

ADRIAN ROGERS

WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN OUGHT TO KNOW

Essential Truths for Growing Your Faith



LESSON ONE: HOW TO KNOW THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

Why You Can Believe Every Word of It

“The historical, scientific, and prophetic accuracy of Scripture, along with its life-changing qualities, offer evidence that the Bible is the revealed ‘Word of God.’”

The Bible is the only book that has the answer to man's three problems:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Not what I _____, but what I _____.

The following things depend upon the confidence you have in the Word of God:

Your _____

Your _____

Your _____

Your _____

You can know the Bible is the Word of God because of:

1. Its _____.

Before you say there are scientific errors in the Bible, make sure you know _____ and make sure you know the _____.

Commonly accepted scientific facts:

- a. The earth is suspended in _____.

Job 26:7 - "He hangs the earth on nothing."

Is That Your Final Answer?

When it comes to answering the question, "What supports the earth?" different cultures have advanced some strange theories: The ancient Egyptians believed the earth was supported by huge pillars. The Greeks believed Atlas carried the world on his shoulders. The Hindus believed the earth rested on the backs of elephants, who in turn stood on a giant tortoise, who stood on a huge coiled serpent. They all could have saved a lot of time reading Job 26:7—"He hangs the earth on nothing."

b. The earth is _____.

Isaiah 40:22 - "It is He who sits above the circle (globe) of the earth."

c. No one can count the _____.

Jeremiah 33:22 - "...the host of heaven cannot be numbered."

The Bible and Astronomy

Ptolemy was a mathematician and astronomer that lived from 127-145 AD. His findings that there were 1026 stars, and that the planets and the sun revolved around the earth were accepted as scientific fact for centuries.

In 1609, an Italian nobleman named Galileo Galilei perfected a telescope capable of seeing into the heavens far beyond the scope of the unaided human eye. His discovery of millions of stars confirmed what the Bible states in Jeremiah 33:22: "The host of heaven cannot be numbered." His findings reinforced his support for the views of Copernicus that the solar system revolved around the sun. Such a view was considered heretical at the time, and Galileo spent his remaining years under house arrest.

d. The _____ circulates in the body.

Not until 1615 William Harvey discovered the blood circulates bled George Washington to death.

Leviticus 17:14 - "...For the life of all flesh is its blood. "

2. Its _____ .

Dr. Driver: "Moses could not have written the Pentateuch—at the time Moses lived, men did not know how to write."

Tel el Amarna tablets—letters of correspondence—centuries before Moses

3. Its _____ .

Written by 40 different _____

Over a period of _____

From 13 different _____

4. Its _____ .

Jesus fulfilled more than 300 Old Testament prophecies:

- Micah 5:2 - He would be born in Bethlehem
- Isaiah 7:14 - He would be born of a virgin
- Psalm 22 - Description of the crucifixion
- Isaiah 53: 9-12 - Crucified between thieves
- Zechariah 11:12, fulfilled in Matthew 26:15 - Betrayed by Judas for 30 pieces of silver

Many prophecies fulfilled not by friends, but by enemies.

Matthew 26:56 - "But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

Crucifixion

Psalm 22 prophesied the crucifixion of Jesus in 600 BC: "For dogs have surrounded me; The assembly of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet." What makes the prophecy so amazing is that the Jews used stoning as their method for capital punishment. Crucifixion was practiced hundreds of years later, primarily by the Romans.

- 5. Its _____ .
- 6. Its _____ .
 - a. Saving to the _____
 - b. Sweet for the _____
 - c. Sufficient for the _____
 - d. Satisfying to the _____

LESSON ONE: DAY ONE

God's Revelation

It is absolutely imperative that you are certain of God's Word. You will never get much of anything else settled until you are sure of the Bible. Your salvation depends on it, since the Bible says you are born again by "the Word of God" (1 Peter 1:23). Your sanctification depends upon it, because Jesus said, "Sanctify them with Your truth. Your Word is truth" (John 17:17). Your usefulness depends on it, for the Scriptures say, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that you might know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13). If you want to be sure of your faith; if you want to be an exclamation point rather than a question mark, then you need to be certain that the Bible is the Word of God.

God takes His Word seriously. So should we. Read the following passage:

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. (Revelation 22:18-19)

What principles about the Bible can you glean from the following passages?

1. **2 Chronicles 17:9**

2. **Joshua 1:8**

3. **Psalms 119:4**

4. **Nehemiah 1:7-9**

5. **Psalm 119:89**

LESSON ONE: DAY TWO

Believe It!

...from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16)

God makes it very clear that we are to believe and revere our Bibles, but there is in our world a war over the Word; a battle over the Bible. There are those who despise it; they are against all that we Christians stand for. There are those who deny it; they simply refuse to believe the Bible is the Word of God. There are those who distort it; they twist the words of the Bible to their own destruction. There are those who dissect it, treating Scripture more like a math text than a love story. There are those who disregard it, claiming it unimportant and irrelevant. They want to focus on the here-and-now, so they spend their energies making this world a better place from which to go to hell.

There are those who claim to believe it, giving lip service to the Bible as God's Word, but they do not know it, nor do they live by it. There is dust on their Bibles and drought in their hearts. Finally, there are those who believe it. They know the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, infallible, authentic Word of God, and they trust it for the daily guidance of their lives. We can have a firm assurance that the Bible is the Word of God. There is an abundance of evidence to support the fact.

