "To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech."
2. **Proverbs 9:10**, "'The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."
3. **Proverbs 10:27**, "The fear of the LORD adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short."
4. **Proverbs 14:26**, "He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge."
5. **Proverbs 15:16**, "Better a little with the fear of the LORD than great wealth with turmoil."
6. **Proverbs 19:23**, "The fear of the LORD leads to life: Then one rests content, untouched by trouble."

7. **Proverbs 23:17**, "Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the LORD."

Today take some time in prayer and ask the Lord to give you a holy and healthy fear of who He is. Yes, God is Your Father and He loves and accepts You. But also remember He is Your Creator and Judge who has not given you "10 Suggestions For a Better Life", but "10 Commandments" and many other laws He wants You to obey!!

Hebrews 10:26-31

26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, 27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.

28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." 31 It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

3. Daily ask God to develop the fruit of the Spirit in your life

A great way to start your day is to ask God to transform your life by developing in you the fruit of His Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is the nine manifestations of God's perfect character. Think of a fruit like an orange, which is one fruit, but has many parts on the inside. The fruit of the Spirit is one kind of fruit, but has many different parts. Here is the verse in the Bible that teaches what the nine parts of the fruit are.

Galatians 5:22-23

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



Start today by praying and asking God to develop each characteristic in your life. Go through each one and allow God to teach you what must change in your life for you to look and act more like Him.

Pray this out loud:

Love: God I ask for Your perfect love to be developed in my life today. Help me to love my enemies, to forgive those who hurt me and to be a vessel of your love to the hurting. Empower me to love You with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love my neighbor as myself. Help me no matter where I go today to come in love and leave in love.

Joy: God I receive Your joy today, and I declare that since You are with me, I have the fullness of joy and I choose to rejoice in You always!! Help me by Your Spirit to not let the devil, this world, my problems, or other people to take away Your joy in my life. I choose to be happy and full of joy because You are with me, and You are always good!!

Peace: Father, I receive Your peace today in the Name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ!! I will allow You to be in control of my life, therefore I trust You with Your plan for my life and I will rest in your presence. I know You will put my mind at peace when I put my mind on You. Because of you I am free from all worry, fear, and anxiety, I am at perfect peace in Your loving arms.

Patience: God give me patience today to go through the hard times in life. Help me to wait and be still and know that You are in control. Even when I think I can do it better, remind me that Your ways are not my ways, and Your time line is not on my schedule. I therefore will live in Your strength knowing that whatever I face today is in Your plan and You have made a way of escape that will come at the appointed time You have set. Today during my most trying times I will remember to praise You for all the good things you have already done!!

Kindness: Father, teach me today to be kind and considerate of other people's feelings. Help me to look passed my own selfish desires and see the hurts and needs of others. May Your Spirit give me compassion for the lost, understanding for the weak, patience for the insulting, and love for all. I choose to be kind instead or rude or discourteous. I want people to see You in me today.

Goodness: God, I want to be good because You are always good. I want to do good things today, because you always operate out of goodness. May Your Spirit use my life to show others Your goodness. Let my words be for the good of those who hear them, may my actions be good to those I do them for, and let my thoughts be good towards You and those I think of. I stand in Your goodness and by Your Spirit I choose to walk in goodness today.



Faithfulness: Father, I want to be faithful. I do not just want to proclaim my love for You, I want demonstrate my love for You by living a life faithful to You and to Your commandments. Empower me to be faithful to my friends, my church, my job, to

my community and most importantly to You. Let my word be taken seriously to those I give it to. Help me to fulfill every promise and commitment I make today. I accept Your faithfulness and I choose to live by it in all the areas of my life.

Gentleness (Meekness): God teach me to be humble like Jesus. Help me to lower myself so You can lift me up. Remind me of the saying, “the greatest among you will be the servant of all.” Let Your Spirit give me the strength to be a servant to all and to prefer others above my self. Help me to carry my cross and crucify my ways, my wants, and my needs, and help me to live for Your glory according to Your ways, and look to other’s wants and other’s needs. I declare today I will be gentle and meek by Your Spirit and I will lower myself so Jesus can be lifted up.



Self-Control: God, I give You control over my life so that You can free me from all bad habits, addictions, selfish attitudes, harmful thinking, and destructive behavior. I choose today to allow Your Spirit to guide all the areas of my life. Have control over my time management, my diet, my relationships, my hobbies, my money, my thought life, my entertainment, and my family. Jesus take control, my life is Yours, I will not make excuses for my lack of control, rather I give You control and declare by Your Spirit I will live life honoring You in all my ways!

People Are Watching You

By the power of the Spirit go out into this world and show people how a true disciple lives. Show them your life and that even though you make mistakes, you still desire to be like Jesus in all your ways. Display to this world the great love and holiness of our God in heaven. Help teach others that God is our judge and that to fear Him is to truly know Him.

People are watching you, they want to see if a person really can be changed. Show them that by the Spirit of God you are like Jesus, that the fruit of the Spirit is in your life and that He is changing every part of you. Believers just “believe” in Jesus, but disciples “live” like Jesus, go out into the world and show them JESUS!!

John 8:31-32

31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Questions:

1. What does it mean to be holy?
2. Discuss what it means “God is Holy.”
3. What does it mean to “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness”?

4. What does the word “sanctified” mean?

5. How is a person sanctified?

6. How can a person truly love keeping God’s commandments?

7. What is the “fear of the Lord”?

8. Name some Scriptures that teach the benefits of living with a healthy “fear of the Lord.”

9. What are the nine manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit?

10. How has this lesson affected your walk of holiness before God? Be specific and list the areas of your life that have been changed.

LESSON 4

Disciples are Humble

The Kenosis

Though Jesus was fully God and equal to the Father in all ways as the Second Person in the Trinity, He lowered Himself and became man. Thus Jesus became the God-Man, 100% divine and 100% man.



The term that is used to describe the lowering and humbling of our Great Lord and Savior is the Greek word “kenosis”, which means, “to make of no reputation or to empty one’s self.”

Jesus left His glory and place in heaven and came down to earth in the form of a man to become the Savior of the world. Take a moment to read and study Paul’s description of this great and powerful event in the life of Jesus, known as the “kenosis”.

Philippians 2:5-11

5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 **but made himself nothing** (*kenosis*), taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

If Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, the Bright and Morning Star, the Alpha and the Omega, would make Himself nothing and become a man that could die for the sins of the world, how much more should we His disciples learn to humble ourselves and make life not about our selfish needs and desires.



Jesus gave the greatest example of a servant when He left the worship of the angels in heaven and became a man on earth to die on the cross for the sins of the world. He displayed the highest degree of humility by becoming a man subject to the natural laws of the human condition such as hunger, fatigue, and even death.

During His earthly ministry Jesus never made people feel that He was too good for them. He loved to serve people and be there for them in their times of need. Jesus showed great humility in His relationship with the twelve disciples. He was always patient and forgiving towards them, even when they betrayed Him. Jesus was a great leader, by being a great servant.

Luke 22:24-27

24 Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. 25 Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors.

26 But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. 27 For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

Who's the Boss?

Today in the church many people have a difficult time submitting and serving the pastor and the leadership God has placed over them. Over my eleven years of ministry I have seen people come into the church and get saved and within a couple of months try to teach the pastor how to run the church. Lord have mercy!



One of the hardest lessons I find that people have to learn is humility. I know for me it took awhile as well. I had to learn the hard way in Bible College. When I first came to college I felt like I was the “best of the best”. I loved to pray, preach, witness, and study my Bible. I thought I was the perfect Bible school student and I felt it should be their honor to have me as a student.

So much so that I felt it was my job to teach the professors who had been in ministry over 25 years how to do their job. Well, after one day when I had corrected my professor who was in charge of the jail ministry, they brought me before the dean of boys for correction and discipline. In that meeting they told me that if I did not repent and accept their discipline then I would be expelled from the school.

So I dropped out. I went down to my dorm, packed up all my clothes, got in my car and left to go back home. The only problem was my Mother, who had led me to the Lord nine months early, said I couldn't come back home because she wasn't going to let me live there.

So there at the gas station with my car all packed and nowhere to go, I finally stopped and listened to the Lord speak to my heart. I think He had been trying to talk to me for sometime, but now I was finally ready to listen. The Lord basically told me that He was the one who had brought me to the school and the leaders discipline was a part of His plan.



I went back to the school and called up the dean of boys and I repented and begged him to let me come back to school. And so they took me back and gave me another chance. Now today, eleven years later, the dean of boys, Reverend Anthony Freeman, has been a spiritual father and mentor to me. He is on the board of our church and I contact him all the time seeking his advice and counsel.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:15, *“Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.”* Today I have a spiritual father because I could humble myself. For many reading this booklet, you need to do the same.

I look back on that day now even with tears in my eyes and I thank God for the people that loved me enough to tell me I was wrong and needed to change. My punishment in the school was to clean the toilets everyday until they said I had changed my attitude. I have never been the same since.

Today as a pastor I see people leave one church and go to the next, just like I tried that day and they don't take time to listen to see if God is the one who is actually correcting them. I ask that you would read the following verses and then pray and ask God to make you humble.

1 Peter 5:5-6

5 Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

Prayer for Humility:

Father, I come to You today and I ask that You would make me humble like Your Son Jesus. Father, I pray that You will teach me how to listen to others and follow the leadership that You have placed in my life. Take away my pride and make me a leader that serves. Transform my life by Your power in Jesus Name.

Ten Scriptures That Teach Humility

I would like to give you a list of verses that teach different aspects of humility and then comment on one of them so that you can get a better understanding of how to walk in humility as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

1. Exodus 10:3,

"So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, "This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so that they may worship me.'"

This verse teaches the importance of listening to others that have a Word from the Lord for us. Pharaoh could have been spared if he would have listened to Moses, but since he was prideful he lost his life, his first-born son, and much of his army and Egypt's wealth.

2. 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.”

Sometimes God will allow trials and tests to come into our lives to humble us. Many times you may face difficult times and think the best way out is to run away, but God wants us to be humble and learn how to serve Him and keep His commands even when times are tough.

3. 2 Chronicles 7:14,

“if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

The first thing we must learn to do to receive answers to our prayers is to humble ourselves before God. We need to take off the “masks” that we put on and admit to God that without Him we are nothing. Also, before we can truly repent of sin, we have to be willing to admit we have sinned.

4. 2 Chronicles 34:27,

“Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God when you heard what he spoke against this place and its people, and because you humbled yourself before me and tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the LORD.”

When King Josiah found the laws of God, he humbled himself and did all that he could to make Judah pleasing to God. Therefore, the Lord blessed Him and the nation of Judah. We must humble ourselves, hear the Word of God, and respond with passion and obedience.

5. Proverbs 29:23,

“A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor.”

This verse declares that pride will bring people low and also eventually to destruction, but the humble will gain honor. The best way to gain honor in the church and at your work place is to learn how to be humble yourself and not to walk in pride. Pastors and employers love to honor people that can listen and follow directions.

6. Isaiah 57:15,

“For this is what the high and lofty One says— he who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.”

God says He will live with those who have a humble and lowly attitude. He also promises to bring life and strength to their spirits. What an awesome promise to the humble!!

7. Matthew 18:4,

“Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Here Jesus teaches His disciples that to be great in the kingdom of God they must be humble like a child. Children admit they don't know everything, they are willing to be guided

and helped, and children love to learn new things. Today humble yourself like a child and learn to rely on God as Your Father and be willing to learn from others in authority.

8. *Matthew 23:12,*

“For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

Jesus teaches that in His Kingdom it is the opposite of the world’s system. In His kingdom the way “up” is “down” and the way “down” is “up”. Meaning when people try to do things their way, God will bring them down to nothing, but those who are willing to humble themselves and learn from God and others in authority they will be lifted up and exalted.

9. *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.”

Here we learn that God has placed leaders in the church to be our teachers and mentors. Everyone is to submit to them so that they can enjoy their work unto God. Wherever God has placed you in the church make sure you have a “spiritual covering” and submit to the leadership in place.

10. *James 4:6,*

“But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

Here the Bible teaches us that God will give grace and favor to those that humble themselves, but to those that are proud He will not only bless, but He will oppose them. If God opposes

you, there is no one to rescue you, therefore live life with humility.

Five Practical Ways to Live Humble

As a disciple you must learn to walk in humility in all areas of your life. Maybe you will have a boss who mistreats you; you must choose to be humble even when your patience is being tested. One day at church you may feel you can do things better, but you must choose to be humble and submit to the authority God has placed over you. You might feel in life you're too good to help the poor, clean the churches' toilets, listen to your husband or wife's advice, remember to humble yourself like a child and be willing to do anything that pleases God.

Man is not at the center of the universe, God is. Life is not about you; life is first about God and then about others. Humility is learning to make life about God even when it does not "feel good". It didn't "feel good" when Jesus went to the cross. It didn't "feel good" when David was being chased by Saul. It didn't always "feel good" when Moses served the Israelites for forty years.

Here are five practical ways to live humble:

1. **Submit to God's Word:** Always read the Word of God with the heart that says, "God teach me Your ways and change anything in me that doesn't line up with You." (2 Timothy 3:16)
2. **Be Under Authority in the Church:** No matter who you are God wants you to be under Biblical authority. Find a pastor or leader that can train you in the things of God. Someone that is willing to tell you when your

wrong and you are willing to listen no matter the cost. [Hebrews 13:17]

3. **Have an Accountability Partner:** Find a peer that you can talk about your life too and be open to their suggestions and advice. [James 5:16]
4. **Follow the Guidelines for the Christian Family:** Learn the way God wants the family to run and find your place being right where God wants you to be. [Lesson 5]
5. **Follow the Rules of Society:** Obey the laws of the government, the rules on your job and the social values of your culture so that you can be an example of a real Christian and a true disciple to the world around you. [Romans 13:4]

Questions:

1. What is the “kenosis”?
2. Explain how you are to be humble like Jesus?
3. What times in your life did you lack humility? Explain two situations.

LESSON 5

Disciples Have a Blessed Home

Home is Where God's Heart Is

Today the greatest display of God's love and nature can be seen in a happy and healthy family. And because the devil knows this he tries to destroy the family and bring death instead of life and he tries to bring hurt and pain instead of joy and healing.



Presently in America one out of every two marriages ends in divorce and most of the divorces involve adultery and sexual sin. Many times the marriages end in power struggles, selfishness, and deep emotional hurt for both parties. Also, the children are the ones who are hurt the most. They needlessly suffer as they watch their mom and dad destroy the family they had built together and they helplessly watch as their mom and dad try to start two new lives where there used to be only one.

Malachi 2:16a

"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel

Over the last eleven years of my ministry I have not seen a divorce that did not devastate and harm the children. Though each divorce has its unique arrangements, most of the times the mother keeps primary care for the children and the father will only have a limited role in the children's everyday life.

Studies now show the damaging results a fatherless home has on children. The girls who grow up without a father in the house are more likely to get pregnant before marriage and struggle in life with a low self-esteem and a low self worth.

The young boys who grow up without a father are more likely of getting a girl pregnant before marriage and will be many times more likely of having trouble with the law. Both sexes will have a much harder time getting good grades in school and will struggle themselves with having healthy relationships with the opposite sex and a healthy marriage.

The answer to this crisis in the family must come from the Bible, God's instructions for a blessed life. But many Americans have turned away from the Bible and have instead replaced Biblical foundations with sin, wickedness, and whatever seems right in their own eyes.

Today many want to redefine the family and allow men to marry men and women to marry women and raise children and be a "normal family".



Others want to live a "swingers" lifestyle and be able to "swap" and trade partners whenever they feel the urge. And there are even still some that believe sex with many partners with no long-term commitment is the best answer. In all these scenarios sexual relationships can be viewed like food on a buffet table. Society is basically

saying, "take whatever you want and as much as you want"; and like at a buffet, those who frequent them and over indulge without restraint become obese and unhealthy. So today most of America's relationships are unhealthy and are self destructive to everyone involved.

Please read the following passage from Paul and hear what God says about sexually perverse and destructive families.

Romans 1:18-32

18 **The wrath of God is being revealed** from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.



24 **Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity** for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

28 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to

do what ought not to be done. 29 **They have become filled with every kind of wickedness**, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31 they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

As the 21st century American culture embraces these deeply sinful and wicked practices, the family is being destroyed and replaced with sexual sin and selfishness and as a result God's love and nature is lost in the home and in the community. Therefore, God's wrath is poured upon the people and society who live without His guidelines for families.

But that is not the way God intended it to be. God intended the family to be the best example of His nature. God chose the love between a man and woman to be the very thing He would use to show the love between Himself and His church.

The Family is the Expression of God's Love

God displays His perfect love and nature in the family in many different ways. First, the nature of God can be seen in a healthy family when there is a mother and father that work together as one. This working together is like how in the Trinity the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work together as one and yet they have different roles.

Though God's Word says that the man has a role above the wife in the family, he is also commanded to live his life to please her and make her happy and secure. In the Godhead (*Godhead means "trinity"*) the Father is over the Son in His role, but the Father places the Son at the center of worship and gives Him all He has, and in return the Son always does

the will of the Father and forever pleases Him in everything He does. And the Holy Spirit also willingly serves the Father and the Son.

When the family is in accord with the Word of God there is perfect unity and peace among each member. Therefore, when the husband and wife work together as one, yet with different roles, they display the perfect nature of God to the world around them.



Second, the love of God can be clearly seen in the family better than anywhere else on earth. God sent His Son to die for the sins of the world because He loved the world. And because Jesus gave His life and willingly died, God the Father now gives salvation to all who call upon Jesus' name. Therefore, God produced a family of spiritual sons and daughters through the love and sacrifice of Jesus.

The same is true in marriage. When the man and woman become one and share in their love together they produce a family of sons and daughters. These sons and daughters are a result of the man and woman's deep love for each other and their willingness to come together to make children. The mother and father then sacrifice and lay down their lives for their children to create a healthy and happy home. Therefore, just as good moms and dads provide for each of their children's needs and desires; the Godhead provides for all of the needs of every believer both now and for eternity.

Ephesians 3:14-15

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, 15 from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

Now I would like to make a detailed list of each member in the family and what the Bible teaches in regards to each of their roles and duties. These next sections are here to make you the best person you can be in the family and by being the best you will also be blessed by God and a blessing to everyone you share life with!

Husbands

Husbands are to love their wives as Jesus loves the church. As the husband you may be over your wife in your role, but you are to make her the center of your world and work together with her as a team. After God your wife should be the most



important person in the universe. As the head you are to be there to make the final decisions but in doing so you are to always remember her needs and desires.

The most important thing you can give your wife is your love and attention. You must be able to fluently speak her love language. You should know if she responds best to special touch, words of affirmation, quality time, gifts, or acts of service. A good husband knows when to love his wife. And he also knows how to love her and fill her love tank everyday!

Second, you also must make your wife feel secure and at peace in your relationship. She must know that you will always be there for her. Whether it is just to listen to her hard day at work or to give her a romantic night on the town. She must be able to trust you and know that you will never cheat or give

your love to another woman. That means you will not spend time alone with another woman and that you will not look at other women and lust after them.

You will only have an emotional relationship with her and no other woman can have that part of your life or heart. Your feelings and heart belong 100% to her forever.

Here are some verses from the most powerful chapter in the Bible on being a good godly husband. Prayerfully read each section and let faith come as you confess and believe each verse is for you today!

Ephesians 5:25-33

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

Here the Greek word “agape” is used for the word love. Agape means unconditional love. The first thing you are to do is have unconditional love for your wife. You are to have the same kind of love Jesus has for the church. The best definition for love can be found in 1 Corinthians 13. Please read Paul’s description of love and ask for grace to always love your wife in that way.

Next, we see that Jesus gave Himself for the church. That means Jesus was self-less and not self-ish. He laid His life down for the church. You are to love your wife so much that you are willing to lay your life down for her everyday. You must desire her wants and needs above your own.

26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29

After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—

Here Paul says that Jesus makes the church a radiant, beautiful, and holy bride. He does this because He loves the church. In the same way you must put action to your love for your wife. Your love for her should help her be all that God has made her to be. You must make her dreams your dreams and do all that you can to help and assist her so that she can fulfill her God given purpose.

Paul says that your wife will be a reflection of you, just like your body. So as you take care of your own body, you should take care of your wife. Her smile and the look on her face should be an indication to everyone she meets that she is the pride and joy of her husband. Everyone should be able to tell that she has been lavished with your love because her countenance shines wherever she goes.

30 for we are members of his body. 31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Next we learn that the church and Jesus are one. You and your wife therefore should be one. You must make her a part of your life and let her share in all your decisions and plans. Together you should encourage and strengthen each other.

The day you both said, "I do", you became a life long team. You may be the head of the team, but if you lose your wife, you will be the only one on the team. Prayerfully lead your wife and guide her in the plans God has for your family. Together you will do great and awesome things for God!

Wives

Wives are the backbone to every great marriage. The saying is true, "Behind every strong man, is an even stronger woman." As the wife you will either make or break your marriage. For the man to be successful as the head, he needs you to be his number one supporter.