What did Jesus say about the Scriptures in Matthew 22:29, Luke 24:44, and John 5:39?

What further truth do we learn in 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:20-21?

LESSON ONE: DAY THREE

Standing on the Promises

Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. (Psalm 119:89)

God's Word is the firm foundation that we as believers build our lives upon. It is trustworthy not only in areas of spiritual truth, but in all areas in which it speaks, including science and history.

Skeptics seem to think that the Bible is full of scientific errors. However, before an individual can make that assertion, they had better make sure they know science *and* Scripture. It is true that the Bible is not primarily written to teach us about science, but to teach us about God. However, the God of salvation and the God of creation are the same. Science doesn't take God by surprise. A close look at Scripture reveals that it is scientifically accurate.

Every now and then science may disagree with the Bible, but usually science just needs time to catch up. For example, in 1861 a French scientific academy printed a brochure offering 51 incontrovertible facts that proved the Bible in error. Today there is not a single reputable scientist who would support those supposed "facts," because modern science has disproved them all!

The Bible is not primarily a history book, but it records history, and all the things we believe as Christians are historical facts. Historians have criticized the Bible as being filled with errors, but in our lifetime we have seen the history of the Scriptures proven right time after time.

For years historians claimed Daniel's story of King Belshazzar was a fake, that there was no record of that Babylonian king. They claimed that the last Babylonian King was named Nabonidus, and that Belshazzar never existed. Then one day an archeologist uncovered a clay tablet describing the rule of Belshazzar, who was co-regent with his father, King Nabonidus. The Bible had been right all along.

Read Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. List the predictions of Jesus' crucifixion that are fulfilled in the gospel accounts of Matthew 27 and Mark 15:

Scripture and Shakespeare

Modern scholars believe they have a fairly exact rendering of Shakespeare’s “Hamlet,” since a handful of copies of the play made within 200 years of its original writing exist. But the New Testament is without question the most well documented book in history. There are 25,000 documents supporting its text, some made within 30 years of the original writing.

LESSON ONE: DAY FOUR

A Lamp Unto My Feet

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and light unto my path. (Psalm 119:105 KJV)

As we walk by faith into what seems at times like total darkness, the Bible is the lamp that lights our way. If you had to walk home through the woods on a dark, moonless night, you would, no doubt, want the strongest flashlight you could find. Even then, you would not be able to see very far into the distance—only enough to make sure you are on the path and headed in the right direction. How then, could you complete your journey with a flashlight that only illuminates a few yards ahead? You would simply start walking in the light that you have. As you would continue to walk with the flashlight in your hand, more and more of the path would be continually revealed, until you arrived home safely.

God's Word is the believer's flashlight, revealing our way as we walk the path God has laid out in front of us. As God's Spirit guides you day by day through the “great adventure” He has prepared for you, study the Scriptures and let them shine His light into your darkness.

Read the following passages and list the ways these men and women let God's Word guide their way.

Solomon: 1 Kings 6:11-1

David: Psalm 18:30

Mary: Luke 1:38

John: Revelation 1:9

LESSON ONE: DAY FIVE

The Sword of the Spirit

...the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. (Ephesians 6:17)

In the classic passage on spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6, Paul describes the Word of God as a sword. In telling believers how to prepare themselves to stand firm against the attacks of the enemy, several defensive weapons are mentioned: the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation.

However, only one offensive weapon is mentioned: the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

The Christian who studies God's word as a daily habit will be able not only to defend himself, but to go on the offensive against error and the wicked lies of Satan.

For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

Many times truth is mixed with error, and those who are immature are easily deceived. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Word of God will help us to divide between soul and spirit; joints and marrow. That is, the student of God's Word will be able to get below the surface to the real heart of the matter, and separate fact from fiction; truth from error.

Read the account of Satan's temptation of Jesus in Luke 4:1-13.

When Satan asked Jesus to turn stones into bread, what was the temptation to do wrong?

How did Jesus use God's Word to counter this temptation?

In the second temptation, Satan asked Jesus to worship him. In what ways are we tempted today to worship other “gods” besides the Lord?

How does God's Word keep us from worshiping the idols of this world?

LESSON TWO: HOW TO BE SAVED AND KNOW IT

The Believer's Blessed Assurance

“You really can know that you are eternally saved and on your way to heaven.”

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:13)

_____ is to your spirit what _____ is to your body.

Pain does not mean you are dead, it means you are alive.

Pain means something is _____.

1 John 5:1 – “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.”

What are the ingredients of salvation?

Ephesians 2:8-10 – “For by grace are you saved through faith. Not of yourself, not of works.”

Two things that *don't* save us: 1. _____ 2. _____

Two things that *do* save us: 1. _____ 2. _____

G.R.A.C.E. _____

F.A.I.T.H. _____

Grace - _____ reaching down from heaven.

Faith - _____ reaching up to God.

The apostle John wanted believers to have a “know-so” salvation. He used the word *know* over 40 times in the gospel of John and over 25 times in the letter of 1 John.

3 traits or tests that we know we are children of God:

If we are born of God, there will be some _____.