I know today that the world may lead you to believe that being a meek woman is the same as being a weak woman, but the opposite is true. The Bible teaches that the greatest among us would be the least. And Jesus said the servant of all would be the best leader for all. (Mark 10:44)

Your greatest example of submission is found in Jesus. He was 100% equal with the Father in all ways, yet He humbled Himself and became a man and served His Father in every way that pleased Him. Everything Jesus did on earth was to please His Father and make His Name great. Jesus' number one goal in life wasn't to do great miracles, to help people, or even to be the Savior of the world, He first and greatest assignment was to make His Father's name great on the earth and to bring Him glory.

And by doing so, Jesus did many awesome miracles, changed people's lives and became the Savior of the world. And because Jesus pleased the Father He was given a name that is above every name and at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and confess Him Lord. But always remember Jesus' number one motivation was first to please His Father.

Other woman may try to tell you not to let a 4,000-year-old book with outdated rules tell you what to do. But



remember you're not just following rules written in an ancient book, you're following a living person, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Please prayerfully read these verses and ask for strength to apply them to your life so that you may please your Heavenly Father as a wife and as a woman of God.

Ephesians 5:22-24

22 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

The Greek word here for “submit” means “to be under someone’s authority”. The term was used for soldiers on how they were to obey their commanding officers in the Roman army. Paul here says that you are to be under your husband’s authority just as you are under the Lord’s commands.

That may not sound good to your flesh, but it is the right thing for your spirit and for peace in your home. You cannot build a happy home with two equal authorities; one has to give in to the other. God’s plan for peace and harmony in the home is for the woman to give up her rights and let the husband have the final word.

This of course does not allow your husband to be either physically or verbally abusive, nor does it allow for him to neglect your needs and to treat you like a child. The passage is simply teaching you that when it comes to the authority of the house, your husband is in charge.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Once again Paul is stating that you are to look at your role as a command from God, not just a man's opinion. And because it is a Word from God, I believe that when you do it His way you will be blessed with a happy home. I know that God will meet everyone of your needs and your husband will love you as Jesus loves the church.

Paul also says that you are to submit to your husbands in everything. Everything means everything. From how you cut your hair, to what clothes you wear, to how you decorate your house, you must allow your husband to have the final authority in everything. But as my wife and many other godly women will tell you, they are very happy and their husbands allow them to do many things. The authority is not there to harm you, but to protect you and the family from confusion and contention that can lead to divorce.

Fathers

Fathers are given the most crucial role in the family because their responsibilities and accountability to God are the greatest. When God chose a title to make Himself known to the world He did not choose "mother", "son", or "daughter", He chose Father.



Even though Jesus is the Son in regards to the Trinity, He is called the "Everlasting Father" in regards to the world. [Isaiah 9:6] Jesus, God the Son, is called the Everlasting Father because He makes spiritual sons and daughters and all mankind is made in His image.

Therefore, since God has chosen the term Father to be the most dominate way of expressing

His nature, you then must live and act like Him when you are called by that name. The term Father carries with it the likeness of God the Father in both character and lifestyle.

The first father your children will ever see is you. And before you ever tell them about God the Father you ought to have lived a life in front of them worthy of that title. Your life as a father will either be a good example of God the Father or a bad example.

You might be thinking to yourself, "But I am not perfect, I make mistakes, how can I be like God?" Listen carefully to me sir, no excuse is valid in God's eyes, Jesus Himself said in Matthew 5:48, "Be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."

I know that a man may sin, but a true father does not live in sin. He does not continue in sin nor live a half-hearted life for God. As the head of the house what sins you *tolerate* will *dominate* your family. You must decide that there will be no generational curses passed down to your children. Generational curses are sins that are passed down from one generation to another. (Exodus 20:5)

The Bible often shows that the sins the fathers committed the children did as well. Even contemporary psychologists teach that if a child grows up in home where there is spousal abuse, the children are very likely to be in an abusive relationship. If a child lives in a home where there are drugs, alcohol, smoking, profanity, pornography, and witchcraft, the children will have a greater chance of participating in the same destructive behavior.

You must learn to display god likeness in front of your children. If you fall, then you must show them grace and that your Father in heaven forgives sin and also gives the power to overcome sin. You must show them that by God's power you can live a life that is an example of God in all that you do.

You must show them:

- Love for God and devotion to all His commands
- Faithfulness to your wife
- Dedication to your job for their provision
- Kindness and compassion to them in their times of needs
- Order and peace in the home as designed by God
- Faithfulness to the church and the work of the ministry
- Respect and love for others
- Generosity and a giving heart
- Forgiveness and grace

I pray you go to your heavenly Father everyday and seek for His strength and wisdom, because your family is depending on you. God said you could do all things and that you were more than a conqueror. Start today by kicking the devil out of your home and making your family a place where God dwells and where your children see God's character and love in you everyday! Decide today that as for you and your house you will serve the Lord. And instead of curses being passed down, God will pour out his blessings on you and your children's children!

Proverbs 13:22a

"A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children."

Psalm 103:17

“But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children.”

Mothers

As a mother you will have the greatest love the world has ever known after God's love. There is no greater love found on this earth, than the love a mother has for her children. When I was in juvenile jail with other teen criminals I would notice who would come and visit, it would always be the mother. The child might have been a drug dealer, thief, and a gang member, but he was still his mother's baby.



Why? Because the mother carries the child for nine months in her womb and during that time she develops a strong bond with her children that will remain forever. Though God chooses the example of a Father to be His prime example of power and authority, He uses the role of the mother for the example of His love and nurturing.

Matthew 23:37

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.”

As a mother you are still under the authority of your husband, but should have just as an important role in the upbringing of your children. You should be the example to the young men of

the woman they will want to marry one day. And to the young girls you should be the example of the type of woman that they want to grow up and become.

The Bible gives a very honorable place to your role as a mother, so do not let anyone look down on you for placing your children's needs even above your career or social status. Being a good mother is the greatest job a woman could ever have and it is the most needed job in America today. Your children need to see your love and Christian example everyday in their life.

Here is a list of things you should pray and ask God to do through you everyday as a Christian mother.

- Be a woman of prayer and devotion to God like the great woman of the Bible that saw many mighty things from the hand of God
- Live being content and satisfied being first a wife and then a mother
- Always place your children's needs above your own, but also make time to be alone with God and your husband, remember you still need to be loved too
- Be a woman of faith and speak the Word of God into your children's lives everyday, be an encourager

I know and believe you will be all that God has called you to be. Your strength comes from Him and even in your weakness; God's power is made strong. Call on His name and seek His face for your family, as the mother you are God's heart in the home.

1 Timothy 2:15

“But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.”

To Both Parents

God has a plan to use both of you in a mighty way. I pray that you see your great responsibility as being parents and the example to your children. I ask that you read this Scripture and let it give you a healthy fear of the Lord so that you always are reminded of your influence upon your children.

Matthew 18:5-6

5 And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. 6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

God is with you! With Him on your side you will do great things. He says to ask Him anytime you need wisdom and He will give it you. He promises that if you put first His kingdom and His righteousness He will give you all the things you need in life. And He also says if you put Him first and follow His commands you will be blessed in all that you do and your children will be His delight!

Joshua 24:15b

“But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD”

Questions:

1. What are some of the most common problems with families today?
2. Why do you think God hates divorce?
3. How is God's nature seen in the family?
4. How is God's love seen in the family?
5. Briefly describe the role and responsibilities of the husband.
6. Briefly describe the role and responsibilities of the wife.
7. What does a good father do for his family?
8. What way is God's love like a mother's?
9. How should parents raise their children?
10. What things have you learned from this lesson?

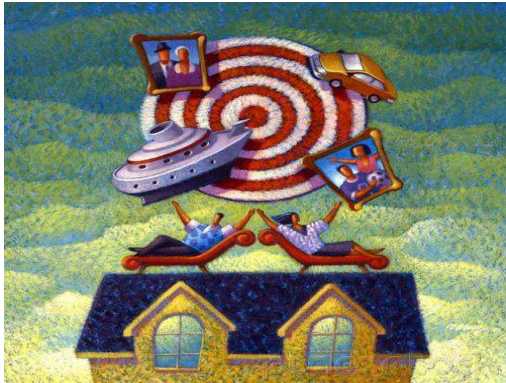
11. Write a prayer with at least three verses that describe the type of person you want to be and the type of family you want to have.

LESSON 6

Disciples Have a Balanced Life

The American ~~Dream~~ Nightmare

The American Dream has taken more good from the lives of American's than most realize. When I look around at the culture today, I do not see healthy and spiritually fulfilled lives.



Instead I see that most American's are in debt financially, overweight and unhealthy physically, struggling with their family relationally, and frustrated with their job emotionally.

I believe the reason for much of the hurt and frustration in people's lives today is because they are focused on achieving what the world says is success and happiness. To see where the American Dream ends just read what Solomon the richest and wisest man once said in *Ecclesiastes 2:4-16*,

4 I undertook great projects: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards. 5 I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. 6 I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees. 7 I bought male and female slaves and had other slaves who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me.

8 I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I acquired men and women singers, and a harem as well—the delights of the heart of man. 9 I became greater by

far than anyone in Jerusalem before me. In all this my wisdom stayed with me.

10 I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my work, and this was the reward for all my labor.

11 Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, **everything was meaningless**, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.

12 Then I turned my thoughts to consider wisdom, and also madness and folly. What more can the king's successor do than what has already been done? 13 I saw that wisdom is better than folly, just as light is better than darkness.

14 The wise man has eyes in his head, while the fool walks in the darkness; but I came to realize that the same fate overtakes them both. 15 Then I thought in my heart, "The fate of the fool will overtake me also. What then do I gain by being wise?" I said in my heart, "**This too is meaningless.**"

16 For the wise man, like the fool, will not be long remembered; in days to come both will be forgotten. Like the fool, the wise man too must die!

Solomon is saying that life has to be about more than just making money and being wise. Life is about God. Loving God and loving people are the two greatest things you can do in life. And when you die you will have eternal life and heavenly rewards. But most today are willing to trade eternal heavenly blessings for temporal earthly pleasures.

For the average family to have a house, two cars, private schools for their kids, all the "modern" home improvements, and two vacations a year, they will have to trade their time for church, prayer, devotion, workout and diet, quality family time, and rest.

If you are one of the millions caught in the "rat race" you need to get off the track and start another race, called the

“Christian race.” The Christian race is about doing the things God said to do. To prioritize in your life the things that God says is important and to have the things God says are needed.

Chasing the American Dream will leave you empty and unsatisfied. You will think to yourself, “If I can just get a better job I will be happy.” Or, “If I could just buy a bigger house and a nicer car I would feel fulfilled.” And, “If I could just save up for that trip to Disney World I know my family will get closer.”



The American Dream has become the American Nightmare. We have forgotten what is really important in life and we must change directions and start living the life that God has for us. We must learn to live a balanced life that will lead to blessing, health, and spiritual fulfillment.

The Bible says in ***2 Peter 1:3-4***,

3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

All you need for life is found in the knowledge of God. Let us now take a look at the Bible and learn what God teaches our lives should be like. As you learn the keys to a balanced and successful life do not just be a “learner” but be a “doer”. Begin to put the keys into practice immediately so that you can see your life change and become the life God created it to be!

Here are the seven keys to a balanced and successful life according to the Bible.

1. Always put God first in everything
2. Make family time a must every day
3. Serve in the church and practice daily devotions
4. Work a job that works for you
5. Eat less & workout more
6. Enjoy a day of rest every week
7. Make healthy friendships

Time Management

Every person on earth has the same 24 hour day. Most people sleep for eight hours, work for another eight, and then waste the other eight hours. What are you doing with your other eight hours?

I challenge you before you read the seven keys to a successful



balanced life to sit down and write every hour of your day and where it is going. Start off by writing how many hours you sleep a night, then how many hours you work, then how many hours you spend eating, how many hours you spend getting dressed, how many hours you spend in traffic, how many hours you spend in church, how many hours you spend in the gym, how many hours you spend with God

and how many hours you spend with your family.

After you have factored in all the priorities of life, minus the hours you have accounted for by 168 (total hours in a week) and what is left over is “free time”. Now you can begin to plan more positive activities with that free time. Plus, you can see where you have been wasting time and begin to restructure your life according to the priorities of the Bible and give yourself time to do the things that are really important.

Don't let life pass you by; you only have one life, live your life to the fullest for God by making the most of every moment!

Ephesians 5:16,

“making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil”

1. Always Put God First

Make no excuses, do whatever it takes, start right now, put God first. If life gets hard, put God first. If you get promoted and make more money than you have ever dreamed, put God first. When people are on your side, put God first. When everyone leaves you, put God first. When you start your family, put God first. When you are all by yourself, put God first.

When you get busy in life, put God first. When you're bored and life moves slowly, put God first. When you understand what is going on around you, put God first. When you have no idea why things are happening the way they do, put God first.

When you are healthy, put God first. When you are sick, put God first. When you lose, put God first. When you win, put God first. When you're at work, put God first. When you're having fun on your day off, put God first. When God's commands are easy, put God first. When God's ways are hard, put God first. In everything you do, all the time, in every situation- ALWAYS PUT GOD FIRST!!

And the way you put God first is to obey His commands. There are more commands in the Bible than just the ten commandments, there are commands to pray, to love your enemies, to help the poor, to be filled with God's power, to preach the Word, and so on. You must always follow God's commands at all times of your life to be successful. The most important part of having a well-balanced life is to always put God first!

1 John 5:3-5,

3 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Romans 14:8,

If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

2. Make Family Time A Must Everyday

God said it was not good for man to be alone so He gave Eve to Adam and told them to be fruitful and multiply. (Genesis 1:28)

The first organization God started was a family. Families are designed to be a place where relational and emotional needs can be met everyday. When a family is built on the Word of God it is the single greatest force on the earth. But when it is built on the flesh and is given over to sin, the family can bring much hurt to a person.

You must decide that you and your house are going to serve the Lord together. You must choose that each member in the family is going to be the person God commanded them to be and that there will be unity in the home. When the family operates in divine unity and structure God will pour out His blessings upon the house and all who live in it.

Therefore, make time everyday to pray together, to talk to each other. Ask each member what his or her specific needs are and help them through the hard times. Plan special days and events just to be alone as a family and try to make quality time with each member every day. God gave man a family so that we could feel love from each other and not be alone in this world. Decide right now to make family time a must everyday!



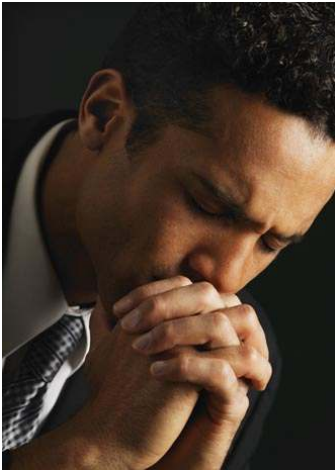
Joshua 24:15,

But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. **But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.**

3. Serve in the Church and Have Daily Devotions

Paul said the church is the Body of Christ and Jesus Himself is the Head. [1 Corinthians 12:27] The Bible makes it very clear that the church and private devotion are to be a very important part of the every day life of a Christian.

Some today want to stay home and pray by themselves using the excuse that God is everywhere and that their body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. But they fail to remember that in the book of Acts the early Christians meet daily in the temple and



in their homes together. And that everywhere the apostles went they established churches to govern and watch over all the believers.

Each Christian should have time every day when they pray and study the Bible in private. And they should have many times during the week they meet with other believers and are both taught the Word and teach it to others. Also, the true disciple of Christ should find a place to

assist and serve in the local church so that the work of the ministry will be done.

God never intended you to live your life with only part of spiritual fulfillment. If all you do is go to church, but you never have private and personal times of prayer and devotion then your faith will be weak and reliant upon what others can do for you.

And if all you do is stay at home and have private times of devotions, and are never under authority you will be weak in faith, because you will only go as far as you can reach, instead of being lifted up to higher levels by others who have gone higher with God than you.

Therefore, you must have both. Make time everyday to be in private prayer and devotions. And make attending church and serving in your local church a top priority.

Hebrews 10:25,

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.

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.

4. Work A Job That Works For You

God created mankind to have dominion over the earth and to rule all that He created. God gave man his first job of naming the animals and caring for the garden. Work is not a result of sin and the fall of man, God always intended man to be productive with his time. (Genesis 1:28)

However, when sin did come to earth it cursed the ground and made the work man would do a chore and bring sweat to his forehead. But when a man is born-again he no longer lives under the curse, but now he is under the blessings of God.

Your first job is to find out what God's purpose for your life is. What does He want you to do with your day to make this world a better place? What gifts, talents, abilities, and calling has God given you? You must first be able to answer these questions before you pick a career because when you know what you were created to do, your work becomes a blessing to you and to others, rather than being a burden and a curse.

As for me, being a pastor is a joy and the passion of my heart. I love to preach and make disciples. I enjoy writing booklets like the one you're reading now. I know God called me to do

this, therefore when I do it I am good at it and at the end of the day I feel great because I know I have been successful.

Find out what God has called you to and do it. Start working a job that works for you. Remember, life is not about making a lot of money and trying to achieve the “American Dream”, it is about living a balanced life and being filled with good things, so work a job that works for you!

Colossians 3:17,

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

5. Eat Less & Workout More



If you want to live a long life you will need to obey these four simple words. I call it the “Four Word Health Program”, “Eat Less & Workout More”. We eat too much in America and exercise too little. We literally spend millions of dollars wasting food because we over eat and then we spend millions more on gym memberships and workout equipment and then don’t even use them. We need the fruit of the spirit called “self-control”.

We have the best technologies, the best workout programs, the best foods available, and the best medical programs, and yet we are the most overweight and out of shape generation that has ever lived!! LORD HAVE MERCY!!

Make a decision today that you will not be mastered by the food you eat. Decide that you are going to live a long and healthy life that can be used mightily by God.

Most experts teach that we should eat about 2,000 calories a day and that we should exercise at least three days a week. Take a look at your schedule and make time right now to be healthy. How can God use you if you're sick and tired all the time? Therefore, eat less and workout more!

1 Corinthians 6:19,

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.

6. Enjoy A Day of Rest Every Week

A four door family car was not made to be driven in the Indy 500 at 210mph for hours and days at a time. If you would subject the family car to racecar conditions then you would harm the engine and the transmission. Your life was not made to go 100mph seven days a week-365 days a year. And for many to keep up with the American Dream they are in fifth gear all week long and the result is physical and mental "burn out."



Burn out happens in life when you have non-stop activity all the time. Eventually your body and emotions run out of gas. Then

you have to take weeks and months to get healed and restored. God made a very simple solution to spare you from getting burned out in life; it's called "A DAY OFF"!!

It is not a suggestion it is a command. Make one day out of every week to be a day when you park the car and just rest. Shut off your cell phone and take off your cape and boots, because you're not Superman. Who cares if the Jones' pass you up, let them, it's not worth it. Stop worrying about what people around you might think, you don't need their permission, God gave your life to you, and you have the power to park it when you need to. God said it and that settles it, REST!

My wife and I take off every Monday. We sleep in, hang out around the house, watch movies, go out for long walks, go shopping; we do whatever we feel like doing and answer to no one but God and each other. We have already planned that when we have children Saturday will be our family day and Monday will remain our personal day off. Monday's are our day to rest, go out on a date, or just be alone with the Lord.

Make a day where you can rest your body and emotions, trust me you need it. And when you do, God will bless your other six days more than you can imagine!! God will do more in your six-day week than you could do in a seven-day week!

Exodus 35:2,

For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day shall be your holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD.

Hebrews 4:9,

There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God

7. Make Healthy Friendships

David and Jonathon were two friends that were closer than brothers. God wants you to have godly friendships that are that close. Though most friendships will just be acquaintances, and many will only be companions, but there will be a select few that will be close and intimate.

Seek out those that do more than just tolerate you, but they celebrate you. You want close and intimate friends that help you in your weaknesses and stay until you get strong. You



need friends that come celebrate your strengths and help them grow and flourish.

Good friends will tell you when your wrong, but they also help you make it right. They will stand by your side when everyone else

leaves and they will fight your battles with you. Real friends don't just say they love you; they show you their love with their actions.

If the devil can use people to hurt you, then God can use people to heal you. Do not let past hurts and broken relationships keep you from finding good friends in life. Begin to pray and ask God to give you healthy friendships that encourage and strengthen your faith. And remember you have to be a friend, to make friends!!

Proverbs 17:17,

A friend loves at all times,

Proverbs 18:24,

A man of many companions may come to ruin,
but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Live the Balanced Life!

Make time to make time. Start right now and begin to reorganize your life so that you will live a balanced life. God made you for more than the American Dream. Your life is meant to bless God and to bless others. You will love life when you live the life God intended you to live. Live the God-kind-of-life!

John 10:10,

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Questions:

1. Why is the American Dream destructive?
2. How does God define success? Give Scripture.
3. What are the seven keys to a balanced and healthy life?

4. Write the things you are now going to do different in each of the seven areas of life.

LESSON 7

Disciples Have a Great Devotional Life

Just One Hour A Day

Jesus asked His disciples if they could pray for just an hour,



but they ended up falling asleep. The Bible says in Mark 14:37, *"Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. 'Simon,' he said to Peter, 'are you*

asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour?"