1. _____

Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep his commandments. He who says, 'I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. (1 John 2:3-6)

You are not saved because you keep the _____.

You keep the commandments because you are _____.

The key to understanding this scripture is the word *keep*. Keep is a sailor's term. We need to learn to steer by God's stars.

1 John 3:6 – Does not mean sinless perfection. It means that you cannot, if you are saved, habitually practice sin.

A man who is born of God does not make sin his _____.

2. _____

I love what He loves.

1 John 3:14-15 – “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

John 13:35 – Jesus said: “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

If we love _____, we are going to love _____
_____.

3. _____

1 John 5:10-11 – “He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.”

A Christian is a person who has a _____ with Jesus Christ.

KEY THOUGHT

Sin in the life of the Christian will make him doubt his salvation.

If you have doubt, reaffirm your faith right now.

If that does not give you assurance, perhaps there is sin in your life—a broken relationship or a commandment you need to put right.

LESSON TWO: DAY ONE

A "Know-So" Salvation

And this is the testimony, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:11-13)

All Christians can know they have eternal life. You don't have to wonder, you don't have to guess. You can know it. You don't have to have a "hope-so" religion when you can have a "know-so" salvation. The Apostle John understood that people sometimes have doubts about their faith, so he wrote to encourage us to be sure. Having doubts doesn't mean you're not saved; everyone has experienced doubts. But John wrote this to offer assurance in place of doubt. Assurance of salvation is important. Your soul will last forever, either in heaven or hell, so let's be confident that we know where we will spend eternity.

The method of salvation is very plain in Scripture: "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John 5:1). The way that you are saved is by believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. The name "Jesus" means "Jehovah saves," and those who believe Jehovah saves through Jesus are born again. The Christian faith is just that simple.

John tells us he wrote 1 John so that we may know that we have eternal life.

Read these scriptures from 1 John that use the word know, and complete the following sentences:

1 John 2:3. We know that we know God if:

1 John 2:29. Because we know that God is righteous, we also know that:

1 John 3:18-19. We know God's truth is real in our lives if we:

1 John 3:24. We know God abides in us because:

1 John 5:2. We know that when we love God, we will also:

1 John 5:14-15. If we ask God anything according to His will, we know:

LESSON TWO: DAY TWO

Saved by Grace

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

You will never experience the assurance of your salvation if you depend on your actions. I can't trust the best fifteen minutes I ever lived to get me into heaven. God isn't Santa Claus, making a list and checking it twice to find out who's naughty and nice. He isn't weighing your good works against your bad works. You are dead in your sins if you don't know Christ, and a long list of good works won't balance the scales because we aren't saved by works, but by grace.

Grace is the unmerited love and favor God shows to sinners. It's what makes God love us when we are unlovely. He doesn't love you for what you've done, He loves you out of grace. Think of grace as the hand of God reaching down out of heaven. He says, "I love you; I want to save you." Think of faith as your hand reaching back up toward God, saying, "I love You, Lord, and I accept Your love for me." When you put your hand of faith in God's hand of grace, that's salvation.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9.

1. What are some of the words that are used to describe salvation?

2. What word is specifically excluded from being a component of salvation?

3. Write your own definitions of the following words found in Ephesians 2:8-9:

Grace: _____

Faith: _____

Gift: _____

Works: _____

4. Using your definitions, rewrite Ephesians 2:8-9 in your own words:

If we think that any part of our salvation depends upon us (works), we will never have assurance because we will never know if we have done enough. Complete this statement in your own words: I can have complete confidence that I am saved because:

The Scales Theory

Most people have the mistaken idea that when they die, God will put all their good deeds on one side of the scale, and all of their bad deeds on the other. They think as long as their good deeds outweigh their bad, God will let them into heaven.

In reality, our salvation is based totally upon the mercy and grace of God. Titus 3:5 says, “not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.”

LESSON TWO: DAY THREE

The Lordship Test

The book of 1 John was written to give Christians assurance of salvation. The apostle used the word *know* over 25 times in his epistle, because he wants all of us to know for certain we have been born again. Over the next three days we will study the three tests John gives that we can have assurance that we are saved.

The first test is the Lordship Test. Is Jesus Lord of your life? John says in 1 John 2:3-4, “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him', and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

John doesn't beat around the bush. He simply says that if you say that you are saved, but you don't do what God says, you are a liar. Don't misunderstand this: he isn't expecting us to be perfect. Everybody sins. If we didn't sin, we wouldn't need salvation. Yet “we know that we know him if we keep His commandments.”

The word *keep* was used by sailors sailing by the stars. They would plot the heavens, then keep the boat going in the right direction by “keeping to the stars.” To keep His commandments means to steer your life by His Word. That's the goal of the Christian life. We sometimes take our eyes off Him and fail, but the desire of our hearts is to keep His commandments. You aren't saved by keeping them, but one of the marks of a Christian is that you desire to live according to those commandments. You want Christ to be Lord of your life.

Jesus is Lord of your life when you follow his commandments. According to 1 John 5:3, His commandments are not:

According to 1 John 3:22, what is a benefit we receive when we keep His commandments?:

According to 1 John 3:23, what are two things we must do to obey His commandments?:

Read Luke 10:25-28 and Exodus 20:1-17. Complete these sentences: When I love God with all my heart, I show it by:

When I love my neighbor as myself, I show it by:

LESSON TWO: DAY FOUR

The Fellowship Test

John says in 1 John 3:14, “We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.” When you love the Heavenly Father, you love His children as well. You love your brothers and sisters in Christ. It's one of the traits of the twice born. “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him, that he who loves God must love his brother also” (1 John 4:20-21).

Some people seem to think they can worship God all on their own, never going to church or meeting with others. They say, “God knows I love him. I don't need to assemble with others.” But God clearly instructed us to love the brethren, and to keep assembling together as His family. You see, when you were saved you became a partaker of God's divine nature. You received the nature of God, which is love. If God's nature is in you, you will love others the way He loves others. “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone that loves is born if God, and knows God. He that loves not, knows not God for God is love” (1 John 4:7-8).

If you are really saved, God's love will be in you. You aren't saved by loving others, but you love others because you are saved.

What is the test of love in the following passages from 1 John?

1 John 2:9-10

1 John 3:10-18

1 John 4:7-11

1 John 4:20-5:2

What practical principles for loving others can you find in those passages?

LESSON TWO: DAY FIVE

The Relationship Test

Salvation is a vital relationship with Jesus Christ. Those who are Christians have an on-going relationship with Him.

And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life, and he that has not the Son of God has not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may believe on the name of the Son of God.
(1 John 5:11-13)

The Bible never says to look back to some past experience for proof of your salvation. It says to look at your current relationship. Do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ? Is He your friend and companion? Or is He somebody you were introduced to once but never bothered to get to know? You see, the question is not, “Did you believe in Jesus?” but “Are you believing in Jesus?” Do you have a relationship with the Lord now?

What do the following verses suggest about our relationship with Jesus Christ?

1 John 2:1-2

1 John 3:1-3

1 John 4:4-6

1 John 4:12-19

1 John 5:3-5

1 John 5:19-21

LESSON THREE: HOW TO BE SURE YOU ARE ETERNALLY SECURE

Can a Christian Lose His Salvation?

“Not only can you know that you are saved, you also can be certain that you will never lose your salvation.”

It is essential to know that you can never lose your salvation because of several things:

1. Your spiritual _____.

2. Your _____.

When we know the _____ is secure, we can concentrate on the _____.

Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, CA

When construction on the Golden Gate Bridge began in 1937, there was no safety net to protect the workers. Twenty-three workers fell to their deaths in the perilous waters far below the bridge.

The city of San Francisco decided to spend an enormous sum to put a safety net under the next section, but once the safety net was in place only a handful of workers ever needed it. The work went faster, and the workers could concentrate on their jobs without worrying about the danger of death.

3. Aid in _____. The God who _____ you is the God who will _____ you.

If you are genuinely heaven _____, you are heaven _____.

Matthew 7:22-23 - “Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your

name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I **never** knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

John 10:27-29 – “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand.”

1 John 2:19 – “They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

The faith that fizzles before the _____ had a flaw from the _____.

Eight reasons you can believe in the eternal security of the believer:

1. God's Sacred _____.

Romans 8:38-39 KJV – “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

2. God's Determined _____.

Philippians 1:6 – “Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

God is the _____.

He is the _____.

He is the _____.

God never _____ something He can't _____.

3. God's Sovereign _____.

Romans 8:29-30 KJV - "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified."

4. Calvary's Perfect _____.

Hebrews 10:14 KJV - "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

KEY THOUGHT

Nobody is saved twice, because Jesus only died once.

Romans 4:5-8 - "But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin."

5. The Saint's New _____.

2 Corinthians 5:17 - “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”

“Security is not in a place, it's in a person—His name is Jesus.”

6. The Believer's Eternal _____.

John 5:24 KJV - “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him who sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

7. Jesus' Interceding _____.

John 17:9 - “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world, but for those whom You have given me, for they are Yours.”

John 17:15 - “I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the Evil One.”

Jesus prayed for Peter that his faith should not fail (Luke 22:31-32).

John 17:20 - “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word.”

Hebrews 7:25 - “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them.”

KEY THOUGHT

The finished work of Jesus is Calvary, the unfinished work of Jesus is intercession.

8. God's Almighty _____.

1 Peter 1:5 - "...for you who are **kept by the power of God.**"

LESSON THREE: DAY ONE

God's Forever Family

Can you imagine the emotional state of a child who does not know from day to day whether or not he is a member of the family? Today, since he was a good boy, he is considered a member. But tomorrow, if he misbehaves, he may no longer be a member. Today, he is loved by his father. Tomorrow he may not be. This child would be a neurotic mess.

You are a part of your family, regardless of your behavior. So it is in the family of God, too. If you belong to Christ, you are part of the family, and can enjoy the emotional security our Heavenly Father wants us to experience.

Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them to me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand” (John 10:27-29).

Read Ephesians 1:4-6. According to verse 4, when did God choose us?

According to verse 5, how did we get into God's family?

According to verse 6, God has made us:

Explain, in your own words what you think it means to be “accepted in the Beloved”:

Read Ephesians 1:7-14. Paul sums up our position in God's family by using the phrase "in Him." According to verse 7, what do we have "in Him?"