I know that Jesus is still asking us His disciples, "Can you pray with Me just for an hour?" We will sit down and watch a two-hour movie and time will just fly by. We will watch our favorite sports and three hours will pass like seconds. But when it comes to private prayer with the Lord hardly any Christian spends an hour or more in devotion to God.

We as a church should be ashamed and embarrassed that the Lord Himself has asked us to pray with Him for an hour and we put everything before our time alone with Him and give Him the last seconds of our day. We come to Him when we please and often make our prayer time like a burden we want to be done with as soon as possible. LORD PLEASE FORGIVE US!!

Is it any wonder we don't see our lost family members saved? Is it any wonder our schools are still full of violence? Is it any wonder that our church services are weak and powerless? Is it any wonder our marriages are falling apart? Is it any

wonder that liberalism is taking over our nation? Is it any wonder that most Christians feel weak and beat up? If Jesus, God in the flesh, made time to pray for hours at a time, how much should we pray for at least an hour?

Because of prayer:

- Your soul is filled with the Holy Spirit
- You are given strength to overcome every obstacle
- You are convicted of sin and given a clean heart
- You are given wisdom and understanding
- God's power can flow through your life
- The lost are convicted of sin and are saved
- The nations are changed and brought to God
- Healing comes to the hurting
- Joy comes to the depressed
- Peace comes to the trouble
- Your faith is made strong
- God's presence comes into your life, home, community, and church

Jesus, Teach Us To Pray

The disciples asked Jesus one day to teach them to pray. Why? Because they had seen Jesus wake up early to pray and on some occasions they watched Him pray all night. They knew He had spent 40 days in the desert praying and fasting before He started His ministry. They wanted to pray like Jesus.



They wanted to see God's power operate in their life just like they had seen in Jesus. They wanted to see the dead raised, demons cast out, and the Gospel preached with boldness. They also saw how Jesus was always at peace and full of joy. They wanted to have the same inner confidence and self-control like Jesus. The disciples knew the secret to Jesus' life was His prayer life. They could see Jesus always devoted Himself to personal prayer and the study of God's Word.

Read these Scriptures that describe Jesus' devotional life (devotion: to be committed to God) and ask yourself these questions: Do I pray like Jesus prayed? If No, then ask yourself, "Do I think that I am better than Jesus?" And, "Am I busier and more important than Jesus?" Also, "Is my personal time too important to give to God as prayer time?"

Please be honest with yourself and remember Jesus was always busy, He was always in the spotlight and had more responsibility than any other human being and yet He always made time to pray!

Matthew 14:23,

After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.

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.

Luke 9:28,

About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray.

Mark 9:29,

He replied, "This kind can come out only by prayer and fasting."

(Notice how Jesus said the reason the disciples could not cast out the devil was because they did not pray and fast enough.)

Decide today that you will make time to pray at least an hour everyday. Make spending time with God a top priority. You might think that you are too busy to pray, but the truth is you are too busy not to pray. God must be the source of your life and joy. He must be what you rely upon and where you get your direction in life. You will rise and fall based on your prayer life.

Please read the Scriptures that describe the disciple's life of prayer and begin to follow their example. Are you better than them to not pray like they prayed? Do you feel God wanted them to pray, but He wishes you to avoid Him? Do you think your life does not need God's presence and power? Are you busier than they were? GOD FORBID!! Brothers and Sisters pray like Jesus prayed! Pray like the disciples and early Christians prayed!!

Acts 1:13-14,

13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.

14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Acts 2:42,

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 3:1,

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon.

(Notice there was a time of prayer everyday where the church meet to pray.)

Acts 10:30,

Cornelius answered: "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me."

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.

Three Ways To Spend An Hour With God Everyday

The key to spending an hour with God a day is passion. You have to keep your love flame for God burning bright. Even though life may get busy, you have to make spending time with Jesus a must. Here are three ways to help you enjoy spending an hour a day with the Lord.



1. Be Focused In Your Prayers
2. Incorporate Reading The Bible
3. Make Time to Worship

1 Thessalonians 5:17,

"pray continually;"

1. Be Focused In Your Prayers

One of the most common pitfalls in prayer is that people do not pray with a focus. Imagine if you were to stand before a judge to plead the case for your wronged loved one. You would not come before the judge talking about the weather, and the meal you ate last night. You would be pleading with the judge to see the facts in the case and to bring justice to your loved one.

Your time with God should be focused in the same way. When a person prays they should not allow their mind to wonder and think of all types of various subjects. The mind should be fixed on the Word of God and the promises it contains and thus the prayers should be direct and specific. When we come to God asking for specific things to be done according to His Word He will answer us.

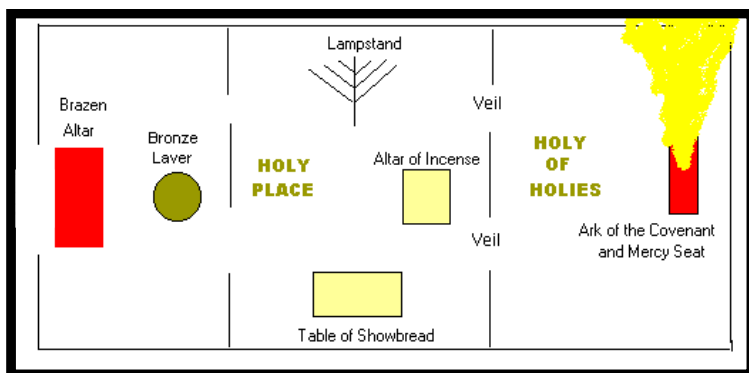
Therefore, when you make time to pray set some specific requests that you are going to pray about and pray using the Word of God.

When I pray for the church I bring to the Lord very specific needs such as the finances and I begin to pray the Word of God. I will pray, *“Lord you said in Your Word that You will supply all my needs according to Your riches in glory. I therefore ask You in the Name of Jesus that you will bring to the church \$10,425 so that we can buy the things needed for our new building.”*

Spend time in prayer focused on the specific needs in your life and use the Bible to support your requests. Sometimes your mind will be racing with so many thoughts that it may take the whole hour just to get you focused. But once you are focused you will pray with power and faith and you will begin to see your prayers answered. So make praying focused prayers

that goal, not just an hour. Stay in prayer for as long as it takes to be successful.

Here is a helpful tool to stay focused and pray for an hour. It is called the “Tabernacle Prayer”. Each item in the Old Testament tabernacle is a station of prayer. Praying like this will help you stay focused and it will discipline your flesh to submit to the will of God.



1. **Brazen Altar (10 min.):** Thank Jesus for the sacrifice He made for you on the cross. Pray and acknowledge everything the cross did and will do in your life.
2. **Brazen Laver (10 min.):** Examine your life by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Ask God to show you your faults, weaknesses, and sins. Then repent of each one and ask God to wash you clean.
3. **Candlestick (10 min.):** Begin to allow the Holy Spirit to move in your life. Pray for the nine manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit to be developed in your life. Ask that the nine spiritual gifts will be active in your ministry. And pray in tongues.
4. **Table of Bread (10 min.):** Find three to five verses in the Bible to bring you strength and blessing for the season of your life and begin to speak the Word over

your life and confess each of the promises. This is a great time to pray your “Faith Confession.”

5. **Altar of Incense (10 min.):** Begin to offer God the many different forms of praise (Towdah, yadah, barak, etc) and proclaim the glory of His many names and titles (Jehovah Jirah, Elohim, etc.).
6. **Ark of the Covenant (10 min.):** Be specific in the areas of need and speak the Word of God over every prayer request. Be sure to bring God praise in every situation.

James 5:16b-18

16 The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

17 Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.

18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

2. Incorporate Reading the Bible

When praying another way to enjoy spending an hour with God is to pray the various prayers that are found in the Bible. There are literally hundreds of prayers found all throughout both the Old and New



Testament.

Also, you can spend time meditating on the Scriptures that God has spoken to you and you can begin to search for a deeper understanding of the Word of God. I love spending time in prayer before I preach just meditating on the Word of God. I will ask the Lord, “What does this mean to me?” Or, “God reveal Your knowledge to me, I want to know you more.”

Remember that studying your Bible should be done at its own time too. But praying with your Bible and speaking the Word of God is an effective way to pray for long periods of time and will increase your success with getting answers.

Ephesians 6:17-18,

17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Romans 10:17,

“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”

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.”

3. *Make Time to Worship*

Worship is a form of prayer that is effective to keep your love for God burning strong. Find some worship music that expresses your heart for God and begin to sing to the Lord

from your heart. The presence of God will begin to fill the room and you will have deeper times with the Lord than you even have at church. Starting off your prayer time with worship is a great way to get your heart and mind focused on the Lord.

Try singing in the Spirit and from your heart, begin to allow God to speak through you.

Also, begin to prophesy, or speak words of wisdom and knowledge as the Spirit leads you. God desires to bless you in your times of worship. You can encourage yourself just like you were at church with a pastor and worship leader. God can use you to bless and speak Words into your own life.



John 4:23-24,

23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

Study to Show Yourself Approved

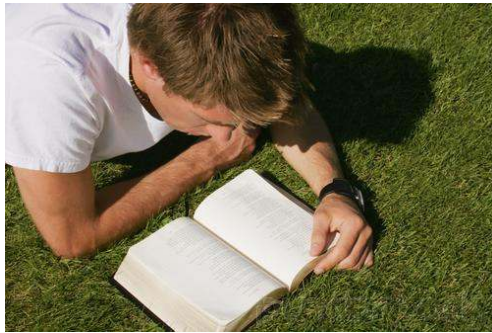
The next important part of having a great devotional life is to make time to study the Word of God. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:15, ***“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”*** Every believer and true disciple must have time to read and study God’s Word everyday.

One of the great ways to get to know your Bible is to follow a Bible reading program. I recommend starting with a Bible reading program that will take you through the entire Bible in one year. Each day you will read something in both the Old and New Testament. And you will complete the whole Bible in just one year.

If you do not follow a specific Bible reading program, you still want to be able to read one book at a time. It is good to read from start to finish so that you are not just reading “popular verses” out of context and jumping from one book to another.

Another great way to enjoy studying your Bible is to begin to take notes as you read and prepare

outlines of the material. This will help you organize the information that you are getting so that it will be easier to remember. And your notes and outlines will be



helpful when you want to share the Word of God with others.

Also, one of my favorite ways to read the Bible is with “Bible literature tools”. These are Bible dictionaries, commentaries, and lexicons. You never want to read the tools first, but after you have read a chapter in the Bible these tools can help you pull out the most knowledge from the passage.

A dictionary simply defines words and teaches you the different ways a word can be used. Commentaries are comments and explanations scholars have on the chapter. They will draw from their education in Biblical languages, world history, and the culture of the Bible.

Lexicons are simply dictionaries for the original languages of the Bible. If you want to learn why the translators choose a certain English word to explain the Greek and Hebrew concepts than lexicons are the perfect tools. You will be able to see the very colorful and unique ways the original Greek and Hebrew languages speaks the Word of God.

So each day as you make an hour to pray and be alone with God, try to add another 30-60 minutes of Bible reading and studying. Your life will never be the same!

2 Timothy 3:16-17,

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

Questions:

1. Why should a Christian spend an hour in prayer with the Lord everyday?
2. Give some reasons why it is hard for people to spend an hour in prayer, but easy to spend two hours watching a movie.
3. List and describe the three ways to make spending an hour in prayer easy and effective.

4. How much time a day do you spend in prayer? Describe the changes that you are going to make to increase your time.

5. Why is reading the Bible everyday important?

6. List some tools that can make the studying the Bible very informative.

7. How often to read and study the Bible? What tools do you use?

8. On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the best and 1 being the worst. How do you rank your devotional life? What changes are you going to make to bring them to a 10?

LESSON 8

Disciples Have a Lifestyle of Giving

God the Father is a Giver

If I were to choose one attribute of God's love that is the most visible and easiest to see on the earth, I would choose the attribute of generosity. God is a giver.

God created the earth and gave it to man. He created Eve and gave her to Adam. He created the animals and the garden and He gave them to man. He gave man his five senses; touch, taste, smell, hear, and see. He gave man free choice. He gave man a spirit and a soul. And even when man sinned against Him He gave them clothes and the first blood sacrifice.



Then all throughout the Old Testament God was a giver. He gave Cain a second chance at life. He gave Noah warning of His judgment and gave him the ability to build an ark. He gave the new world to Noah's children.

God called Abraham and gave him a child and gave him the title, "father of many nations". God gave Jacob twelve sons so that the nation of Israel would have twelve tribes. He gave Joseph the ability to interpret dreams so that he could be made a ruler in Egypt. God gave Moses the ability to do miracles and lead the nation of Israel to freedom.

God gave the Israelite people riches from Egypt and protection from the death angel. He gave them water from a rock, manna in the desert, a cloud by day and fire by night. He gave Israel His laws so that His presence could dwell in the tabernacle. He gave them victory over all their enemies and forgiveness of all their sins.

He gave Israel the Promise Land that was flowing with milk and honey and He gave them protection from all their enemies. Even when Israel sinned and broke their covenant with God, He still gave them prophets and godly kings to lead them and when they repented He always forgave them. And when Israel sinned even more against God, He sent Jesus His Son to be their redeemer and the Savior of the world.

James 1:17,

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”

Jesus, God the Son, is a Giver

When Jesus came and walked on the earth His was a giver like His Father. Jesus gave wine to guests at a wedding feast so they could celebrate the marriage. He gave bread and fishes to over 5,000 people so they could eat and not faint. He gave three years of His life to serve mankind in every way they had need.

He gave healing to everyone who was sick and came to Him for help. He gave sight to blind Bartimaeus. He gave healing to ten lepers. He gave a beggar back His physical health. He gave Lazarus another chance to live. He gave a woman freedom from twelve years of bleeding.

Jesus also gave deliverance to those who were oppressed by the devil. He gave freedom and a sound mind to a man who had been possessed with a legion of demons. He gave an older woman healing from her back pain that was caused by an evil spirit. He also gave a healthy soul to a young boy who had a demon that made him throw himself in fire. Jesus loved to give freedom from the devil's oppression.



Jesus also did what no other person could ever do; He gave His perfect sinless life to be a blood sacrifice for the sins of the world. Jesus gave his flesh to be beaten and whipped, He gave His face to be punched and spat upon, He gave His hands and feet to be pierced with nails, He gave His forehead to be gouged with thorns, and He gave His blood to be poured out on the earth for the forgiveness of all mankind's sins. Jesus gave His life, so others could have eternal life.

Jesus then gave the world a church built upon twelve apostles. He gave His church the Bible that has been preserved for over 2,000 years without any contradiction or corruption. And He also gave His church the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead.

Romans 5:15-17,

15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!

16 Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.

17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

God the Holy Spirit is a Giver

The Holy Spirit came to earth to give gifts to all men. The Holy Spirit gives conviction to sinners so that they can repent of sin and be saved. He gives new spiritual birth to all who call upon the name of Jesus and He gives daily transformation and sanctification to all believers so they can be renewed in their minds and live a God-kind-of-life. He also gives every believer the fullness of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,



goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

He gave the early church the Word of God so it could be written down and read by everyone and then He gave the church the ability to preserve and handle it accurately so

the Word of God could be passed down for 2,000 years.

He gave the apostles the same anointing that was on Jesus so they could preach the Gospel with power, heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out devils. He gave the nine spiritual gifts to the church with the evidence of speaking in other tongues. And since the day of Pentecost He still gives every believer who believes in Jesus His power and spiritual gifts.

He brings comfort to every believer's hurting heart, He brings wisdom to all who ask for God's knowledge, and He gives the

people of God the presence of God, so that they will know the Father and Son are always with them.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11,

7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Are you a giver or a taker?

Now that you have been reminded of God's great and outstanding generosity, the question that you need to answer is, "Are you a giver or a taker?" Please



be honest with yourself and answer the question not just based on your "ideals" or your "intentions" but answer the question based on your "current actions" and "past record".

Are you a tither? If you do not tithe and give God 10% of your total income then you are just a taker. How could you consider yourself a giver when you are stealing from God? To be a giver, you must be a tither.

Malachi 3:8-12,

8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.

9 You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me.

10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.

11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty. 12 "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.

Your first responsibility as a giver is to be a giver to God in your tithes and offerings. You should be able to give to God your tithe with a smile on your face because you understand in comparison to all that He has done for you, a tithe is just a drop of water compared to God's ocean of blessings in your life.

Do you give offerings? If you do not give generous offerings to missionaries, evangelistic outreaches, and to the poor and hurting around you, then you are a taker. How could you call yourself a giver if you do not actively share with those who are in need of money?

You might be thinking to yourself, that you cannot afford to tithe and give offerings, but really the truth is, you cannot afford not to give. The Bible is very clear on how God feels about those who do not give their tithes and offerings.

Here is a list of various Scriptures that teach the need to give your tithe and offerings to the church. Please prayerfully read these Scriptures and allow God to teach you His ways. And remember these are not the words of "greedy ministers", rather these are the words of a Great Big Generous God.

Scriptures for Giving Your Whole Tithe:

1. *Malachi 3:8-12,*

10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.

This Old Testament Scripture is simply teaching that the whole tithe is to be given unto God. I believe a person should tithe off the "gross", not the "net". Meaning we should tithe off of the portion that gets taxed, not the portion after the taxes.

Just because the government takes the "first cut" does not mean God does not get the "whole tithe". Tithe 10% of your total income to be obedient to the Lord and receive even more of His blessings.

2. *Genesis 14:18-20,*

18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, 19 and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.

20 And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

Here we see that Abram, later called Abraham, gave 10% of all his wealth to Melchizedek. First, this teaches that the tithe was before the Law of Moses and thus should remain after the Law of Moses. And second, it teaches that the tithe is given to people who represent God, such as a church or pastor.

3. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2,

1 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do.

2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Paul taught that all believers should set aside their "tithe" in keeping with their income so that the work of the ministry could continue across the Roman Empire. Therefore, every believer in every church should tithe to his or her church so the work of the ministry can continue.

4. Acts 5:1-11,

1 Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. 2 With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.



3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? 4 Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God."

5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. 6 Then the young men came forward,

wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.

7 About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price."

9 Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."

10 At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. 11 Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

This real story tells how a married couple were both struck down and killed in the New Testament because they failed to give to Peter the portion of money they had promised to give to God. God is not to be mocked; we should be faithful to give Him our entire tithe.

Scriptures for Giving Your Offerings:

There are a variety of ways to give your offerings to God. Here is a short list of different ways to give offering: to a missionary, to an evangelistic outreach, to a needy family in your community, to a guest speaker, or to bless your pastor and ministers. Here are some principles that will apply to all the various forms of giving offering.

First, always give your tithe to your local church and then give your offering. Do not place another ministry or need above your local church. Your church is the place where you are getting fed and disciplined and



your tithe should first be given into the ground that you have been reaping your spiritual food from.

Second, do not give out of pressure or manipulation. There are literally thousands of ministries that you can give to, but you need to only give to those the Lord asks you to bless.

For example, just in our church we have three ways to give offerings, first to our missionary, second to our outreach ministry, and third to the church building fund. As a member of our church a person should only give to the ministries as the Lord places them on their heart. It is good to be generous, but give as the Lord leads you, never feel like you have to give out of pressure or obligation. God loves a cheerful giver!

Third, give your offering like a farmer plants seed. Think of your offering more like an investment and less like a “gift”. Ask God in prayer to give you a bountiful harvest so that you can be rich in your giving and in your everyday life.

God desires you to be blessed and to have great wealth, but His first purpose in making you rich is so that you can continue to bless His kingdom. And second, it is so you can have more than enough for needs and for your family.

As you begin to read these Scriptures begin to pray and ask God where He would like for you to give your offering. Ask God to give you good seed to plant into ground so that you can reap a good harvest.

1. *Acts 4:32-35,*

32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.

33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.

34 There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales 35 and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

Here we see that the early Christians were very generous in their giving. They shared all that they had and even sold their homes and gave the money to the church. As a result there were no needy persons among them.

I believe when a church is really blessed they can say the same thing. Instead of saying, "Our church has a fountain in the parking lot!" Or, "Our pastor drives a Rolls Royce and flies in helicopters!" Offerings should be given so that there are no needy persons in the house of God. God is a good host in His "house"; there is always enough "bread" for everyone.

2. *1 Corinthians 9:6-7,*

6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

This is the very verse that teaches we should give as the Lord speaks to our heart. Never feel like you have to give because of what a man says, give because of what God says. And when you do give, give with a smile on your face and joy in your heart because you are acting like God, He is a great big Giver!

Also, remember that as you give, give according to your need. If what you have in your hand does not meet your "need", give it to God as your "seed". The best way to get out of debt and

poverty is by generous giving. Give to the Lord what is in your hand and He will give to you what is in His.

3. *1 Corinthians 9:8-11,*

8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.

11 You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

God wants to make you rich so that you can be rich in your giving. Begin to ask God to make you rich for the purpose of being rich in giving and watch how He will begin to pour out His blessings upon you. God loves to bless those that will bless others. Start sowing your seed and ask God to make you rich and when He does be faithful to be rich in your giving.