According to verse 11, what have we already obtained?:

According to verse 13, what did God do to us after we believed?:

In verse 14, God's children are referred to as His:

God's Engagement Ring

Ephesians 1:13-14 says that the Holy Spirit has been given to us as a deposit, guaranteeing our inheritance as God's children. The word translated as "deposit" is the same word used when a man promised to marry a woman. The Spirit is a promise—and God always keeps his promises!

LESSON THREE: DAY TWO

He Who Began...

God will complete what He has begun. In Philippians 1:6, Paul says, “Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

When you were saved, who began the good work in you? It was God. He was the One who called you. The Holy Spirit showed you that you were a sinner in need of salvation. He convicted you of your sin and converted you by helping you understand the Gospel. He was the One who put faith in your heart and helped you receive the Lord Jesus Christ.

But He is not just the Convictor or the Converter; He is also the Completer. He never starts anything that He does not intend to finish. There is no job that proves too big for Him. He has begun a good work in your life, and He intends to complete it. If any of His children were to perish apart from Him, that would mean God had been defeated in His purpose.

The fact is, God *will* persevere in the lives of His children, and complete the good work He has begun.

Read Ephesians 4:13. List four things mentioned in this verse that God is working into our lives as we mature in Him:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

In Hebrews 10:14, we read, “For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” Does being perfect mean that we will never sin again?

How are we perfect?

Does God see you as perfect? _____

Why is that significant?

LESSON THREE: DAY THREE

Your Destiny Is Determined

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. (Romans 8:29-30)

The Bible says God foreknew certain ones and predestined them to be like Jesus. That is, He predetermined their destiny. He planned out what was going to happen to them. If you are predestined for heaven, then you'll be in heaven and you will be like the Lord Jesus. You couldn't be in hell and be like Jesus Christ.

That passage in Romans offers a chain of five golden links: foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification. If you are a child of God, He already sees you glorified. He already pictures you in heaven. It doesn't say that some day He will glorify you, but that you are already glorified. Your salvation did not begin with you. It began before the creation of the World.

God knew you were going to be born, and He already had a plan for you to be with Him. He sees you predestined for heaven, being like His Son Jesus Christ. What could possibly stop that? How could you ever lose your salvation if you are predestined to be like Christ? What is settled in eternity cannot be undone in time. What has been decreed by heaven cannot be annulled by hell.

Read Romans 8:29-30. What do the following mean?

...that God "foreknew us."

...that He "predestined us."

...that He predestined us “to be conformed to the likeness of His Son.”

...that He “called us.”

...that He “justified us.”

...that He “glorified us.”

Is it significant that those words are in the past tense?

Noah’s Ark—A Picture of Our Salvation

How safe was Noah when it began to rain? Noah was as safe as the ark. He may have fallen down inside the ark, but he never fell out. He couldn’t because God sealed him in. Not only did God seal Noah in the ark, but He sealed the water out.

The believer is in Jesus as Noah was in the ark. He is sealed into Jesus by the Holy Spirit and not one drop of Judgment can get to those who are in Jesus, the Ark of Safety.

LESSON THREE: DAY FOUR

"I Never Knew You"

When we look at the issue of eternal security, we must first define our terms. Eternal security is for believers, people who have received Jesus Christ into their hearts by faith. They are born again, having become partakers of the divine nature. This person can never again be a lost soul.

Now, we have all known people who were apparently saved, but no longer have any interest in spiritual things. They used to attend church—maybe they were even baptized—and they seemed to be Christians. But I would argue that they never were truly saved. These are the ones Jesus spoke about in Matthew 7:22-23 when He said, “Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast our demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me you who practice lawlessness.’”

Notice that Jesus doesn't say, “I once knew you, but you lost it.” He says He never knew them. They may have done all sorts of religious things, but they never knew God. They turned away from Him at some point, and they do not have eternal life.

Every church has experienced plenty of people who are baptized, join as members, and seem to live for God awhile, but then turn away. They were never saved. If they left the faith and stayed away, we can be sure they were never saved. That's the message John gives us in 1 John 2:19: “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.”

If these folks had really been Christians, they would have remained in the faith. They didn't lose their salvation—they never had it!

Have you ever known anyone who seemed to be a Christian, then walked away from the faith?

Did you believe they were saved?

Read Matthew 13:24-30 and 36-43. How can some of the people in that parable appear saved?

What happens to them?

Hebrews 10:38-39 contrasts those who are truly saved with those who fall away. What is the distinguishing characteristic of the truly saved?

LESSON THREE: DAY FIVE

Kept by His Power

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (I Peter 1:3-5)

We are kept by the power of God. There is no power which can force open God's hand and pluck us out of it. If Satan could do it, he surely would have. God saved us from the power of Satan. He also saved us from the power of ourselves, for John 10:28 promises that “*they shall never perish*” which literally translated means, “they can never destroy themselves.”

The Good Shepherd takes care of us, His sheep. We are kept secure by the power of God. We can rejoice that we are eternally secure in the hands of a God who loves us.

KEY THOUGHT

If I had to depend upon my behavior to keep me saved, I'd be hopelessly lost.

What three promises does Jesus give us in John 10:28 regarding our eternal security?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

According to John 10:29, we can have confidence in God's power to keep us because:

A rhetorical question is one in which no answer is given because the answer is obvious. Read Romans 8:31-39. Answer these rhetorical questions:

If God is for us, who can be against us?

Who can bring a charge against God's elect?

Since Christ died and paid our penalty, who condemns us now?

Circle the correct answer. What shall separate us from the love of God?

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| death | life |
| angels | principalities |
| powers | things in the present |
| things in the future | things above |
| things below | any created thing |
| none of the above | |

LESSON FOUR: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS

Forgiveness, Cleansing, and Restoration

“Everybody sins. But the Christian has a unique place to turn that will take him past the sin and on to forgiveness.”

In Psalm 51 we find the story of David's sin.

If you are bound to _____, you are bound to _____.

I. _____ of sin in the life of a Christian.

1. It _____ the soul.

Psalm 51:1-2 - “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.”

“Some have been starched and ironed, but have never been washed.”

If you can sin and don't feel _____,
You should ask if you have ever been _____.

2. It _____ the mind.

Psalm 51:3 - “For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.”

There are two kinds of wounds. _____ is a clean wound.
_____ is a dirty wound. It will fester until it is cleansed.

3. It _____ the Lord.

Psalm 51:4 - "Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight."

An unsaved man feels bad about what his sin does to _____.

A saved man feels bad about what his sin does to _____.

4. It _____ the heart.

Psalm 51:8 - "Make me hear joy and gladness that the bones You have broken may rejoice."

Psalm 51:12 - "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation."

The most miserable person on earth is a _____ person out of fellowship with God.

Somebody else's sin cannot take your joy. Only one kind of sin can take your joy: _____.

"Pain is inevitable, _____ is optional." —Barbara Johnson

The Difference Between Happiness and Joy

Happiness is like a thermometer. It registers conditions. Joy is like a thermostat. It controls conditions. Happiness changes. The joy of the Lord is constant. Happiness depends upon what happens. You would get sick and tired of being happy *all* the time. Joy remains steady whether the thermometer of happiness goes up or down.

5. It _____ the body.

1 Corinthians 11:30 - "For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep."

6. It _____ the spirit.

Psalm 51:10 - "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

7. It _____ the testimony.

Psalm 51:14-15 - "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth your praise."

Can a Christian sin? _____

Can a Christian sin and not suffer? _____

II. The _____ of Sin in the Life of a Christian.

1. _____

Psalm 51:1 - "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness."

For a multitude of sins, there are a multitude of mercies.

God does not love us because we are _____.

We're _____ because God loves us.

2. _____

Psalm 51:3 - "I acknowledge my transgressions."

One thing God will not accept for sin is an _____.

1 John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Proverbs 28:13 - "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy."

KEY THOUGHT

If we cover our sin, God uncovers it. If we uncover our sin, God covers it!

Accusation is the work of _____.

_____ is the work of the Holy Spirit.

3. _____

Psalm 51:2 - "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin."

Psalm 51:7 - "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Isaiah 1:18 KJV - "Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'"

KEY THOUGHT

There is no stain the blood of Jesus cannot remove.

4. _____

The sins of _____ are greater than the sins of _____.

If you're doing what you _____ to be doing, you can't be doing what you _____ to have been doing.

LESSON FOUR: DAY ONE

Sonship and Fellowship

The Christian has a two-fold relationship with the Father. First, we are His sons. When we became Christians, we were born into the family of God. Nothing can take that away; it is settled for all time. If you are a Christian, you are born again and can never be “unborn.” So there is the relationship of sonship. Second, there is the relationship of fellowship. Even though we are God's children, we must walk in His way if we are to remain close to Him. Sin doesn't affect my sonship, but it does affect my fellowship. As a boy, I was always my father's son. I had his name, his genes in my body, and there was nothing that could undo my sonship. But if I disobeyed my father, our fellowship could be broken. And until I got myself straightened out and asked his forgiveness, our fellowship wasn't close.

A true child of God may slip and fall into sin, but he always has a desire for a quick recovery. When Christians sin, they break fellowship with their Heavenly Father. But they can get back into fellowship with Him by following the formula of 1 John 1. The Apostle John wrote,

If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:6-9)

As you walk close to the Lord, you remain in fellowship with Him. As you will see tomorrow, if you fall out of fellowship there are some things you must do.

How would you define fellowship?

Who are you in fellowship with?

What is the difference between sonship and fellowship?

When have you felt that your fellowship with God was broken?

What brought you back into fellowship?

LESSON FOUR: DAY TWO

Sin: Deal with It

If we are to experience true fellowship, we must first recognize our own sin. God forgives sin, as long as we confess it as such. In our world we have evolutionists telling us that man is the result of some blind force, which means that sin doesn't really exist—sin is just an accident, or perhaps a mere stumble as man progresses. But that is the opposite of the truth. Man didn't evolve, he devolved, from the image of God into sin.

Sin has ruined the human race. If you don't recognize sin as an affront to a Holy God, you will never be able to have fellowship with God. If sin is seen as a mistake or a sickness, then there is no reason to have God; so Christ died for nothing! A growing problem in our society is that people have the burden of guilt without the sense of sin. They know they are sinners in need of salvation, but they do not want to admit it. So they try to fix themselves up and somehow compensate for the problem of sin, without ever getting cleansed from the sin itself.