Note: By the standards of the world Americans are rich. We have cars, houses, clean water, education, food, technology, and hospitals. Restructure your budget so that you can be rich in your giving, instead of being in debt because you are rich in your spending!

Scriptures for Giving to the Poor:

There are so many verses in the Bible that teach giving to the poor I thought it best to make a separate section just for these verses.



Today in America we spend more on movies than we do on curing contagious diseases, we spend more on pet food than we do on clothing the homeless, and we spend more money on making ourselves fat and obese than we do on feeding the hungry. GOD HAVE MERCY!

If today just in America we spent just as much money on feeding the hungry in the world as do on ice cream we could feed all the starving people in the world. There is enough wealth in the world to give each of the 6 billion people a million dollars.

Our problem is not with money; our problem is with the human heart. For America to change you must change first. Start today by reading these Scriptures and ask God to give you a heart for the poor and hurting. And then demonstrate your heart by giving and helping others in need.

1. *Matthew 25:41-43,*

41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,

43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

When we neglect the needs of the poor we will suffer punishment from Jesus because He identifies with the poor and needy. Therefore, take giving to the poor a serious matter and be generous with your giving.

Also, learn wisdom when you are personally helping people that are in need so that they do not use the money or your gifts for drugs or other harmful things. You do not want to empower their bad habit, so if you are not sure, give to

ministries that help the poor in a godly way and learn from them.

2. *James 1:27,*

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Being truly spiritual is to help others especially those who do not have anyone else to go to.

3. *Proverbs 19:17,*

He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done.

When we give to the poor God Himself will repay us and bless us. God always rewards those who look after the poor. If you want to be blessed and rewarded, give to the poor.

4. *Proverbs 21:13,*

If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.

God says that if you do not hear and respond to the cry of the poor, you will pray in your time of need and He will not hear you nor answer you. If you feel like you are struggling financially, seek out the poor and meet their needs. Do for them what you want God to do for you!

5. *Proverbs 28:27,*

He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses.

Here the Bible makes the point very clear: you help poor people you will be blessed; you neglect poor people you will be cursed. Decide to stop making excuses and staying cursed and start giving to the poor and be blessed!

6. 1 John 3:16-18,

16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?

18 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

This is how you can know if you truly love God, when you see people in need and you can help, you give to them. Do not just talk about love, show love, and one of the greatest ways to show people that you love them is to give in their time of need.

Be a Giver like God!!

Decide right now that you are going to be like your Father in heaven and be a big generous giver. Start today and repent if you have not been faithful in your giving of tithes and start this week to be a tither.

If you have not been giving offerings above your tithes start today and ask God where you should invest your money so that you can be made rich. For those that have been generous in your giving, begin to ask God for more money so that you can give more money.



I challenge you to pray and determine an amount of money you would like to be able to give to a certain ministry and begin to be faithful with what you have and watch and see in six months what God will do!

And determine in your heart today that you will be mindful of the poor and that you will begin to make ways of giving to those who are in need.

Remember not to love money, but to love giving money away for the kingdom of God. The best way to break the attitude of greed is to be a giver, because when you give your money to others you show God you love Him more than you love yourself.

1 Timothy 6:10,

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

I believe as you do these things you will see that the Word of God is true when it says that you will be blessed!! God will open for you the windows of heaven and pour you out blessings that you do not have enough room to receive!!

Luke 6:38,

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Questions:

1. List and describe three ways God the Father is a giver.
2. List and describe three ways God the Son is a giver.
3. List and describe three ways God the Holy Spirit is a giver.
4. Why is it important to tithe off of the gross?
5. Are you a tither?
6. Explain two scriptures [1 Old & 1 New Testament] that teaches tithing.
7. Why is it important to give offerings?
8. What are the three things to remember when giving your offerings?
9. Where do you give your offerings?

10. Why is it important to give to the poor?

11. Write out a prayer that asks God to make you rich so that you can be rich in your giving. Use three Scriptures.

LESSON 9

Disciples Build the Local Church

I Will Build This Church

When Jesus was on this earth He had a two-part mission. His first mission was to redeem lost mankind by His death on the cross and His second mission was to build a living organization that would remain after His departure to heaven and represent His Word upon the earth.



This living organization is called the “church”.

The Greek word for church is “ekklesia”. “Ekklesia” means “called out ones who gather together”. The church refers to people who have been called out of the world and gather together to know God and to make Him known.

The main purpose for Jesus making disciples was so that they could be the first church and spread the Word of God to all the nations. One day Jesus asked His disciples who they thought He was. Peter received a revelation from the Father and said that Jesus was the “Christ” or the “Anointed One”. After Peter said that Jesus said,

Matthew 16:17-19

17 "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Jesus declared that upon the revelation of who He was that He was going to build a church that Satan himself could not even stop. Gates are meant to keep people out. And since the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden, Satan



has had power over this earth. But now for anyone who believes Jesus is the Christ they will invade the Devil's territory and establish the Kingdom of God!!

Jesus came and destroyed the works of the devil on the cross and established His church and told His disciples to go into the entire world and make more disciples. And today because of them Jesus is the most well known name in the world, the Bible is the most read book, and Christianity grows 8x faster than the rate of birth! This is the purpose of the church!! PRAISE THE LORD!!

The church has been growing for 2,000 years and the gates of hell have not stopped it. The devil tried to use the Roman government to stop the church but the church moved forward. The devil tried to use division in the church and bring in false doctrines, but the gates of hell did not prevail because the church still grew.

Communism tried to conquer the church, but the church has outlasted every communist regime. Even Islam has tried to

stop the church, but today Christianity is growing and moving forward in Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and in every Muslim nation!!

Today you must join this church and build it with the power of God. When you help build the church with the knowledge of who Jesus is and with the Word of God the gates of hell will not prevail against it. The gates of hell will not prevail in your house, community, city, or nation!! JESUS PROMISED HE WOULD BUILD HIS CHURCH!!

The Universal & Local Church

There are two ways to look at the church. First, the church is universal. The “Universal Church” is all the believers that love God and are called to help build the one true church of



Jesus Christ. They belong to many different congregations and denominations, but they are a part of one universal church. They hold to the main doctrines and commandments that Jesus taught and they are united through their love and devotion to Jesus Christ.

The primary doctrines that must be present for a church to be considered the true church of Jesus Christ are: Belief in One God revealed in the Trinity, The Deity of Jesus,

Jesus is the only Savior because of His death, burial, and bodily resurrection, The Bible is the only perfect Word of God, Jesus is coming back to judge the world, and there is a real heaven and a real hell where eternal souls are assigned to.

The second kind of church is the “Local Church”. The local church is the unique congregation that individual disciples belong to. Because there are so many disciples all around the world they cannot all go to the same building to worship God and preach His Word. So there are many different places with many different leaders for people to gather together and serve God.

Though each good church will have its unique characteristics that make it special from other churches, they will always agree on the core fundamental beliefs. Therefore, every disciple should prayerfully join a good church that teaches the truth and fulfill their call given by God.

The Bride of Christ

Being a part of the church is a great honor and privilege. The Bible refers to the church as the “Bride of Christ”. Please carefully read these verses that refer to the church as the Bride of Christ.

Ephesians 5:22-33,

22 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body.

31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Basically, Paul is teaching that Jesus views His church like His Bride and that He loves His church and takes great care of her. Also, Paul teaches that Jesus becomes one with His church and joins Himself to her like a Husband becomes one with his Wife.

Therefore, being a part of the church is like being married to Jesus. How then can someone say they love Jesus and dislike His bride? Imagine if you came over to my house and my wife answered the door and you said, "I do not want to be around you, please leave. I just came to be with Joe!"



You would not stay in my house very long because you would offend me. I would say back to you, "You either treat my wife with the same respect you treat me or you can leave. Because my wife and I are one!"

And with Jesus and His bride it is the same way. Many today say they are Christians but they do not belong to a church nor help build the church. They think that they can love Jesus and at the same time disrespect and ignore His bride. **WRONG!**

No disciple can truly love God and not be a part of a church. Every disciple must find a church to be a part of and help build it because Jesus loves His church like a husband loves his wife. That is why the writer of Hebrews teaches the believer to never forsake the gathering together of the saints!!

Hebrews 10:25

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.

The Body of Christ

Jesus also refers to the church as His body. Please read the following verses and learn how the church is considered the Body of Christ.

Ephesians 5:11-13

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:12;14-20

12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

14 Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the

sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

Just like the human body has many different parts but they all work together as one body. It is the same way with the Body of Christ; the church is one body with many different parts but they all work together as one.

Jesus has created each of His disciples with special gifts and talents that work as a part of the body and each disciple must find their place and do their job so that the whole body may be built up and strengthened.



Can you now see how important it is that every disciple is committed to their church? Imagine if your hand said to the rest of your body, "I am tired today, I do not feel like going to work, I am just going to stay home." You would not be able to get any work done.

The same is true when people say, "I don't feel like going to church today, I think I will just stay home." The whole body suffers because they are not doing their part. God has a place for every disciple in every local church. And when every disciple does their part the Body of Christ is blessed and God will do great things on the earth.

But when the Body of Christ stays home and is not committed to the church the Body becomes sick and ineffective. Today you must decide that being a part of the church is not an option, but a must. Place church at the top of your priorities because you understand the importance that you play. Honor God today by being a strong and effective part of His body!

The Different Parts of the Church

I will now take some time to briefly explain the main parts of the church. As you read the different parts of the church begin to pray that you will find your place and know your calling in the Body of Christ.

Remember, Jesus is the head of the church. He is the churches foundation and the Husband. Every part submits to Jesus and serves Him first. Though there are many different roles and positions that people should submit to, everyone must equally serve and submit to Jesus.

Five-Fold Ministry

The Five-Fold Ministry is the gifts that Jesus gave the church to be its foundation and structure. In today's church these would be the disciples that desire to be in the ministry of the church and serve the people of God and build up the church for works of service in the world. The word "ministry" means "the act of serving God" and "Ministers" are "people who serve God in the ministry" (Colossians 4:7).

For someone to be in the Five-fold ministry they have to be both anointed and appointed by God. To be anointed for ministry means God, through the Holy Spirit, gives a person a specific calling in the Five-fold ministry and then gives them the

gifts and abilities that go along with that calling. Appointed or ordained means that God uses other leaders in the church to see the Five-fold ministry gifting in the person and then recognizes that the character of the person is in agreement with the calling and gifting and therefore then gives them the church's approval to go forth and fulfill their calling.

1 Corinthians 12:28a,

And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers...

Take for example the calling of Paul to be an Apostle. The Bible records in Acts 9 that Paul was saved and given the calling to be an Apostle from Jesus personally, this could be considered his "anointing". But Jesus did not want Paul out doing ministry by himself, so he brought him Barnabas, who had been in the ministry before him, to bring him to the church and the other Apostles to receive an "appointing".

Acts 9:26-27a & 13:1-3,

26 When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles.

1 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

So as seen in the above passages Paul both received an anointing and appointing from God. Then Paul along with Barnabas began to travel and appoint new disciples into the ministry who were called and anointed by God.

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.

Note: Though there are no written qualifications of the Five-Fold ministry, we believe that for a person to be qualified to serve in one of these areas they must be ordained either as an Elder or a Deacon. The qualifications for Elders and Deacons will be discussed in the next section. So as you read understand that these Elders were meant to be the “Apostles”, “Pastors”, “Teachers”, “Prophets” and “Evangelists” of the church in their area - 1 Timothy 4:13-16.

Five Gifts, Like Five Fingers

The Five-Fold Ministry can be easily understood in the example of a hand. Even though you consider the hand to be one part of the body, it is made up of five fingers. These fingers come from the same wrist found in the hand, but each finger is separate and has its own distinctive purpose.

The same is true with the Five-Fold Ministry gifts, they come from the same source, the Holy Spirit, but each has a different purpose, but together they make one complete ministry to win the world for JESUS!!

Please read Paul's teaching about the Five-Fold Ministry to learn each distinctive part.

Ephesians 4:7-8a;11-13,

7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of

Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

The Five-Fold Ministry gifts are: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers. Here is a brief description of what each minister does in their ministry position.

Apostles: Ministers that are sent out to start new churches are Apostles. Today missionaries and church planters can be considered Apostles. Such men as Paul Cho in Korea and David Hogan in Mexico are modern Apostles. Paul is a Biblical example of an Apostle - Romans 1:1.



Prophets: Ministers that speak on behalf of God are called Prophets. They are used in the gift of prophecy and are given dreams and visions that help guide the church. A person like David Wilkerson who has written books about his dreams is considered a modern day Prophet. Agabus is a Biblical example of a Prophet - Acts 11:28 & 21:10.

Evangelists: Ministers that go out of the church and win souls are Evangelists. Today preachers like Reinhard Bonnke and Billy Graham that have seen millions of souls saved in crusades are considered Evangelists. Philip is a Biblical example of an Evangelist - Acts 8:5 & 21:8.

Pastors: Ministers that shepherd people in local churches are called Pastors. Today Robert Morris and Bill Johnson are

examples of modern Pastors. The Elders in 2 Peter 5 are Biblical examples of a Pastor/Shepherd – 1 Timothy 1:1-4.

[Note: Today in the American church the Pastor is considered the “boss” of the local church. He is responsible for preaching the Word of God, organizing the church’s activities, and leading the other Pastors and leaders on staff.]

Teachers: Ministers that work in the local church and instruct in doctrine and Christian living are called teachers. Today Michael Brown and James White are considered modern day teachers. Barnabas is a Biblical example of a teacher – Acts 13:1.

Gifts vs. Offices

As you have read in the above passage of Ephesians 5 Paul refers to the Five-Fold Ministries as “gifts”. That is why we do not see requirements for these ministries in the Bible because God gives them as free gifts to whomever He calls. Therefore, the requirements or qualifications of these gifts come from the lists found for the offices of Elder and Deacon.

1 Timothy 3:1& 10 (KJV),

1 This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

Therefore, the idea to call everyone in the church “Pastor” has been a tradition that is not found in the Bible. [For example, to call someone in the church “Pastor Bob”.] First, none of the leaders in the church used their office or gift before their name. You never find the phrase the “Apostle Paul” in the Bible; it is always, “Paul, the Apostle” [Gal. 1:1, Eph. 1:1, Col. 1:1, & 1 Tim. 1:1].

Second, the word “Pastor” is only found 1x in the New Testament, and that is when it is listed in the Five-fold ministry, but it is used 15x as the word, “shepherd”, so the word “Pastor” would not even be the proper way to use it, it would be more proper to say “Shepherd Bob”. Thirdly, everyone in the ministry was either an Elder or a Deacon and then they operated in their gifts.

For example we know that Peter was called to be an Apostle by Jesus, and that was his ministry gift from God out of the Five-fold ministry, but he referred to his office as an Elder and he commanded all the Elders to be good shepherds, so it is clear that Elders pastor or shepherd, but the office is the “noun” or “title” and the gifts are the “verbs” or the “actions”.

1 Peter 5:1-4,

1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Therefore, Elders who are gifted as Teachers, teach. Elders, who are gifted as Evangelists, evangelize. Elders, who are gifted as prophets, prophesy. Elders, who are gifted as Apostles, are sent out. And Elders, who are gifted as Pastors, pastor (or shepherd).

And we not only see that Elders are used in the Five-Fold ministry, but also Deacons. Take for example Philip was appointed by the twelve apostles to be the first of seven Deacons; and the Bible also says that he was an Evangelist.

Acts 6:2-6 & 21:8,

2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait (This is the first time the Greek word for Deacon is used, "*diakoned*") on tables. 3 Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also *Philip*, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

8 Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of *Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven*.

Therefore, at Metro Praise we use the church government system of "Elders and Deacons". Our goal is to make disciples and ordain Elders and Deacons in the church that can do the work of the ministry for the building up of the body of Christ.

Titus 1:5,

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

Elders & Deacons

Elders and Deacons are the offices in the church that God uses to rule and govern the Body of Believers. Everyone can desire or set their heart on being an Elder or Deacon, but only God can give each person their gift of ministry.

Therefore, every believer should live up to the standards of the Elder and Deacon and seek God for their own personal calling

and gifting and at the right time God will give each person an anointing and an appointing into ministry.

I truly believe that God will give each person who desires to be used in the ministry one or many of the Five-Fold Ministries! Therefore, set your heart on God and the noble task of being a leader and let the Holy Spirit set your life on FIRE!!

Here are the requirements for a disciple to be an Elder or a Deacon.

1 Timothy 3:1-13

Elder or Overseer

1 Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. 2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

4 He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. 5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.

7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Deacon

8 Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. 9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. 11 In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

12 A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. 13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

At Metro Praise we believe the qualifications of the Elder and the Deacon are one in the same, and thus we as a church determine, with the leading of the Holy Ghost, what each person should be appointed and ordained as.

Here is the complete list of requirements with definitions and examples so that you, the hopeful leader, may have a clear and sound understanding of how you ought to live if you want to be used by God as a Elder or Deacon.

Elders and Deacons Must Be:

- (1) *Above reproach.* Elders and Deacons must always be in good standing with the church and nothing seen in the Bible can prove them of sin or err.
- (2) *Husband of One Wife.* Elders and Deacons cannot be polygamists, or have an unbiblical divorce.
- (3) *Temperate.* Elders and Deacons must have their emotions under control, they cannot be easily angered, depressed or full of pride, they must have a balanced emotional life.
- (4) *Self-Controlled.* Elders and Deacons can not be addicted to anything in this world; not to sports, food, perversion, or the like
- (5) *Respectable.* Elders and Deacons must live their lives worthy of respect in the areas of finances, integrity, speech, time management and overall lifestyle in the community, church and home.
- (6) *Hospitable.* Elders and Deacons must have a home and heart that is always open to fellowship, discipleship, and comfort for the people they minister to.
- (7) *Able to Teach.* Elders and Deacons must be able to teach the sound doctrine of the Apostles, passionate worship for God, the true Gospel of Repentance, and instruct new believers in the way of true discipleship and devotion to Jesus and His commands.
- (8) *Not Given To Drunkenness.* Elders and Deacons must not be addicted to alcohol or the like (cigarettes, drugs, etc).

- [9] *Not Violent, But Gentle.* Elders and Deacons must be kind and loving to the world that opposes them and patient with those they are discipling.
- [10] *Not Quarrelsome.* Elders and Deacons must be able to learn under submission of the other Elders and they must teach with humility, not with an attitude of pride and dissension.
- [11] *Not a Lover of Money.* Elders and Deacons must be tithers, generous givers, and not indebted to the lusts of this world; they must be an example of a wise steward of God's financial blessings and not pursue dishonest gain in any way.
- [12] *Manage Their Home Well.* Elders and Deacons must keep their home in order where the children serve God and or are submitted to them as their parents. This also includes the marriage as seen in 1 Timothy 3:11, both the husband and wife must live equally godly lives and the wives must not be slanders, but rather trustworthy.
- [13] *Not a recent convert.* Elders and Deacons must be thoroughly trained and proved faithful before they are given their appointment. Therefore, they must be tested and approved before they are appointed.
- [14] *Must Have a Good Reputation.* Elders and Deacons must have a good name in their community, on their job, and with their extended family. There can be no evil thing said about them, as seen in the Bible, whether in their character or conduct by non-Christians.

Metro Praise does not withhold the office of Deacon or Elder from women because we believe that women are able to lead in the church according to Scripture. We see that women in the New Testament we given the same baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Five-fold ministry gifts, and were used in the offices.

Acts 2:17-18,

17 "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

Acts 16:7,

Greet Andronicus and Junias (*Name of the wife*), my relatives who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.

Acts 16:1 (NLT),

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a deacon in the church in Cenchrea.

However, we do insist that a married couple be in agreement and both be ordained to the same position, meaning we do not agree with a man being an Elder and his wife being a Deacon, or the wife being a deacon and the believing husband is not in ministry. We believe that for all believing families that both husband and wife must be appointed to the same office of either Elder or Deacon. Read some of the examples of husbands and wives working together as a team.

Acts 16:7,

Greet Andronicus and Junias, my relatives who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.

Acts 18:24-26,

24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

If a believer is married to an unbeliever we do not forbid the believing spouse to have a position in the church as long as they are not hindered from serving by the unbelieving spouse and or brought into reproach on Biblical grounds by the unbelieving spouse. So if the believing spouse is truly serving

God with all their might, we will not withhold any good thing from them in the ministry.

How the Church Works

I will now take a few moments to explain how Metro Praise governs itself with the system of Elders and Deacons. First, we have three different categories of Elders because we see that in the New Testament even though Peter was an Elder like the Elders he was writing to, he had a greater authority than them and was over them.