The evolutionist believes man is on his way up. The educator believes man can be taught to live without sin. Science seems to think that in solving the problems of the natural world, we will do away with sin. The sociologist thinks that sin comes from an unhealthy environment. And the psychologist believes that if you talk about yourself long enough, you can erase your guilty feelings about sin. Everybody wants to ignore God, deny sin, and hope that there is no justice in the next world to which they'll be accountable. But that is wishful thinking, and it fails to do anything about the guilt people have because they know they can never overcome the sin in their lives.

What is sin?

What do the following verses tell us about sin?

Romans 3:23

James 4:17

Jeremiah 14:7

Isaiah 59:1-2

What plan has God put in place to deal with man's guilt?

LESSON FOUR: DAY THREE

"You're Right—I'm Wrong"

Confess literally means to “say the same thing.” When we confess to God, we are saying the same thing about our sins that God says about them.

One of the great promises of Scripture is in 1 John 1:9: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” When you confess your sin to the Lord, you call it by name and admit specifically what you have done. You agree completely with the Holy Spirit about the problem in your life, and you admit it to the Lord.

The word *confess* is used in the present tense, so confess your sin immediately. Don't wait for the end of the day or the end of the week—tell the Lord you want to be right with Him immediately. When you get a speck of dust in your eye, you don't wait until nightfall to take care of it, you fix it right then. You need to do that on a regular basis for sin, too.

The Spirit-filled life is not a life without sin, but a life that remains in close fellowship with God. Some Christians ride a spiritual roller coaster, riding high with God on Sunday mornings, but down in the dumps on Monday. They're back up, high again after Tuesday Bible study but down low by Wednesday afternoon. That's not the way the Christian life should work.

Instead, we should stay in constant contact with the Lord by confessing sin immediately and remaining in fellowship with Him.

How do we expose our sin to the light?

How does unconfessed sin keep us out of fellowship with God?

How does unconfessed sin keep us out of fellowship with other Christians?

What principles for confessing sin can you find in the following verses?

Leviticus 5:5

Nehemiah 9:2-3

Psalms 32:3-5

Luke 15:18-20

James 5:16

LESSON FOUR: DAY FOUR

Clean and Forgiven

The best news in the world is that there is one place man can turn to find forgiveness of his sins. There is one Source for ridding himself of guilt. It is found in the blood of Jesus Christ. Man is looking for an answer to sin, and Christ is offering it. If we confess our sins, He is faithful. No matter how many times you come to Him, He is always there and always ready to forgive. *He is just.* God blots our sins. They are no longer counted against us. On that great judgment day, when our sins are listed we will be declared “not guilty” because Christ has already paid the penalty for our sins, meeting the legal requirement. So He can offer us forgiveness that we can find no other place.

He is faithful and just and He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He will do it. He has promised to do it. Mankind is looking for a way to feel clean. We want to get rid of our guilt, and Christ can take it away. Unfortunately, man wants to do it for himself. And, he wants to deny that sins exists. God won't allow any other road to forgiveness. He has already done the hard work, preparing a way for mankind to find redemption. If you go to Him and confess your sins, He will forgive you and cleanse you. Then you can be in fellowship with Him.

Read Isaiah 6:1-8. Describe what the prophet saw in verses 1-4:

What was his first response?

Why do you suppose he responded that way?

What did the Lord do for him? (verse 7)

What was Isaiah's new response? (verse 8)

In 1 John 1:9, what condition does God put upon our being cleansed?

LESSON FOUR: DAY FIVE

Confidence

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. (1 John 3:21)

A believer with sin in his life feels dirty. His conscience constantly makes him feel guilty. He loses the joy of his salvation as David did. When we acknowledge our sin, confess our sin, and receive forgiveness and cleansing, we can have confidence.

There is a beautiful verse in Hebrews that says “their iniquities will I remember no more” (Hebrews 8:12). If we go to God and repent of our sin, He will forgive us and cleanse us, even forgetting about our sin. “I, even I, am He who blots out your transgression for My sake; and I will not remember your sins,” the Lord says in Isaiah 43:25. When you are saved, all of your sins are forgiven, and put in the grave of God's forgetfulness. “...though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow” (Isaiah 1:18 KJV). All your sins—past, present, and future—will never be brought up against you any more. You stand clean before Him.

When David sinned, he prayed, “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your lovingkindness.” David had confidence in God. He knew that for a multitude of sins, God offers a multitude of tender mercies. No matter what you've done, or how many times you've failed, God still loves you and wants to be in a right relationship with you.

First John 3:21 tells us that if our heart *does not* condemn us, we have confidence toward God. If our heart *does* condemn us, what reassurance do we have, according to 1 John 3:20?

When our heart condemns us, we sometimes may not feel that God still loves us. How can we have confidence that God loves us even though our sin breaks our fellowship with Him?

Read Ephesians 3:11-12 and Hebrews 4:16. Complete this sentence in your own words:

I can have boldness and confidence toward God because

LESSON FIVE: WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT BAPTISM

Obedience that Brings a Blessing

“Baptism is the first step every believer should take in his or her walk with Christ.”

Baptism is not _____, it is _____.

We should not _____ what God has _____.

Jesus _____ His ministry by being baptized.

Jesus _____ His ministry by commanding baptism.