So with the desire to stay as close to the New Testament example and the early church form of government we have made three types of Elders. Which are:

- [1] **Apostolic Elders:** these are the Elders that oversee the Pastoral Elders and kept them accountable, this would be like Peter overseeing the churches he was writing to, or Paul to Timothy.
- [2] **Pastoral Elders:** these are Elders that shepherd and watch over the whole church and implement the God-given vision for the church, this would be like Timothy and the church he oversaw at Ephesus
- [3] **Governing Elders:** these are the Elders that lead different ministers and services, these would be like

the Elders that Timothy and Titus both appointed in their cities and churches

Second, the Deacons work and assist the Elders in the various ministries. Deacons are the servants and helpers of the ministry that make it possible for the Elders to do their job. Just like when the original Apostles (Elders) needed help, they appointed seven deacons to wait on tables and take care of the needs of the people so they could focus on the study of God's Word and prayer (Acts 6:1-7).

Below is a chart showing the structure of Metro Praise with the various leaders in their respected offices.

Metro Praise Structure

Apostolic Elders

Anthony Freeman, Jim Wyrostek, & Roy Bowes

Pastoral Elders

Joe & Nancy Wyrostek

Governing Elders

Ishmael & Robyn Pickens (Worship/The Bridge), Sue-Ellen Rubio (Children's Ministry), Adolfo Alvarez (Youth Ministry), Griselda Rubio (Young Adult Ministry)

Deacons

Ricky & Rachel Rivera (Worship/Young Adult Ministry), Andrew Scienski (Young Adult Ministry/Sound)

Not every church has to use the form of church government that Metro Praise uses, but this is the best format we have found in the Bible. I pray that you will find your place in this great church and begin to build the church of JESUS CHRIST!!

Find Your Place

Every church has ministries and places that you can serve and do your part. Remember the church is the Body of Christ and you have a special part in it. The church will not be complete unless you become faithful to your call and do your job.

The job of good Elders and Deacons is to help prepare you for the work of the church. Joining this class and coming to church faithfully has been steps in the right direction. Now you need to begin to pray so that Lord will lead you and show you the part that you will play to build the local church.

Here is an example of the ministries you can begin to pray about to see where God wants you to serve. (The complete list is found in “Chapter 12, “Make Other Disciples”)

Small Groups: A meeting in a person’s home where the group studies the Bible and prays for each other, and reaches out to the lost in the community.

Elevate Youth Ministry: A service dedicated just to reaching youth. Here you can pray and disciple teenagers.

Children’s Ministry: A service dedicated to reaching children.

Evangelism Ministry: A time when a group of people goes out and reaches the lost and preaches the Gospel.

Prayer & Altar Ministry: A time at the end of every service when you pray for people to be saved, healed, and delivered.

Worship Ministry: A time when you can use your musical talents to lead people into the presence of God.

Crossover Young Adult Ministry: A service where you can minister to young adults between the ages of 18-30’s.

Latino Ministry: A service that ministers to the Spanish speaking families in the community.

This is just a basic list of things you can do at Metro Praise so that the church will be built strong and it will grow. Prayerfully ask God where you can serve and begin to seek God to make you a leader. Whether it's being an Elder or a Deacon, God has a call for your life and ministry giftings to pour out, seek His face until you know what you are called to do!!

Jesus said that true disciples would make other disciples. Now it is your turn to make a difference in others lives. Go and build the church!!

Questions: *Due to the large number of questions in this lesson, please use a separate paper for your answers.*

1. What does the word "ekklesia" mean?
2. Why does hell have gates? What will break down those gates?
3. Describe the Universal Church and the Local Church.
4. Describe what the Bible says about the Bride of Christ.
5. How should Christians treat the Bride of Christ?
6. Describe what the Bible says about the Body of Christ.
7. Why is every part important to the Body of Christ?
8. Describe what it means to be "anointed" and "appointed"?
9. List and describe each of the Five-Fold Ministries.
10. What is the difference between the "gifts" and the "offices"?

11. Did the early church call everyone “pastor”? Why not?
12. List and describe the two offices in the church.
13. List the qualifications of being an Elder and Deacon.
14. Give two reasons with Scripture references why woman can be in the ministry.
15. Give an example of a husband and wife team.
16. List and describe the three types of Elders in Metro Praise leadership.
17. Describe the role of a Deacon.
18. Draw the flow chart of Metro Praise’s leadership structure.
19. List the areas of ministry you believe the Lord is calling you to serve in.

LESSON 10

Disciples Operate in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

From Pentecost Until Now

After Jesus left for heaven the early church went out in power and preached the Gospel with signs following. But around the fourth century (300 A.D.) the church began to suffer from inward conflict and division. A political church



began to arise and work with evil governments and oppress people all over the world. This church was and is the Roman Catholic Church.

For many years good Christians had to live in constant conflict and turmoil because of this church. And from approximately 300-1400 A.D. the power of God was only seen in the underground and secret church because the Church of Rome persecuted, tortured, and murdered all those who opposed them.

But around the fifteenth century the true disciples rallied together and broke away from the Church of Rome. This event was called the “Great Protestant Reformation”. The name “Protestant” simply means they “protested” the Catholic Church. And “Reformation” means to “bring back the truth of Bible”.

From the 1400’s until the early 1900’s the disciples were not really aware of the gifts, there were just consumed with preaching the Gospel and breaking free from false religion and heresies. But in 1906 on Azusa Street in Los Angeles

California God's Holy Spirit fell on the people like it did on Pentecost and for three straight years people came from all around the world to be filled with God's Spirit again.

Since 1906 there are now over 500 million "Spirit-Filled" believers all over the world. The largest and fastest growing churches are Spirit-Filled, Korea has a Spirit-Filled church with over 1 million members and Columbia has a church with over 400,000 members.



The Spirit-Filled church grows 8x faster than the rate of birth and it is the fastest growing religion in the world. Just in China alone, over 1,600 people become Spirit-Filled believers every hour!!

And so for our purposes I felt it good for you to know church history so that you can see how special God's gifts upon the earth are. No matter how hard the devil has tried to extinguish the gifts, God has proven to be stronger and the hearts of true disciples has shown to always be hunger for the manifestation of God's power upon the earth.

Jesus Never Took Back His Gifts

Before Jesus went back to heaven He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Promise of the Father- the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Why?

Jesus wanted His disciples to do the same type of things that He had done- heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out devils, look into people's hearts and expose the truth, and talk about the future with 100% accuracy.

Please read the following verses that clearly teach Jesus wanted His disciples to operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:12-14

12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.

14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Mark 16:15-20

15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

Acts 1:8

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.

Jesus always wanted His church to operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit so that the Gospel would come in power and demonstration and not just with words. Jesus never wanted His church to be powerless and void of spiritual gifts.

1 Corinthians 4:20

20 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

Some pastors teach that the gifts of the Holy Spirit were just for the first disciples and that the power of the Holy Spirit stopped sometime in the first century. But Jesus never said that and there is no Scripture that says the gifts stopped.

Therefore, what Jesus did say to the first disciples still stands true for every disciple today. Jesus always intended the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be on the earth with the church.

If 2,000 years ago Jesus saw the need to cast out devils do



think the power of Satan is less now than it was 2,000 years ago? If the first disciples saw the need to pray for the sick and cripple, do you think today we have less sick people in need of a miracle? **OF COURSE NOT!!**

We need the power of God more today than ever before!! We need the power of God to cast out devils, heal the sick, and raise the dead!! The people that teach the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not for today actually believe a lie from the devil.

Because the only thing that can truly defeat the devil on the earth is the power of God. Jesus always intended that you and I would operate in the gifts of Holy Spirit so that works of the devil would be destroyed!! Decide in your heart today that you want all that God has for you.

Matthew 10:7-8

7 As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons.

The Gifts Are For Everyone

Paul writes in the book of 1 Corinthians 12 the most extensive and detailed list of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Please take a moment to read the following verses and the comments that I have made.



1 Corinthians 12:1-11

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

Here Paul says that we cannot be ignorant or unformed about spiritual gifts and still be successful in using them. We have to be taught and trained in the gifts.

Just like in the Old Testament there were "schools for the prophets" we should be teachable and humble so that we can be trained in the gifts.

2 You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. 3 Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

Paul is making very clear what the test is to see if a person is being used by the Spirit of God or by an evil spirit. Only by the

Spirit of God can a person say, “Jesus is Lord”. So those who operate in the “gifts” but do not believe Jesus is Lord are getting their powers from evil spirits.

4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

Notice the reference to the trinity. Gifts are from the Spirit. Service is from the Lord (Jesus). And the working is from God (Father). Here we see God revealed in three distinct persons– Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And each person is doing a specific task in the disciple’s life so they can fulfill their purpose and walk in divine power.

7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

Here we clearly see that gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to everyone. “Each one” means to “every person”, so Paul is saying that the manifestation or the “power” of Holy Spirit is given to “every person” for the common good.

8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

In the next section I will define each of the nine gifts, but for now I will point out once again, that to “each one” these gifts are given. Jesus wants you to be able to operate in every gift.

Though you do not “turn on and turn off” these gifts, you can be “open or closed” to them. Later in this passage Paul says

to eagerly desire and pursue spiritual gifts. (1 Corinthians 14:1)

You can either pretend these gifts do not exist and live without God's power or you can earnestly seek God to use you and see His mighty works on this earth. The Spirit will not force these gifts on anyone; He is looking for willing vessels.

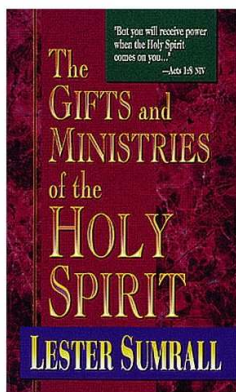
11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Here we see that Paul clearly believes these gifts are for everyone and that the Holy Spirit will "turn them on and off" when He desires. But we as disciples must be willing and ready for God to use us.

The Nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit

As a young believer I was so hungry to learn all that I could about the gifts that I read a lot books and listened to many sermons and lectures on the gifts.

And my favorite out of all the authors and speakers was a humble preacher who came from Louisiana and started a worldwide ministry that is still in operation today in South Bend Indiana, his name was Lester Sumrall. I owe 90% of all I know and understand about the gifts to him.



Therefore, I recommend that every believer have his book, "The Gifts and Ministries of the Holy Spirit" in your library. It truly was and is a great resource to help me understand and

operate in the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. Most of what I will write comes from that book.

I believe that the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit can be placed in three categories of three (3+3+3=9). First, the Revelation gifts, these are the gifts that reveal knowledge about God and man. Second, the Power Gifts, these are the gifts that demonstrate God's power upon the earth. Third, the Inspiration Gifts, these are the gifts that encourage and bless the church.

Revelation Gifts

Message of Wisdom: A supernatural revelation of the divine purposes of God. God gives a person wisdom about the future and what they should do.

A modern example of this gift would be God calling me into the ministry to plant churches and giving me the vision of Metro Praise. A Biblical example would be God telling Agabus there was a famine to come and the disciples responded by saving money and started to send relief to the area. [Acts 11:28-30]

Message of Knowledge: A supernatural revelation of the knowledge of God concerning His divine will. God will reveal His knowledge about someone's past or present.

A modern example of this gift would be the time I spoke to a young girl and said that God told me she was struggling with depression and that she felt unimportant. She said it was true and then God delivered her and poured His love upon her in a great way.

A Biblical example of this gift would be when Jesus sat down at the well and spoke to a woman about her past relationships with men and then told her He would change her life forever. [John 4]

Distinguishing Between Spirits: A supernatural revelation about the origin of a spirit. This gift reveals whether something is from the Spirit of God, an angel, an evil spirit, or the spirit of a man.

Because there are four different kinds of spirits in the world the believer must be aware of the working of each one. Many times Christians believe God is speaking to them, but really it is their own spirit.

Others times, people have visions and hear voices they think are from God, but they really are evil spirits deceiving them. The gift of discerning of spirits lets you know what is the source and purpose of every spiritual thing.

A modern example of this gift would be the time when I was praying for a woman and she began to shake and scream. I knew it was not from the Holy Spirit in her, but an evil spirit. I then prayed for her and she received deliverance from a spirit of unforgiveness.

A Biblical example of discerning of spirits would be when Elymas the sorcery tried to stop the preaching of Paul. Paul then knew that Elymas was not just resting in the flesh, but that an evil spirit was in him trying to stop the Gospel so Paul responded by cursing him with blindness. (Acts 13:6-12)

The Power Gifts

Gift of Faith: A supernatural infilling of faith to accomplish the divine will of God. This is a gift to do things that would normally be impossible, but God gives a person the faith needed to respond to the situation and see the miracle manifested.

A modern example of this gift would be the time I was told by God to walk into a church and ask for the keys to the building without any money. Within two days we had the keys because

God had a plan for our church and He gave me a divine portion of faith to act on to receive His blessing.

A Biblical example of the gift of faith would be when Peter got up and began to preach in the same city that Jesus was killed in. Peter had doubts and fears before hand and even denied Jesus three times. But when the Holy Spirit came and gave him a supernatural faith, he stood up and preached the Gospel and thousands received Jesus into their lives. (Acts 2)

Gifts of Healing: A supernatural manifestation of God's healing power. This gift comes in many forms because it responds to the many ways a person can be sick. This gift can be used to cast out an evil spirit that brings sickness or it could be given to heal emotions that have been hurt because of past traumatic events. The gifts of healing are pluralistic and are able to meet any and every need.

A modern day example of this gift would be the many times I have prayed for people to be healed from depression and anxiety and God heals them from the hurt and they no longer need to take medication. I have also seen God restore people's hearing, make lame people walk, and heal allergies and sinus infections.

A Biblical example of this gift would be the many times in the Bible the disciples healed the sick, raised the dead, and made the lame walk. (Read Acts!!)

Miraculous Powers: A supernatural display of God's infinite power. This gift can come in many different forms, but in every way the response is always the same, people acknowledge God is real.

A modern example of this would be the time in 1995 when God's Spirit came in mighty power at a church service in Pensacola Florida and for the next five years over 1 million

people were saved because everyone who went to their services tangibly felt God's power.

A Biblical example of this gift would be when a poisonous snake bit Paul and he did not die. Everyone knew that God had given him special powers. [Acts 28:3-4]

The Inspiration Gifts

Prophecy: A supernatural message that brings edification, exhortation, and comfort. [1 Corinthians 14:3] Prophecy is speaking for God a message to people who need to hear His voice. It is not man's opinion or his thoughts; it is literally a Word from God.

Many times with prophesy the flesh can enter in and people who claim to be "prophets" can try to usurp their will upon people and use the phrase, "The Lord has said..."

But the Bible plainly teaches that prophecy is simply bringing a message to someone from God that build's them up (edifies), encourages them (exhorts) or comforts them.

If the word brings discouragement or places a person's focus on man, then you can be sure it is not from God. Always test every prophesy with the Word of God, the past words you know God has already spoken and confirmed, and the council of spiritual leaders who can discern the will of God.

A modern example of a prophecy would be the time I held a young man in my arms and said, "Jesus wants me to tell you just like I am holding you now He is holding you in His arms and pouring out His love upon you." And the next moment tears gushed down his face as he began to feel the comfort of God heal all of his many hurts.

A Biblical example of the gift of prophecy would be when Peter preached on the day of Pentecost and quoted Joel to the people listening. When they heard that God was speaking to them about their generation that were encouraged to draw near to God and receive salvation. (Acts 2)

Message in Tongues: A supernatural message given in an unknown tongue that brings edification, exhortation, and comfort. Here the tongue must always be interpreted because it is being spoken to the congregation as a message, not just a private prayer.

Hence, the difference between the “gift of tongues” and the “message in tongues” is the way in which the tongue is used. The gift of tongues is a private prayer language between you and God. And a message in tongues is a prophecy in an unknown tongue that needs an interpretation.

A modern example of a message in tongues would be the time I was in a prayer meeting and I began to sense God wanted me to give a message in tongues, so while everyone was praying I raised my voice and I began to speak in a different tongue than the one I usually prayed in. Then afterward someone gave a message in English that encouraged the people of God.

Interpretation of Tongues: A supernatural ability to interpret the message given in tongues.

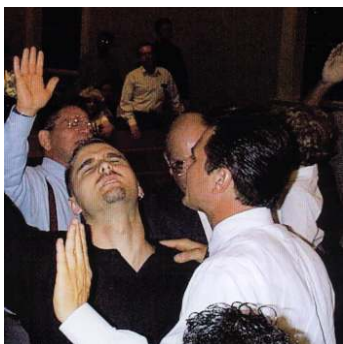
Note: The Bible teaches that there should be order when the inspiration gifts are in operation. Here are some of the guidelines that are to be used to insure peace.

1. There should only be two to three words given in a service. (1 Corinthians 14:27)

2. The leaders of the church must approve the words given. (1 Corinthians 14:29)
3. The one being used in the gift always has the ability to be in control and in order. If the person acts rude and says “The Spirit is making me act this way and I can not stop.” Then an evil spirit or their flesh is actually influencing them. (1 Corinthians 14:32)

Be a Vessel God Can Use!

God is looking for people He can use to display His power upon the earth. Begin to earnestly seek the gifts and ask God to



use you. Start by making your heart pure before God. Ask Him to forgive you of any hidden sins. And then ask Him to show you your motives, and you have selfish motives ask Him to give you a pure heart that truly desires to be used for His glory, not your own.

Then begin to follow the same principles you learned in Lesson 2 “Anointed”. Begin to talk like Jesus, begin to walk like Jesus, and begin to be daily filled like Jesus.

God does not have favorites, but He does favor those who walk in faith. You have the same opportunity to be operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit like Paul and the first disciples. Start right now by praying this prayer and begin to expect God to use you in mighty ways!

Pray this out loud:

Holy Spirit I welcome you into my life today in the name of Jesus. I ask that you will give me your gifts and use my life for the glory of

God. Give me your gifts at the proper time so that the name of Jesus would be known in the world today. I am your willing vessel. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

Questions:

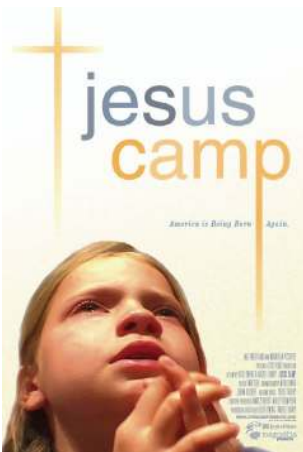
1. Why did the gifts of the Holy Spirit go “underground”?
2. Defend with the Bible the position that teaches Jesus never intended the gifts of the Holy Spirit to end after the first disciples.
3. Describe how the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for “everyone”.
4. List the three categories of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
5. Briefly describe each of the nine gifts.

LESSON 11

Disciples Defend The Faith

A Ready Answer

Today the Christian faith is being attacked in many different ways and on many different levels. The educational system, both on the college and grammar school level, is undermining the very foundation of the Bible claiming that it is nothing more than an inaccurate book filled with ancient myths that was poorly handed down over 2,000 years ago.



The media presents fundamental Christians as “backwards” and “intolerant” when it comes to social issues such as “gay rights”, “abortion”, and “freedom of speech”. The media loves to distort such issues like Intelligent Design verses Evolution to make the Christian look “unintelligent” and blinded by “religious

fanaticism” rather than “scientific” and “rational”.

And at the same time atheists and skeptics are fighting against the Christian faith thousands of cults and counter Christian’s groups have rose up and begun to teach their interpretation of the Bible, thus bring confusion to the religious seeker. Just in the last 150 years there have been literally thousands of new religious sects that have started and though they differ on many things, they all agree that the fundamental Christian faith is wrong.

Today like never before Christians must study to show themselves approved so that they can defend the Christian faith against this onslaught of evil. [2 Timothy 2:15] For the Bible teaches that Satan is our enemy not flesh and blood. [Ephesians 6] Satan is the one who wants people to reject Christianity because in doing so man will have rejected his only chance of eternal life.

Please read the words of Peter and pray that God will use you in this generation to defend the Christian faith.

1 Peter 3:15-16,

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,

16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

We today must first be trained in the faith, so that we can give an answer to defend the faith. This chapter is designed to give you the disciple a fundamental knowledge of the core Christian doctrines and a brief overview of the different religions that are trying to destroy these truths. The goal is to equip you with resources and information that will stand up against any attack of the enemy! Lets get ready!

The Fundamentals

You have heard the term “Fundamental Christians Truths” throughout this whole booklet and now you will learn what they are. The Christian faith has been passed down for almost 2,000 years and has withstood every attack known to mankind. The Christian faith has withstood attacks from governments, other religions, and even from heresies within.

Heresies are “beliefs about Christianity that are not true”. Some of the greatest heresies came right at the beginning of the Christian church. Most of all the heresies that are around today were around back then and they were defeated in the first three hundred years of the church.

The truths that will be presented to you now are the truths that have come from the disciples down throughout the ages. The Bible and church history itself can prove these truths.



Jesus knew that His church would be attacked so He gave His Holy Spirit to be those who would love Him and love the truth. Thus the Holy Spirit has worked with man to preserve these truths, as Jesus and the first disciples originally taught them.

Some teach that the original truth was lost and needs to be restored but Jesus said He would build His church and the gates of hell would not prevail. These simple truths have been passed down through every generation. Learn these truths and be able to teach them to all who questions their validity.

Matthew 16:18,

And I tell you that you are Peter and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Here are the Fundamentals:

1. **The Bible:** The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testament, are verbally inspired by God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct.

- A. **Scripture References:** 2 Timothy 3:15-17, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, & 2 Peter 1:21.
- B. **Scholarly References:** Dr. James White of Alpha and Omega Ministries www.aomin.org has a great book called, "Sola Scriptura!" and a debate with Shabir Ally (Muslim) over the divinity of the New Testament.

Josh McDowell www.josh.org provides great resources on the infallibility of the Bible in his book "New Evidence That Demands a Verdict", which I think is a must have for every Christian.

2. **The Trinity:** There is only One True God—revealed in three persons...Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (commonly known as the Trinity).

- A. **Scripture References:** Deuteronomy 6:4, Isaiah 43:10-11, Matthew 28:19, & Luke 3:22.
- B. **Scholarly References:** Dr. James White of Alpha and Omega Ministries www.aomin.org has a great book called, "The Forgotten Trinity".

3. **Jesus is God:** As God's Son Jesus was both human and divine.

- A. **Scripture References:** John 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:16 (KJV), Philippians 2:9-11, Revelations 7:9-11.
- B. **Scholarly References:** Josh McDowell www.josh.org has a great book called, "More Than A Carpenter".

4. **Fall of Man:** Though originally created good by God, man willingly fell to sin when tempted by Satan—ushering evil and death, both physical and spiritual, into the world.
- A. **Scripture References:** Genesis 1:26-27, 2:17, 3:6, & Romans 5:12-19.
 - B. **Scholarly References:** Any good commentary on the book of Romans is worth having. Tyndale Press makes an excellent commentary on the book of Romans by F.F. Bruce, which is a very valuable and informative resource on the most theological book in the Bible.
5. **Salvation:** Every person can have restored fellowship with God through 'salvation' by accepting Christ's offer of forgiveness for sin.
- A. **Scripture References:** Luke 24:47, John 3:3-16, Romans 10:13-15, & Titus 2:11.
 - B. **Scholarly References:** Every Christian should own at least one theology book so they can see the basic doctrines of the Bible taught thoroughly throughout Scripture. Moody Press makes a great beginners book called, "The Great Doctrines of the Bible", by Williams Evans.
6. **Communion & Baptism:** The Bible teaches two practices that every Christians should participate in— (1) Water Baptism by Immersion after repenting of one's sins and receiving Christ's gift of salvation, and (2) Holy Communion (the Lord's Supper) as a symbolic remembrance of Christ's suffering and death for our salvation.
- A. **Scripture References:** Baptism: Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:16, & Acts 10:47-48. Holy

Communion: Luke 22:19 & 1 Corinthians 11:25-26.

- B. **Scholarly References:** Once again a basic theology book will teach these basic truths in depth.

- 7. **Final Judgment:** A Final Judgment will take place for those who have rejected Christ. They will be judged for their sin and sent to eternal damnation in a punishing lake of fire along with the Devil and his fallen angels.

Those who have been saved and have their names written in the Lamb's book of life will be given a resurrected body and will live and dwell with God on the new earth forever.

- A. **Scripture References:** Matthew 25:46. Mark 9:43-48, 2 Peter 3:13, & Revelations 19–22.

- B. **Scholarly References:** Once again a basic theology book will teach these basic truths in depth.

Note: I did not include such doctrines as the “rapture”, “speaking in tongues”, and “divine healing” because though these are important they are not considered fundamental. Fundamental doctrines are the truths that are required to be a Christian. These doctrines literally determine whether someone is following the One True Christ or a False Christ.

Fundamental doctrines are the truths that all Christians must agree on in every place and in every generation. Though different churches and denominations may differ in other areas, they will never differ in these areas, and if they do, they cannot be considered a true church.

Know the Real Ones and You Will Spot the Fakes

Just like bank tellers are told to study the real money so that they can easily spot a fake, you should spend time studying your Bible and learning these fundamental doctrines so that when someone comes with heresies or false doctrine you will be able to defend the core doctrines of the Christian faith and spot a “fake doctrine”.



And just like how a basketball player spends hours in practice before the game to get ready for his competition, you need to spend hours in private prayer and study so you are ready with an answer for those who challenge what you believe.

Please read the following Scriptures and learn how in every generation it is important to defend the truth.

1 Timothy 4:1-2,

1 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

2 Timothy 3:1-9,

1 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good,

4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— 5 **having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.**

6 They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, 7 always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.

8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth—men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. 9 But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.

2 Timothy 4:1-5,

1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

What Others Believe

I will now take the next section to briefly explain and inform you of the most popular attacks against the Christian faith. I have divided the section into three main divisions. (1) The Non-Religious Attacks (2) The Counter Christian (Cult) Attacks (3) The World Religions Attacks. Each division attacks the Christian faith in a unique way, but each has a common goal, to exterminate fundamental Christianity.

As you learn of these attacks against Christianity you must remember that the battle is not against “flesh and blood” but

the fight is against Satan and his evil demons that hate the souls of men and wish them to be damned forever. So when engaging those who oppose the Christian faith we should do so with love and patience.

These sections will require you to do some outside learning. I will only pose some of their main attacks and give you the reader some basic answers. Then I will give you the resources to study for a more proper in-depth defense. You will be required on your own to study and learn these outside materials so you can be better equipped with the truth.

(1) Non-Religious Attacks

People that fit into this category are generally those who are atheist (do not believe there is a god) and agnostics (do not believe anyone can really know for sure if there is a God). They tend to use “intellectual arguments” to try to disprove the claims of the Bible and Christianity.

1. Evolution



This is the belief that “nothing” exploded billions of years ago and made the universe. Evolution teaches that life came from non-living things billions of years ago and it has evolved into

mankind by natural selection and survival of the fittest.

The evolutionist basic attacks against the Bible are the following:

A. God did not create the world because science cannot prove that He did.

Response: What can be proven is that everything that is made has an intelligent designer. A watch does not appear out of nothing it was created by a watchmaker.

Man is more complex than all the computers at NASA combined and none would say those computers came from an explosion of nothing. God created man in His own image and thus man has a creator.

B. If God did create the world He did a terrible job because the world is full of death, suffering, and flawed creations.

Response: The world was not originally created the way we see it now. At first it was without pain, death, and disease, it was perfect. But because of sin the world is now in its present condition. Therefore, man choosing to live without God made the world the way it is today.

C. The scientific proof for the age of the earth and the universe is billions of years old and thus disagrees with the Biblical belief that it is only 6,000 years old.

Response: When God created the universe He created it “full grown” to sustain life. When He placed Adam and Eve in the Garden they were full grown, not babies. If you would have taken a sample of their body it would have been probably thirty years old, but they had just been created.

The age of the universe only proves that God created a full-grown universe to sustain life.

D. The fossil records show without a doubt that today's modern species have evolved from other lesser species over millions of years. Thus, the Biblical view of creation in six literal days "as is" is absurd.

Response: There is evidence of variations within every species. But there is no proof of any species evolving into another species. All the dogs and wolf like creatures can all be shown to come from a dog like animal. But science has not proven that a dog came from a rock, then a fish, then a lizard, and so on.

All of the data still shows that basically the way man is now, is the way he has always been. And any other differing belief can and will always lead to behavior like Hitler. He believed that the Arian race was the superior race and the other human races needed to be killed off. That is what "natural selection" and "survival of the fittest" looks like in humans.

Resources: Listen to lectures either by Dr. Kent Hovind at www.drdino.com or Ken Ham of Answers in Genesis at www.answersingenesis.org. They answer all of the supposed "scientific claims" of evolutionists.

It is always impressive and surprising to an evolutionist when you are able to defend your faith with scientific data. You must learn how Christians have always believed in science and God.

2. Post Modern Theology

This is the belief that absolute truth does not exist. It can also



be referred to as “relativism”. Relativism simply means, “all truth is relative”.

Basically, a “Post Modernist” or “Relativist” believes there is no way to tell one statement is truer than another, a person’s perspective can only define the idea of “truth”.

Example: If I was to be facing a person and I said, “The pen is in my right hand.” He could say, “That can not be absolutely true, because from my prospective the pen is in your left hand.”

Here are some of their main attacks:

**A. How can you prove absolute truth exists?
Everyone has his or her own perspective of every
“truth” and thus it can never be seen as “truth”
but as opinion.**

Response: Ask them if their statement, “No absolute truth exists” is an absolutely true statement. LOL!! Basically, they will have to admit either $2+2=4$ or some other simple truth exist and thus proving that everything cannot be relative.

If they still do not admit it, then ask them if life exists relatively or absolutely. If they say relatively, then ask them what would happen if they jumped off the Sears Tower. Then say, would your death be relative or absolute?

Once you can establish that truth does exist, you must show them the perspective does not change truth. Going back to the example of the pen, the opposite person’s perspective does not change the truth that for the person holding the pen it is still in his right hand.

Then show them that just because they do not “believe” in absolute truth, does not mean it does not exist. Ask them to stand on a chair and say they do not believe in gravity. Then have them jump off the chair and when they fall to the ground show them that if they did it a 100x times the same thing would happen. The point is absolute truth does exist, whether they admit or not.

**B. How do you know your God is the only true God?
There are millions of gods in the world and
thousands of religions.**

Response: First share your experience with Jesus. Then ask them, “How many of you exist?” Then say, “Just like there is only one of you there is only one God”. Then ask them, “How would a person prove to the world that you exist?”

In the same way God came to the earth and spent time with man and He sent out His followers to tell the world He is real. And if you do not believe His followers than you will suffer the consequences for rejecting him. Just as if someone were to try to tell another person that you exist and they did not believe them.

When you study every religion you will find out that there has to be a true God, because so much of what they believe is the same. And when a person studies Christianity they find that all the pieces come together.

**C. If the Bible is true, than whose interpretation of
the Bible is true? Every person can see
something a different way.**

Response: The true way to interpret the Bible is the way Jesus interpreted the Bible. You can find out the

way Jesus interpreted the Bible by studying His teachings and by studying church history.

Though churches may disagree on smaller less important truths, anyone who truly studies the Bible with an open heart will see the core fundamental truths.

D. If Jesus loves everybody, than why does He still send people to hell? Humans treat their disobedient animals better than God treats His disobedient creation.

Response: God sends people to hell because they reject His salvation. Hell exists because God cannot dwell with sin. The reason a person does not understand “eternal punishment” is because they do not understand the holy perfect nature of God and the wicked rebellious heart of man.

To compare man's sin to a holy God with an animal's disobedience you would have to make the example extreme just to get close to the point. So imagine if your dog went into a nursery and grabbed little children by the neck and tore their body's limb from limb, how then would you treat that dog? And how much more severe would you punish that dog if you knew it choose to be that way.

All sin is evil and wicked in God's eyes and what makes it even worse is man chooses to be that way. And even after man is given a choice to repent and accept the new life of God, he still refuses and lives in sin. It is only then when God sends people to hell because they have willingly lived in sin and rejected the only way of salvation.

E. If God did exist why doesn't everyone believe in Him? If I were God, I would want everyone to see and believe in me.

Response: God did come in His Son Jesus and many people still did not believe in Him, they beat Him and crucified Him on a cross. And even if God did come to you, should he then come to everyone at all times? And then when man doubts, must He come again? If so, man has become the God and God has become the servant of man.

But it is the other way around; we are here to serve God. And if anyone wants to know if He is real they can seek His Son Jesus and they will find Him. And because the Holy Spirit is here we all can find God anywhere and anytime.

Resources: Read the section "Truth" in the book by Josh McDowell, "New Evidence That Demands A Verdict". Also here is a great web site www.gotquestions.org that answer many of the postmodern atheistic questions.

(2) Counter Christian (Cults) Attacks

These are groups that are considered Christian "cults" because they divert from the core fundamental truths of Christianity and teach opposing views. The most popular ones that we will be discussing in this section have been started in the last 150 years and they believe that the "original truth" was lost in Christianity sometime after the first disciples and because of certain dreams, visions, and "new revelation" their organizations have been given the "old original truths".

They feel that it is their job to teach all the fundamental Christians they are wrong. And they are actually doing a “good job” in converting people because they are growing faster than any other church in America.



The two fastest growing cults are Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons. Therefore, we must be ready to take our stand and fight against their attacks.

The easiest way to defend against their attacks is to know the real Gospel Jesus and the disciples preached 2,000 years ago. Listen to Paul as he describes a time when people will change the Gospel and say it was because of their “visions” or “angelic visitations.”

Galatians 1:6-9,

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

The simple truth is that the Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses are not “restoring” the true Gospel, but are really preaching another Gospel. No the real Gospel and you will be able to spot a fake one.

1. Jehovah Witnesses

Charles Taze Russell founded this group in the late 1800's



and now they have over 6 million members with their headquarters in Brooklyn New York. They believe they are the only true church of Jesus Christ and to be saved you must be apart of their church and be baptized by their leaders. They publish a magazine called "The Watchtower"

and the place where they meet for services is called, "The Kingdom Hall".

They have changed the Bible, the doctrine of God, the doctrine of heaven and hell, and many other fundamental doctrines. They also have suppositious practices such as they do not allow blood transfusions, they do not pledge to the American flag, and they do not celebrate any holidays including birthdays.

They believe that to be saved a person must do go works, so they believe in going door-to-door every week and living a life by the Bible and guidelines taught by the Watchtower.

They derive their name from the German translation of tetragammatron - YHWH. The tetragammatron (YHWH) is the name of God used in the Old Testament. However, the vowels were never written so none really knows how to write the name. Christian scholars filled in vowels (a & e) to make the name YaHWeH. Yahweh is translated to Jehovah in German. The Witnesses choose Jehovah to be the name they call "God".

The JW's (Jehovah Witnesses) are famous for their false prophecies about the end of the world. JW's primarily gain

their converts by grossly misinterpreting the Scriptures and convincing Roman Catholics and unformed backslidden Christians that they are the only true church. They also are one of the boldest cults in their attacks against fundamental Christianity.

Here is list of some of their main doctrines:

1. The only true version of the Bible is the Watchtower's "New World Translation"
2. There is only one God in one person called "Jehovah"
3. There is no Trinity because it is a pagan concept
4. The Holy Spirit is a force, not a person
5. Jehovah's first creation was his 'only-begotten Son' (Jesus) and then Jesus was used by Jehovah in creating all other things
6. Jesus was Michael the archangel who became a man
7. Jesus is only a "god", not God (Jehovah) in the flesh
8. Jesus did not rise from the dead in his physical body, he rose just a spirit
9. Jesus did not die on a cross but on a stake
10. Jesus began his invisible rule over the earth in 1914
11. Their church (The Watchtower Organization) is the self-proclaimed prophet of God and the only channel of God's truth, plus only their church members will be saved
12. Good works are necessary for salvation
13. The soul ceases to exist after death
14. There is no hell of fire where the wicked are punished
15. Only 144,000 Jehovah's Witness are born again and go to heaven.
16. The reward for good JW's is to be resurrected and live on the new earth.
17. The punishment for people who reject the Watchtower is their soul is destroyed and ceases to exist.

Here is a brief list of their attacks:

- A. **If fundamental Christianity is true, than why are there so many different doctrines and denominations? All JW's have the exact same doctrines and the exact same way of doing things therefore we are the true church.**

Response: First, JW's had a split in the early 1900's so they have not always been unified either. Second, even Peter and Paul disagreed on different things, that doesn't mean they were direct opposites. The majority of all Protestant churches agree on the main fundamental truths. (Galatians 2:11)

Third, the Roman Catholic Church is ruled from the top down just the JW's and they rule with an iron fist. Thus, all who disagree are excommunicated. The same is true with the thousands JW's who are forced to leave the organization because of their disagreements. This only proves there unity is a facade because they do not let people think for themselves.

B. How can Jesus be "God" when He said that "God" was His Father?

The Bible clearly teaches that there are three distinct persons that make up the Godhead. The Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Jesus and the Father are both equally God. (Matthew 28:19)

When Jesus came and took on flesh He humbled Himself to serve God the Father just as a man would. However, the Bible says that He was still equal with God. None can be equal to God but God. (Philippians 2)

The Bible also clearly teaches that Jesus is uncreated and has no beginning or end, so the only person that is uncreated and both without beginning and end is God. (Revelations 1:7-8)

Also, the three persons in the Godhead each have specific roles. The Father is the Head, but He desires

to make His Son the center of worship, and the Holy Spirit brings people to the Son. [John 17:1]

The Son loves the Father so all He wants to do is bring people to the Father and the Holy Spirit brings the Father and Son both into the hearts of every believer. [John 14:21,26]

When you study the Bible you can easily see that each person is God and they work together as one.

C. How can three people be one God? The idea of three in one comes from ancient pagan nations like Babylon and India.

Response: Though there are pagan references to three gods in one. There is no reference to three persons making one God. The trinity teaches that there is ONE GOD revealed in THREE PERSONS.

Review the above section and the other resources for the defense of the Trinity.

D. If Christianity is true, than why are there so many Christians living unchristian lives. Jehovah witnesses live pure and holy lives.

Response: It is true that many who claim to be Christians do not follow the Bible but that does not mean the Christian doctrines are wrong, it simply means the people are not living like they should.

There are many people that attend the Kingdom Hall services and do not live according to their teachings either.

Any organization that has been around for almost 2,000 years will have half hearted followers. Judge

the church by its doctrines and those who live by them and you will see their fruit is incredible and verifiable all throughout history.

Resources: The best defense against the JW's is threefold. (1) Know the history of the Christian church and that it has not been corrupted for 1,800 years (2) Know the history of the JW's and understand their many false claims and prophecies (3) Know the fundamental doctrines of the true Christian church and resist their heresy.

I would recommend that every believer own the book "Kingdom of the Cults", by Walter Martin. It is an awesome resource for everyone wanting to learn to defend against the cults. And second I would recommend watching the John Ankerberg Show at www.ankerberg.com on JW's and other cults.

2. Mormons

Joseph Smith founded the Mormon Church, also called The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, in the mid 1800's. He claimed to have been visited by Jesus, the angel Moroni (where the word "mormon" comes from), and John the Baptist. They



supposedly told him that the true church had been lost for 1,800 years and it needed to be restored.

The angel Moroni told him where to dig up ancient tablets of gold that supposedly taught that Jesus had come to North

America after His resurrection and preached to the Indians, which were actually the lost tribes of Israel.

Smith could only translate the lost golden tablets, which were written in an unknown Egyptian language, when he wore magic glasses. The translated golden tablets became known as the "Book of Mormon." However, none every saw the golden tablets or the magic glasses because God told him to destroy them after he translated the message so people would not worship them.

The Mormons recognize four main books to derive their doctrines. (1) The Bible (2) The Book of Mormon (3) The Pearl of Great Price (4) Doctrines and Covenants.

Here is a list of some of their main teachings:

1. The book of Mormon is more correct than the Bible,
2. Jesus and Satan are spirit brothers and we were all born as siblings in heaven to them both
3. God used to be a man on another planet
4. After you become a good Mormon, you have the potential of becoming a god
5. There are many gods
6. There is a mother god
7. God is married to his goddess wife and has spirit children
8. The trinity is three separate Gods: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost
9. There are three levels of heaven: telestial, terrestrial, and celestial
10. The birth of the Savior was as natural as are the births of our children; it was the result of natural action. He partook of flesh and blood - was begotten of his Father, as we were of our fathers. (Basically God the Father had sex with Mary to conceive Jesus)
11. If it had not been for Joseph Smith and the restoration, there would be no salvation.
12. There is no salvation outside the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
13. All mankind was first begotten as spirit children in heaven and then born naturally on earth,
14. A plan of salvation was needed for the people of earth so Jesus offered a plan to the Father and Satan offered a plan to the father but Jesus' plan was accepted. In effect the Devil wanted to be the

Savior of all Mankind and to "deny men their agency and to dethrone god"

15. Jesus' sacrifice was not able to cleanse us from all our sins, thus good works are necessary for salvation and there is no salvation without accepting Joseph Smith as a prophet of God.
16. A person can be baptized for a dead relative

Here is a list of some of their attacks:

A. How do you know that Bible still teaches the same original truth after it has been translated so many times and has been in the hands of evil Christians like the Roman Catholics?

You need a better "Bible" like the "Book of Mormon" which comes directly from the Prophet Joseph Smith and does not have any errors.

Response: The Christian Bible can be proven to be correct because of the 20,000 ancient manuscripts that have been found. All of today's modern versions are directly translated from these ancient texts.

However, though Smith claimed to have only needed to translate the Book of Mormon once from the magical tablets, there have been hundreds of errors found in the Book of Mormon.

The LDS church has changed these errors to cover up Smith's mistakes. But if someone owned the first version of the Book of Mormon one could see the changes from the first Book of Mormon compared to the Modern Book of Mormon.

This proves the Bible is more reliable with its 20,000 manuscripts than the book of Mormon that came from golden tablets that no longer exist.

- B. If God said we are His children, doesn't that make us "little gods"? I am a human being because my father was a human being; I will become a god, because my father is a god.**

Response: Though we are children of God, we will never be God, because there is only one God. When man was originally created he was created in the "image" of God, not as God. (Isaiah 43:10, 44:8, 45:5;21, Psalm 86:10, & 1 John 5:20)

We are God's children because He is the Father of creation and the Father of our spirits. We are like Him because we have a spirit and God is a Spirit. But we are not equal to Him. Man will always man and God will always be God. (Psalm 8:4-5)

- C. Does your church have a prophet sent by God with true apostolic authority? We have a church with a true prophet that can be traced all the way back to first restored Prophet Joseph Smith.**

Response: (A) Jesus said He would build his church with disciples, not prophets (B) Joseph Smith was a false prophet because he changed the Gospel (C) The Word of God is the final authority in the Church, not a man. (D) Yes, our disciples and Word of God can be traced back to a Prophet, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

D. Have you prayed and asked God if the Book of Mormon is true and if Joseph Smith was a true Prophet? If you do not ask, then you can never really know.

Response: (A) No, because the Bible teaches us to discern truth not by prayer, but the infallible Word of God (B) Have you searched the Bible and studied the facts that prove the Book of Mormon is a lie and Smith was a false Prophet?

(C) If not, then I will choose to follow the Bible, while choose to follow your “prayers” and a false prophet. (D) People prayed and thought David Karesh was a prophet too. Therefore, how can you tell which “new” prophet is right if the way you test them is to pray about them? You will be praying about a lot of “prophets” to see if they are true or not. (E) We use the Bible.

Resources: The best defense against the Mormons is threefold. (1) Know the history of the Christian church and that it has not been corrupted for 1,800 years (2) Know the history of the Mormon church and their errors (3) Know the fundamental doctrines of the true Christian church and resist their heresy.

I would recommend that every believer own the book “Kingdom of the Cults”, by Walter Martin. It is an awesome resource for everyone wanting to learn to defend against the cults. And second I would recommend watching the John Ankerberg Show at www.ankerberg.com on Mormons and other cults.

(3) World Religions Attacks

Every since the fall of man there have been people trying to make God in their own image and worship Him they way they felt was best. Whether it was Cain's disobedience in the way he offered up his sacrifice or the people of Israel worshipping a golden calf while Moses was on the mountain delayed with God, people have been misguided in their religious endeavours.



The Bible teaches in both the Old and New Testaments that the true God is close to all people and is waiting for us to reach out to Him. Jesus came to bring man to the Father and now it is even easier to come to the Father. But still man tries to do it his own way.

Also, the Devil desires to lead people astray so he deceives people into believing that Jesus is not the only way and that there are many other ways to God the Father. He loves to take worship from God and turn it towards himself. And when a person is not worshipping God through Jesus, they are actually giving their worship to the Devil.

In this next section we will discuss the two most popular world religions that are attacking the fundamental Christian faith. Islam and the New Age.

Acts 17:26-27,

26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

27 God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.

Psalm 96:4-5,

4 For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

1. Islam

The Islamic religion was founded in the late 500's A.D. by the Prophet Muhammad. During this time the Roman Catholic Church was doing evil things to the Arab people of the Middle East and the Christian



faith was not readily available to the people because most of the church was full of evil and heresy [study the history of Roman Catholic Church and the Dark Ages to learn more].

Muhammad was looking for answers about God because he could not believe a loving God would mistreat people the way the Roman Catholics were. At that time he supposedly received a visit from the angel Gabriel and then was orally given the Koran, which is the holiest book of Islam.

From that time on Muhammad began to unify the Arab people and resist the European settlements and began to fight in many wars. Eventually, he regained much of the Middle East back from the Europeans and began to make the new religion of Islam the state religion of every newly established country.

Now today some 1500 years later Islam is the second largest religion with over 1.4 billion followers. And though some Muslims believe in peace, many still believe it is their God given duty to fight and kill Christians because they believe Christians are pagans who have deceived the world and have taken true worship away from the one God Allah and turned it towards Jesus, who was just a prophet.

The main books for the Muslims are (1) The Koran (2) The Old Testament (3) The Hadith

Here are some of their main doctrines:

1. There is only one God Allah
2. Muhammad is the last and greatest Prophet of Allah
3. The Koran is the last and greatest word of Allah
4. A Muslim must live by the Five Pillars of Islam
 - a. His confession (Shahada), "There is no true God except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."
 - b. Prayer (Salat): Pray five times a day facing Mecca.
 - c. Fasting (Saum): Must fast during the month of Ramadan.
 - d. Alms Giving (Zakat): Must give to the poor.
 - e. Pilgrimage (Hajj): Must make at least one trip to Mecca.
5. Allah will judge everyone one day and you can only be saved if your good deeds out way your bad
6. Paradise is for the good Muslim and Hell is for the unbeliever

Here is a list of some of their most popular attacks:

A. How can Jesus be God, when the Bible says God is a Spirit, and Jesus had a body?

Response: Here is where once again you must know the defense of the trinity and the deity of Jesus. Jesus is God the Son, not God the Father. God the Son and God the Father are two separate persons.

The trinity teaches that God is three different people that make one God. So Jesus can have a body and be

on earth and even have his body be crucified and killed, while the Father is a Spirit in heaven on the throne.

The whole point is God is not like man He is God. God has a nature that is different than man. The Bible also says His nature is beyond our mind to figure out. [Psalm 89:6 & Isaiah 46:5]

All we have to do is look to Jesus and see that He claimed to be God, He forgave sins like God, and others worshipped Him as God. Jesus is God and so is the Father and the Holy Spirit. They share one name, but there are three separate people. [Matthew 28:19]

B. How do you know you have the Word of God because the Bible has been changed so many times? We have just one Koran that has never been changed it is perfect and flawless.

Response: Once again here is where you must know the history of the Bible and that its 20,000 manuscripts support its accurate translation.

The Muslims however destroyed all their manuscripts in the 600's so there would be no contradictions in their manuscripts. Thus, they only have one version because they burned the rest. Christians have different versions because scholars continually find new manuscripts and try to make the translation as close to the original as possible.

However, the Muslim will never know what was the exact wording of the Koran because they burned all the different manuscripts except for the one they choose to be the "official Koran".

C. How can you say Christianity is true when Christians have done a lot of evil in history?

Response: Christianity is true because of what Jesus said, not because of how supposed Christians have lived. We admit that many different “Christian Religions” have oppressed the world, but true Christians live by the Bible and hate evil.

Just like there are two main branches in Islam- Sunni and Shiite, there are two main branches in Christianity- Catholic and Protestant. We as Protestants do not agree with what the Catholic Church has done in the past.

D. How can you prove Jesus died on the cross and rose again from the dead? We believe someone else was killed and his life was spared and that he was taken to heaven like Elijah.

Response: The resurrection of Jesus is the most verified and provable miracle in the Bible and in all of history. All one has to do is study the history of the church and one will find that over 500 people saw the resurrected Lord and died a gruesome death because of what they testified they saw.

Also, if Jesus did not die on the cross than all the prophecies were false and the Gospels are lies. Yet, the truth is the Gospels are true and history proves that Jesus did in fact die on a cross and rise again from the dead, and He is the Son of God.

Look to the history of Jesus’ day and you see that He was crucified and they could never find His body.

Resources: The best defense against the attacks of Islam is threefold. (1) Know the history of the Christian church (2) Know the history of Islam and their errors concerning God (3) Know the fundamental doctrines of the true Christian church and resist their heresy.

I would recommend that every believer own a book on other religions of the world. Josh McDowell has a great book called "A Ready Defense". It is an awesome resource for everyone wanting to learn to defend against the attacks of world religions. And second I would recommend watching the John Ankerberg Show at www.ankerberg.com on Islam.

2. New Age Religions

The Western world has recently been infiltrated with the old religious ideals of the orient. Many new religions are starting in America with "self-proclaimed" gurus and supposed enlightened sages. These men (and some women) claim to be another Jesus, teaching that all people are gods and that if they look within themselves they will find their true "god-self".



I call this New Age Philosophy "buffet style religion". Meaning, you can take a little Buddha, a little Jesus and a little of the Hindu gods and there you have your "spiritual meal". Though every New Age religion has its own unique qualities they do share many things in common. Here is a list of some of the New Religions that believe basically in "buffet style religion": Adi Da, Unitarian Church, Christian Science, Hare Krishna's, Sun Myung Moon,

Here is a list of some of their main beliefs:

1. God is a force not a person
2. Jesus was just a man in touch with His “god-self” and everyone has a “god-self” on the inside
3. When you die you go back to the “light or energy of god” and are then can be reincarnated as a human, an alien, a plant or an animal.
4. There is truth in every religion, the main point is to love everyone and not to judge other people’s belief
5. There no heaven or hell, just light and darkness, and you will continue to be reincarnated until you can achieve oneness with your “god-self” and be brought back to the light of God.
6. Mediation and yoga are better forms of prayer
7. There are many “god men” who walk among us and they are called, “gurus”, “christ’s”, or “enlightened ones”.
8. The main moral code is don’t harm others, but live in love.

Here are some of their main attacks:

A. Didn’t Jesus say the “kingdom of God” was within all of us? We believe that God is literally in all of us and that makes us all gods.

Response: Jesus taught that all men were sinners on the inside and needed to repent. He never taught that people were “good” on the inside or that they were “little gods”. (Mark 6:12 & Luke 13:3)

Jesus never taught that people had the kingdom until there were “born again” or “saved”. He taught that until people were “born again” there were children of the devil. Therefore, Jesus did not teach that everyone was a child of God. (John 8:44)

And Jesus never taught God was a force living on the inside of man, but that God was revealed in three real people- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There are no other gods beside the one God and there are

no other persons who are other than the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

And when Jesus came to earth He was called, “the only begotten Son of God”, meaning He is a one of a kind. There are no other God men. (John 1:1,14-16)

B. Jesus said we had to be “born-again” and we believe that means to be reincarnated.

Response: This is a distortion of that verse. Jesus never taught reincarnation, but rather He taught everyone is given one life to live for God. (Luke 16:22)

Jesus did teach that after Judgment Day everyone would get a new body, some for eternal joy on the new earth, others for eternal torment in the lake of fire. (John 5:29)

Jesus taught that the soul of man would literally live forever either with Him or in the lake of fire. Hell is a literally place and so is heaven. Choose to accept Jesus so you can go to heaven with Him.

C. Have you ever studied other religions and seen the vast amount of similarities? Wouldn't it be evil and selfish of God to say only Jesus was a good man? What about Buddha, Krishna, and Gandhi?

Response: Jesus clearly taught that the other ways to God were evil and brought by false prophets, which were thieves and liars. (John 10:1-11) He said that He was literally the only way to the Father and none would get to heaven but through Him. (John 14:6)

He also said that He was the One and Only Judge that would judge the entire world and that every knee would bow before His throne. [Matthew 25:31-21]

And lastly, His death on the cross is the only way of salvation, there is no other way to get to heaven accept through the acceptance of the Cross of Jesus Christ. [Acts 4:12]

Resources: The best defense against the New Age attacks is threefold. (1) Know the history of the Christian church and that it has not been corrupted for 1,800 years (2) Know little of the history of the religion your talking to (3) Know the fundamental doctrines of the true Christian church and resist their heresy.

I would recommend that every believer own the book "Kingdom of the Cults", by Walter Martin. It is an awesome resource for everyone wanting to learn to defend against the New Age cults. And second I would recommend watching the John Ankerberg Show at www.ankerberg.com on New Age Religions.

Go Defend the Faith!!

Here is a list of things to do to help you defend your faith:

1. Spend time in private prayer and in study to learn thoroughly why you believe what you believe.
2. Learn church history and the basic outline of how Christianity has been preserved throughout the ages.
3. Listen and read Christian scholars work so that you can increase in your knowledge about the Bible, other religions, and fundamental doctrines.

4. When witnessing to a person who is attacking the Christian faith, remember your battle is not against them, but the devil, so be patient in kind in your defense. But also remember to be bold and straightforward with your beliefs.
5. When you're witnessing to person from another religion, try to spend some time studying what they believe. And if you do not know an answer to their questions, just tell you will study and get back to them.
6. Always pray that God will use to preach the Word of God with power, not just words.
7. Learn to use the Internet and the resources mentioned in the lesson so you can stay informed. Buy a few of the books mentioned so you can always be ready to answer any question others may have! [Don't try to always relay on your pastor!]

Questions:

1. How is Christianity being attacked? List and explain three ways.
2. What are the "fundamental" Christian doctrines? Briefly explain each one.

7. Name three false doctrines of the Mormons and the Scripture to refute.

8. Explain why Mohammad thought God could not be in Christianity.

9. Name and explain two Muslim Pillars.

10. Refute three of the New Age doctrines with Scripture.

11. Write a list of resources that you are going to buy.

12. Log the time spent in studying other religions on the web. Also, note the TV shows you watched from the John Ankerberg Show.

LESSON 12

Disciples Make Other Disciples

Well Done My Good and Faithful Servant

Since you have made it this far into the process of becoming a leader and a true follower of Jesus Christ I want to personally congratulate you and commend you for your hard work and dedication to living a life like Jesus and walking worthy of your calling.



This last section of the booklet is here to give you a clear understanding of what you are now commanded to do as a true disciple of Jesus Christ. The Bible says that to the person whom much is given, much is required. (Luke 12:48) You have been given much through training, mentorship, on-hands experience, fasting & praying, impartation, and countless hours of studying.

Now it is time to put all you have been given into practice so that when your life is over you can hear these words from Jesus found in **Matthew 25:21**, *“Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”*

Life is not about earthly treasures that rust and wither away, but rather it is about heavenly treasures that will last forever

in the presence of God. When you get to heaven you will not talk about your job or your favorite sports team or the money you had and the house you lived in, but rather you will talk about the things you did on earth for the Lord and His Glorious Gospel.

When Jesus was in heaven He had riches, power, and fame, but He left it all to have souls in His everlasting kingdom. Today decide that you will not pursue riches, power, and fame, but rather you will live your life to make other disciples and bring souls with you to heaven!!

You have already learned of the importance of the church so now I will discuss specifically how Metro Praise will help you in fulfilling your God-given calling to be a disciple that makes other disciples. You will first learn the “vision” of Metro Praise, second you will be instructed in the “strategy” of the church, and lastly you will be guided into the “structure” of this great army of disciples.

Metro Praise’s Vision - “Love God and Love People”

The word “vision” means “goal or purpose”. The goal and purpose of Metro Praise is to “Love God and Love People”. As the Pastoral Elder and founder of Metro Praise I received the vision for our church directly from the words of Jesus Himself. He said that loving God and loving people were the greatest commands given by God.

Luke 10:25-28,

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

27 He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind';

and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

Therefore, as a disciple of Jesus Christ you are commanded to love God with all your heart and to love your neighbor as yourself. Remember that God would never ask us to do something that we could not do. Consequently, what He commands us to do in life we should strive earnestly to accomplish. And we know that we do not do it on our own, but rather the Holy Spirit gives us the power, energy, and ability to do all things that please God!! (Philippians 4:13) Let us now look at what it means to "Love God and Love People".

Love God: *To worship and adore God with passion.*

True love for God is to desire Him more than anyone else in the universe and to love and adore Him with everything in your body, soul, and spirit in total abandonment and surrender. You were made to worship God. You were made to laugh, cry, dance, and shout in His presence. Everything about you was made to worship God; your emotions, your mind and your thoughts, your spirit and your will, everything that makes you who you are is there to be given to back to God in wonderful intimate worship.

Long after you die and are in heaven, you will still be worshipping God. Out of all the things that John saw in heaven the most powerful scenes are those that describe the passionate worship of God in His glorious presence with all His creation.

Revelations 5:11-14,

11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" 14 The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

You can also see the example of heart felt passionate worship in the life of David. The Bible records that when David was bringing in the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem that he danced with all of his might while praising God and made a fool of himself in the eyes of the people and even in his own eyes. Why? Because he loved God so much he did not care what others thought about him, he just wanted to adore God with all of his might in powerful praise and worship.

2 Samuel 6:5,14-15,

5 David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals.

14 David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, 15 while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets.

He then made the Levites the worship leaders and musicians of the new temple. He assigned them to play and make music to the Lord all day and all night. They were instructed to write songs and lead the people in praise and worship unto God. This type of 24/7 worship has also been known as "Davidic Worship".

1 Chronicles 25:1a,6-7,

1 David, together with the commanders of the army, set apart some of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals...

6 All these men were under the supervision of their fathers for the music of the temple of the LORD, with cymbals, lyres and harps, for the ministry at the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman were under the supervision of the king. 7 Along with their

relatives—all of them trained and skilled in music for the LORD - they numbered 288.

The heart of worship does not stop with David it continues all the way to today. When Jesus was on the earth He taught the woman at the well that she did not have to worship God in Jerusalem in the Temple of David, but that she could worship God wherever she wanted, because God was looking for worshippers who would worship Him not in a certain building, but rather in spirit and in truth.

You do not only have to worship God in church on Sundays, but you can worship God in your home, in your car, wherever you desire!! God is looking for people to come into His presence and spend their life loving and adoring Him.

John 4:23-24,

23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

God loves you so much!! Make a choice to love Him back in heartfelt worship. Think of your life like a love story between you and God. You went away, you cheated on Him, but He did not give up on you, He pursued you and brought you back to Him. Why? Because His love for you is so great, His love is filled with abounding and overflowing grace and mercy.

Now everyday your response to His proposal and actions of love determines whether the love story has a happy or sad ending. If you reject God and love other things in life more than Him, you will spend eternity in hell separated from the love of God. But if you choose Him, you will spend forever in His presence falling deeper and deeper in love with Him. Therefore, do not let anything ever take away your love for God.

Please read this passage in Song of Solomon and make time today to “chase God” and spend time in His presence falling madly in love with Jesus.

Song of Solomon 5:2-8, “Love Sick for Jesus”

2 I slept but my heart was awake. Listen! My lover is knocking: “Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one. My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night.”

3 I have taken off my robe— must I put it on again? I have washed my feet— must I soil them again? 4 My lover thrust his hand through the latch-opening; my heart began to pound for him.

5 I arose to open for my lover, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with flowing myrrh, on the handles of the lock. 6 I opened for my lover, but my lover had left; he was gone. My heart sank at his departure.

I looked for him but did not find him. I called him but he did not answer.

7 The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city. They beat me, they bruised me; they took away my cloak, those watchmen of the walls! 8 O daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you— if you find my lover, what will you tell him? Tell him I am “faint with love”. [*“love sick”*]

Love God: *True love for God is to obey His commands.*

Once you settle in your heart that loving God is not a “chore” or something that you are “made to do”, you will be able to speak Jesus’ love language with ease. Every person has a love language, it is a way they speak and receive love. Some people show their love by buying gifts and doing good things. Others receive love best when they are shown attention and are given quality time.

The language of love that Jesus speaks more than any thing is OBEDIENCE. If a person really wants to show Jesus that they

are passionately in love with Him, the best way is to obey His commands.

Here is a list of Scriptures that teach that true love for God is to obey His commands.

1. **Deuteronomy 11:1**, "Love the LORD your God and keep his requirements, his decrees, his laws and his commands always."
2. **Deuteronomy 30:15-16**, "15 See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. 16 For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess."
3. **John 14:15**, "If you love me, you will obey what I command."
4. **John 14:23**, "Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."
5. **1 John 2:3-4**, "3 We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. 4 The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him."
6. **1 John 5:3**, "This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome"



Some think that the only commands that Jesus gave were not to steal and murder people. When you ask them on the streets if they follow God's commandments they will say, "Yes. I don't kill anybody or commit crimes." They act as if the only thing God wants them to do in life is not be a murderer or a criminal.

Though it is true there are laws against stealing and murder, those types of laws could be summed up as

“God’s Don’ts”, but there are literally hundreds of more laws that can be classified as “God’s Do’s”. And God is more concerned with what the disciple does, than what he doesn’t do.

For example, imagine if you got a new job working at a law firm as a lawyer’s assistant. On your first day your boss comes to you and brings you into a room with five folder cabinets and they are filled with hundred of folders. He then says to you, “Take out all these files and put them back in alphabetical order.”

Now imagine he comes back a few hours later and sees you sitting down in a chair looking confident as if you have done your job in excellence. Your boss says, “Have you finished rearranging all the folders?” And you answer, “No.” He then says back, “What have you done with all your time?” And you say, “Well, I haven’t murdered anybody and I haven’t lied about anything. I was thinking about stealing some money, but I didn’t do that either.”

At that point you would probably be fired because you were hired to do more than just not murder or steal from the company. Now apply that lesson to you working for Jesus as His disciple. He has asked you to do many things in life. He has asked you to do more than just not kill anyone.

He has commanded you to pray, study your Bible, make new disciples, cast out devils, fulfill your purpose, and so much more. Therefore, how do you think Jesus will react on Judgment Day when He asks you what did you do with your life and all you can say is, “Well, I didn’t kill anybody”?

Here is a list of commands in four different categories that apply to the disciple’s life.

Four Categories of Christian Law

1. Laws That Pertain to God

- a. Love God more than family and your own life
- b. Put God first in all you do
- c. Do not mock God or take His name in vain
- d. Fear and respect the Lord
- e. Spend time in worship and praise His name

2. Laws That Pertain to Christian Devotion

- a. Repent and be saved/born again
- b. Forsake all for Jesus
- c. Live a life of prayer & Study the Word of God
- d. Be a witness with signs following
- e. Be a worshipper
- f. Be a disciple and leader
- g. Be a part of the church
- h. Make a difference for God
- i. Be a servant & help others

3. Laws That Pertain to Moral Conduct

- a. Follow the 10 Commandments
- b. Watch your words
- c. Bless people and encourage others
- d. Be a tither and a giver
- e. Live sexually pure
- f. Do not love the world, but rather love the Father
- g. Do not get drunk but be sober minded
- h. Do not be easily angered, but be patient
- i. Do not live with bitterness, but rather forgive
- j. Have a renewed mind and think pure thoughts

4. Laws That Pertain to Loving People

- a. Forgive others of their sin
- b. Help people in time of need
- c. Pray for people to be blessed
- d. Do unto them as you would have them do unto you

Of course this list is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather just a summary of the main laws that the New Testament Christian should follow.

Here are the Scripture references for where these laws can be found throughout the Bible.

1. **10 Commandments:** Deuteronomy 5
2. **Beatitudes:** Matthew 5-7
3. **Jesus' Various Teachings:** Mark 1:15, John 3, Luke 9:23; 16:13 & 22:6
4. **Deeds of the Flesh:** Galatians 5:19-21
5. **Paul's Multiple Lists of Christian Conduct:** Romans 1, Ephesians 4:23-5:6, Colossians 3:1-10, 1 Corinthians 6:9 & 2 Timothy 3:1-5

Now that you have the basic understanding that to love God is to keep His commands and that His commands call disciples to action, go out today and show the world your love for God is more than just a “feeling”, but it is a life changing force!

Love People: *To love people is to truly help them in their times of need.*

Jesus' ministry was marked with compassion. Everywhere He went He was always helping people in their times of need. If they were sick, He would heal them. If they were hungry, He would feed them. If they were burdened with sin, He would forgive them. Jesus always met the needs of hurting people.

Jesus has now commanded you to do the same as He did. The second greatest command is to “Love People”. And to love people is to help them in their time of need.

Read this passage of Scripture and see if you can understand how disciples are to love people in the same way Jesus loved us when He died on the cross for our greatest need- salvation.

1 John 3:16-18,

16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?

18 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

Can you see how the true disciple is to REALLY love his or her neighbor? We are to love with our actions. We are to show our love to others by meeting their needs.

Sure some people may try to take advantage of our generosity, but unthankful greedy manipulating people didn't stop Jesus from going to the cross. He knew that there would be people who would really be thankful and appreciative of His sacrifice. And for those people Jesus gave all He had.

When giving to people you must use wisdom. I do not give money to homeless people, but I will spend money so they can get food or join a Christian rehab. And when people come to me at church and ask for me to pay their bills, I don't max out the church credit card so they can continue in their bad spending habits, but I do spend time helping them budget their money and teach them to start over.

Also, Jesus didn't ask one person to meet all the needs of the world. He has simply asked all of us to do our part. For example at our church we have three different ministries people can give their offerings to and see good fruit. Here is our list of good solid ministries.

1. **Teisa Miller, Missionary to Africa:** A person can give financially so that Teisa can feed and provide for over 500 orphans in Mozambique Africa.
2. **Adopt-A-Block:** This ministry goes out into different neighborhoods and serves the poor, helps the homeless, and starts community programs.

3. **Elevate Youth Ministry:** People can give to our youth ministry so that students that do not have Christian families can get rides to church in our van, go on mission trips, and receive free Bibles.

These are just a few of the type of ways we as disciples can meet the needs of others. I want to challenge you to pray and ask God what ministries you can support and help meet the needs of others.

Though you may not be able to meet the needs of the whole world, you can meet the needs of somebody and it will mean the whole world to them. And remember, it is not only important to give your money, but also your time. Jesus did not just give us “blessings”, He gave us His life.

Please take time to read the story of the “Good Samaritan” found in ***Luke 10:25-37***.

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" 27 He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself."

28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." 29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a



Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" 37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

Notice how Jesus challenged the man to not only be willing to give money, but to take time to personally help another person in need. Jews and Samaritans used to hate each other. But Jesus chose them in the story to prove it doesn't matter what people's skin color is or what part of town they live in or whether they are homosexual or straight, when we see people in need we are commanded to reach out to them and meet their needs.

Now take time to read how the early church took care of each other and the communities they lived in.

Acts 2:44-45,

44 All the believers were together and had everything in common.
45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

Acts 4:32-37,

32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. 33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.

34 There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the

money from the sales ³⁵and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

³⁶ Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), ³⁷ sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

Do you see how they were passionate about helping others and meeting other's needs? At the end of chapter four, Luke (the writer of Acts) mentions a person by the name of, "Joseph", and writes that he sold land that he owned and gave it to the church. ISN'T THAT AMAZING!?!?!?

I pray that the church would love people like that today. I challenge you to love people like Jesus loved you and how the early church loved their community. Do not just love with words, but love with action. Go out and begin to meet someone else's needs. Here are some other Scriptures that also teaches us about giving to the poor: Matthew 25:31-46, Proverbs 19:17, & James 1:27.

I would like to end this section on loving people with a true story about a man in history who loved Jews and helped save many of theirs lives during the Nazi Holocaust.

His name was Oskar Schindler and he lived in Poland during World War II. He secretly bought Jewish people's freedom and helped them move away from German held territories. Though he was a rich man, at the end of the war he was poor because he gave all he had to help over a 1,000 Jews live and avoid the Nazi death camps.

In the movie, "Schindler's List", he is shown at the end of the war taking off his watch and saying, "Just one more, this watch could have helped me buy just one more Jewish person's freedom. I wish I could have saved just one more."

Over three million Jews lost their lives during the holocaust, and he was only able to save 1,000. What if others would have done the same? How many more could have been

spared. Thank God for what Oskar Schindler did, but I wonder how many others just sat by and did nothing?

How much more valuable is the eternal soul of just one person? Today there are countless of millions of souls headed for eternal hell right now. How much are you willing to give so that others can know Jesus? Meeting people's needs is the greatest way to help them receive the Gospel.

I end this section with this thought... "Just one more."

Love People: *To love people is to preach the Gospel to them so that they might be saved.*

Loving people goes beyond just meeting their physical and emotional needs. To truly love people like Jesus you must be willing to preach the message of the Gospel to them so that they might be saved.

1 Corinthians 9:16,

Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

Take for example if you were sick and went to the doctor for help. And after examining you he found out that you had a brain tumor that if left alone would lead to your death in less than three months. But with proper help and medicine you could live and be healed.

Choose from the list of three doctors who you would like your doctor to be.

1. **Doctor Feel Good:** "Doctor Feel Good" is only concerned about you "feeling" good. So he will not



tell you that you have a tumor, because you will not feel good, but you will feel sad and upset. So instead of telling you the truth he just says, “Good news, your okay. You do not have anything wrong with you, go home and enjoy the day. Just take some aspirin if you feel sick, because there is nothing really wrong with you.”

So “Doctor Feel Good” lets you leave his office without hearing the truth about your sickness and the help that you could receive, because he doesn’t want to make you “feel bad”.

2. **Doctor Angry:** “Doctor Angry” is a very angry doctor because all the people that come to him always have something wrong with them and now every time some one comes to him sick he just yells and screams at them. So Doctor Angry says, “You have a tumor and it’s going to kill you and its all your fault. You are going to die in less than three months so get ready to suffer and die a horrible death!”

Because “Dr. Angry” is so upset he never tells you the other half of the examination and that with proper help you can be healed, he only yells and screams at you then kicks you out of his office.

3. **Doctor Truth:** “Doctor Truth” is simply focused on the truth. He comes in and tells you the truth with honesty and respect. He says to you, “The reason why you are sick is because you have a brain tumor. If you do not get help you will probably die in less than three months. But if you are willing to receive treatment you can most likely be healthy in just a few weeks.”

He then talks to you about the treatments you will undergo and explains the best way to cope with the tumor. At the end of the appointment he reassures you of the truth and focuses on the hope of you getting better.

Which doctor would you like to have? Doctor Truth. Why? Because he simply tells you the truth and helps you get better. Now let us apply this example to preaching the gospel.

First, some people want to be like “Doctor Feel Good” and only preach to people what “feels good”. They do not tell people that they are under the wrath of God and that if they were to die without real repentance they would spend eternity in hell.

All they do is try to be nice to people and let them believe that they are going to heaven. But in actuality they are doing the lost person a great disservice. Because they are unwilling to confront people and risk making them “feel bad” about their life, they let them go to hell “feeling good”.

Jeremiah 8:11-12,

11 They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. "Peace, peace," they say, when there is no peace. 12 Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all; they do not even know how to blush. So they will fall among the fallen; they will be brought down when they are punished, says the LORD.

When you go out and preach the gospel you cannot be focused on people's feelings. You must be focused on the truth. It would be better for someone to get mad and offended at your preaching but to hear the truth, than to let them walk away feeling good thinking that they are going to heaven, when in actuality they are going to hell.

Luke 6:26,

“Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets.”

Philippians 1:20,

“I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.”

Acts 9:29,

“He talked and debated with the Grecian Jews, but they tried to kill him.”

Matthew 4:17,

“From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."”

Second, “Doctor Angry” is only focused on the problem and offers no solution. These are the type of preachers that go out on the streets and just yell at everybody and tell them they are going to hell. They see gay people and they yell out, “All gay people are going to HELL!!” They are so focused on people’s sin that they never offer someone a solution to sin—Jesus Christ.

When you are preaching the gospel you cannot let your hatred towards sin result in you hating people. You must learn to hate the sin, but to love the sinner. The Bible says that Jesus did not come into the world to condemn the world, but to save it. Yes, people need to know the truth about their sins, but they also need to hear the truth about God’s love and forgiveness through Jesus’ death on the cross.

Matthew 9:35-38,

35 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Jude 1:22-23,

22 Be merciful to those who doubt; 23 snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

John 3:16-17,

16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

And lastly, “Doctor Truth” is the best doctor because he just focuses on the truth. He is able to talk about the sickness and the cure with respect and honesty because he is more concerned with the truth than feelings. He is better than “Doctor Feel Good” because he tells the truth about why you are sick and he is better than “Doctor Angry” because he does not just focus on the sickness, but he also focuses on the cure.

Jesus was “Doctor Truth”. He never “sugar coated” His message to make people feel good and at the same time He never was angry with people just because they had sin. Jesus knew how to preach to people with conviction and strong language about their sins and at the same time He knew how to be kind, loving and forgiving with those who wanted to be cured.

Today be a “Doctor Truth” when you preach the gospel. Be a preacher that not only sees people’s sin, but also sees the cure found in Jesus. Do not be afraid to offend people or hurt their feelings because you talk about heaven and hell and their sinful nature. But be compassionate and remember that you were also once a sinner damned to hell before you accepted Jesus into your life.

Here are some Scriptures that will help remind you of how to love people even when you are preaching the truth to them.

John 1:14,

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Note: Notice how Jesus came with both “grace” and “truth”. He not only told people the truth, but He also gave them grace.

Matthew 10:5-8 & 17-23,

5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions... 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. 7 As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

17 "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

21 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 22 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. 23 When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Metro Praise's Strategy: *CONNECT, MENTOR, & SEND.*

Now we will discuss the three-fold strategy of Metro Praise. These three parts work together to accomplish the vision of loving God and loving people. By following these three easy steps every person in Metro Praise can be a true disciple of Jesus Christ and do the work of the ministry.

Here are the purposes for each step in the strategy:

Connect: This step connects people to Jesus and to the church. Here people get saved and begin to take the "Seven Steps to Spiritual Growth" class, also known as "Class 101".

Mentor: During this step the new disciple is ready to be trained in being a leader and a minister in God's kingdom.

Here they take the “Disciples Make Disciples” class, also known as “Class 201”.

Send: At this step the trained disciple is now ready to be in ministry and begin to make new disciples. At this stage they will begin to start a small group, a new ministry, and assist the church by winning the lost and making new disciples.



Notice that above Metro Praise’s Strategy our “Goal” is to reach 100,000 souls in Chicago with 50 churches and plant 500 churches around the world. The way we expect to accomplish this great goal is by following the three-step strategy.

Now I will begin to teach the importance of each of the three steps. You will learn that this strategy can be found all throughout the Bible and is anointed by God to produce much fruit.

Easy as 1-2-3!! Elisha-Elijah, Peter-Jesus, and Timothy-Paul

I have chosen three examples in the Bible to show the strategy at work in people's lives. Elisha was with Elijah in the Old Testament, Peter was with Jesus in the New Testament, and Timothy was with Paul in the New Testament during the early church. Each one of these examples show how God used the method of CONNECT, MENTOR, and SEND.

All the people being used as an example had a mentor that God sent to them to be a tool in which God could use to train them up and send them out. Some people think they can do it all by themselves as long as they have God. But that is not the pattern of the Bible. God always uses people to be His instruments in training others.

Please look at the chart below and read each Scripture as it pertains to each person and each step of the strategy.

Three Step Strategy	Elisha was Mentored by Elijah	Peter was Mentored by Jesus	Timothy was Mentored by Paul
CONNECT	1 Kings 19:19-21	Matthew 4:13-20	Acts 16:1-3
MENTOR	2 Kings 3:11	Mark 3:14	1 Corinthians 4:17
SEND	2 Kings 2:13-14	Matthew 28:18-20	1 Timothy 1:3-5

CONNECT: *To connect to God, to remain connected, and to be connected to a good church.*

Connect simply means to “bring two or more things together”. The way the Bible wants you to connect is to first connect to God in a personal relationship with Him. Second, the Bible teaches us that we are to always remain connected because it is a day-to-day effort. And lastly, you are to be connected to a good church, which is the Body of Christ.

Here is a list of Scriptures that teach the importance of connecting to God the Biblical way.

1. **Get Connected to God:** Colossians 1:21-23
2. **Remain Connected to God:** John 15:1-8
3. **Get Connected to a Good Church:** Acts 2:42-47

MENTOR: *To be in a relationship that challenges you to be teachable, accountable, a servant, and stay hungry for God.*

To be a disciple means to be “trained to live like Jesus”. To be trained is the same as being mentored. Jesus never intended people to be disciples all by themselves. He set up a plan that would allow each and every believer the opportunity to be individually mentored.

The easiest way to see this plan in action is to look at the strategy of Jesus when He was on earth establishing His church. Though Jesus loved the whole world, He knew that the most effective way to reach the world would be to have meaningful relationships with just a few people that then could go out and teach others. Therefore, Jesus chose twelve men to go with Him everywhere He went for three years.

After those three years He sent them out to do the very same thing. Within a hundred years after Jesus went back to heaven the whole known world knew about Jesus. They did not have cars, TV, Internet, satellite, planes, or the like. But they had an intense desire to multiply and reproduce other disciples like themselves. Nothing could stop them. And within the first 300 hundred years of Christianity they turned every major nation into a Christian nation, including the Roman Empire.

But it came at a price. They had to be willing to lay down their lives; many of the disciples in the first three centuries died a martyr's death. Yet they did not stop. However in America today, Christianity is a dying religion because people cannot dedicate their life to Jesus and the Gospel like the Christians of the first century. Today in the 21st century many so-called Christians are lazy and only desire comfort and compromise. Therefore, you must decide to live like the 1st century church instead of the 21st century church.

Here are four attributes you must have if you want to be mentored by another disciple and live the life of a "world changer and history maker".

1. **You Must Be Teachable:** 2 Timothy 2:1-2
2. **You Must Be Accountable:** 1 Corinthians 4:8-21
3. **You Must Be a Servant:** Philippians 2:19-22
4. **You Must Hunger For More of God:** John 6:66-69

Note: People are not perfect, and when you are being discipled by a leader, your leader will not be perfect either, but they should be passionate and worthy of respect. And remember, one day very soon you will be making disciples yourself and they will be looking to you. So treat your leader like the way you will want to be treated one day. (Review Lesson 4, "Disciples are Humble")

SEND: *To be sent out with a vision of the Lord, the harvest, the need, and your ministry.*

After you have connected to God and the church and then have been mentored by another strong disciple, you are now ready to be sent out so the cycle can continue. It is now your calling to go out and find new people and connect them to Jesus and to the church and then begin to mentor them so that they can be a true disciple of Jesus like you.

And when you go you should always have a vision of why you are a leader and why it is important to remain a leader that produces good fruit.

Here is a list of four things that you should always remember when you are serving the Lord in ministry and making new disciples.

1. **Always See the Lord:** Remember that you are doing your work for the Lord first, not people. So no matter how hard it gets or how people treat you, always remember to see the Lord. Isaiah 6:1-9.
2. **Always See the Harvest:** Always look to the lost in the world. Maybe someone you preach to rejects the gospel, but remember there are millions more to preach to. Even if someone you are discipling quits and gives up, make sure that you never quit. Because if you do not give up eventually you will see people learn to live like Jesus. John 4:34-38.
3. **Always See the Need:** Never take your eyes off of the need to preach the gospel. If you do not tell the people around you, then who will tell them? Remember that there is a real devil determined to bring as many souls as he can to hell with him. Believe that God is using you to make a difference. Romans 10:14-15
4. **Always See Your Ministry:** Remember what the Lord called you to do and do it. Never quit. Never give up. Remain faithful and know that what He said He will do, He will surely do. You do have a ministry and a calling, make sure everyday to remember it was God who called and it is God who will strengthen you to accomplish your purpose. 1 Corinthians 5:17-21

2 Timothy 2:2,

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”

Structure: *Metro Praise uses a ten-fold ministry structure found in Acts 2:42-47.*

You have learned the vision of Metro Praise, the strategy, and now you will learn the “structure” of the church. The structure is what holds everything together and makes the vision visible for all to see. The structure provides a method in which the strategy and the vision can be accomplished.

Here at Metro Praise we use ten main ministries to make the visible structure of the church. Here are the verses in which we find the basis for all of our ministries:

Acts 2:42-47,

42 “They devoted themselves to the Apostles’ teaching (Discipleship/Bible College) and to the fellowship (Fellowship), to the breaking of bread and to prayer (Prayer Meetings). 43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the Apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common.

45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need (Community Service). 46 Everyday they continued to together in the temple courts (Services). They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts (Small Groups), 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved (Evangelism/Church Planting/Mission Trips).”

Here is a list of each of the ministries found in the structure with a brief explanation next to it.

1. **Services:** A time of fellowship, prayer, worship, preaching, and signs and wonders.
2. **Small Groups:** A time of fellowship and Bible study in the home.
3. **Evangelism:** A time of preaching God's Word to the lost.
4. **Discipleship:** A time of being mentored and disciplined to live like Jesus in the 101 and 201 classes.
5. **Fellowship:** A time to get together and have fun and fellowship.
6. **Community Service:** A time to serve the community with various programs such "After School Programs", "Adult Learning Center", and "English as a Second Language".
7. **Prayer Meetings:** A time to prayer and worship God 24/7 in the church where the doors are always open.
8. **Bible College:** A time to get trained to be a fulltime servant of the Lord.
9. **Church Planting:** A time to plant new churches in America and around the world.
10. **Mission Trips:** A time to go to other countries and preach the Gospel.

All the functions of Metro Praise can fit into these ten main categories. We desire to have hundreds of different ministries that develop out of this structure. Here is just an example of all the things we can do within this structure.

1. Choir Ministry
2. Worship Band Ministry
3. Food Bank & Clothing Ministry
4. Bus Ministry

5. Campus Clubs
6. Gym and Community Center
7. Homeless Ministry
8. Park Outreaches
9. Special Event Outreaches
10. Retreats & Learning Seminars
11. Bible College
12. Christian School K-12th grade
13. TV Ministry
14. Multi-Cultural/Language Churches
15. Muslim Outreaches
16. A ministry you can start _____

Go!!! Now It's Your Turn To Turn the World Upside Down!!

Praise the LORD!!! You have made it!! Now do what you have been trained to do!! Go out and make new disciples! Win the lost!! Pray and win nations for the Lord!! Join a ministry during the services and begin to see people get set free from bondages and live a life of freedom!! Begin to open up your home and start having a small group. Watch God change your life and the community in which you live!!

Find your place in the Body Christ and transform the world you live in! God is with you!! You can do!! Go forth!! You are a DISCIPLE that WILL MAKE NEW DISCIPLES!! COME ON JESUS!!!

Matthew 28:18-20,

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Questions:

1. What does the word "vision" mean?
2. What is the vision of Metro Praise? Give a Scripture reference.
3. Explain how to love God with passion and adoring worship.
4. Give two verses that teach true love for God is to keep His commands.
5. Explain the difference between "God's Don'ts" and "God's Do's".
6. What does the word "strategy" mean?
7. What is the three-fold strategy of Metro Praise?
8. Name the three people that are used as examples of the three-fold strategy.

9. Name the three most important parts of connecting found in the Bible.

10. Describe why God uses people to mentor disciples.

11. What are four things that a disciple must have to properly be mentored?

12. What are the four things you must keep your eyes on when you get sent out into ministry?

13. List and describe the ten parts of the structure of Metro Praise.

14. Begin to plan when you are going to start your small group and what ministry you will work in.