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20 - “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

1. Biblical _____ of baptism—immersion.

The example of Jesus:

Mark 1:9-10 - “It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.”

John 3:23 - “Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.”

When speaking of baptism, the original Greek of the Bible always uses the word *baptizo*, which means “to immerse, or dip under.”

The example of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch:

Acts 8:36-39 - “Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.”

Baptism and the Ancients

Baptism is unique to the Christian religion, but some ancient Jewish sects practiced it as a form of ceremonial washing. To immerse oneself in water was a sign of consecration or dedication, and it had been practiced at the conservative Jewish community of Qumran and other places.

The practice of baptism caused problems for Christians with pagan governments—some Romans accused Christians of drowning new converts and of trying to raise the dead through the use of magical waters!

2. Biblical _____ of baptism—Baptism pictures the saving work of Jesus Christ.

If you change the _____, you destroy the _____.

Romans 6:4 - “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

Baptism is a picture of a _____, a _____ and a _____.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 - "...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and after that was buried, and that He rose again the third day."

Romans 6:5 - "For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection."

We must be _____ first, then _____. This is called _____ baptism.

The example of Pentecost:

Acts 2:41 - "Then they who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them."

The example of Cornelius' household:

Acts 10:47 - "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"

The example of the Philippian jailer:

Acts 16:31-33 - "So they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized."

Not only is His _____ pictured, but His _____ is pictured.

Baptism pictures our _____ with Jesus.

Baptism pictures the great doctrines of our faith: _____,
_____, _____, and _____
_____.

3. _____ of baptism.

a. A _____ to confess.

KEY THOUGHT

Baptism shows I am a new man, and I have a new master

b. A _____ to convey.

Baptism is a _____. It preaches the
gospel without saying a word.

c. A _____ to complete.

Jesus did not request you to be baptized, He commanded you to be baptized.

Matthew 28:19-20 - "...baptizing them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe
all things that I have commanded you."

Acts 10:48 - "And he commanded them to be baptized in the
name of the Lord."

While baptism is not necessary for _____, it is necessary for
_____.

Baptism cannot take away any _____.

It is not _____ that saves;

It is the _____, _____ and
_____ of Jesus.

LESSON FIVE: DAY ONE

Start Right: Believer's Baptism

In a race, how you end up has a lot to do with how you begin. If you begin strong, you have a much better chance of winning. The same is true in education—learning advanced things as an adult is much easier if you learned the basics as a child. Many businesspeople have learned the importance of getting their business off to a strong start. And what is true in those areas is also true of your Christian life. If you get off to a strong start by obeying what the Bible tells you to do, you will find it much easier to grow strong in your walk with Christ.

Many people misunderstand baptism. Some act as though, since baptism doesn't save us, it isn't important. Other people make the mistake of saying, "If you don't get baptized, you'll never go to heaven." Baptism isn't necessary for salvation, but it is necessary for obedience. Obedience is necessary if you are going to experience joy and growth and fruitfulness in the Christian life. Believers dare not minimize what the Bible so emphasizes.

What principle of baptism do you find in the following?

Acts 2:38-41

Acts 8:12

Acts 8:26-39

Acts 18:8

Baptism symbolizes a death, burial and resurrection. Why is it important for believers to be baptized after they have been saved, and not before?

If someone has already been baptized, under what circumstances should they consider being baptized again?

LESSON FIVE: DAY TWO

The Biblical Method: Immersion

Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that he saw him no more; and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing. (Acts 8:35-39)

As we read the account in Acts 8, there are several facts about baptism that are clear. First, it takes water to baptize someone. Second, the person is to be baptized if they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Third, baptism is the act of immersing someone in water. The word in Greek, *baptizo*, means to “immerse in water.” When the Ethiopian asks, “What hinders me from being baptized?” we could also translate that, “What hinders me from being immersed?” The Bible says they both went down into the water, so it was a big enough body of water for two men to wade into, and the one immersed the other.

The word *baptize* means immersion, so when we baptize we need to immerse the person. Immersion was practiced in the early Christian church, and if you visit the ancient cathedrals of Europe built before the thirteenth century, you'll find many have baptistries. The method of baptism is important, because the method is tied to the meaning. Therefore, if you change the method, you change the meaning.

Read Romans 6:3-11. In verse 3, what does Paul mean when he says, “As many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus?”

What do you think it means to be baptized into His death?

If believers are baptized into Christ's death, when does this occur?

Why is baptism by immersion important?

LESSON FIVE: DAY THREE

The Meaning of Baptism

Baptism speaks of what God did for you when He saved you. Romans 6:1-2 says, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How then shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (KJV). This is the key to understanding baptism.

When we are saved, we die to sin. We die to the old way of life. God forbids that we who have been saved should continue to live sinful lives. “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” (Romans 6:4-5). Christian, this is your biography. This passage describes the past, the present, and the future of every believer.

Your past is in verse 4: You have been buried with Jesus Christ by baptism. When you are baptized, you are buried under the water. This is a visual symbol of your old life dying and being buried. It also connects you with Christ's death 2000 years ago. Your old self was crucified with Christ, that your body of sin might be destroyed and you should no longer serve sin.

Your present is that you now walk in newness of life. The old has gone, the new has come. Coming up out of the baptismal water is a symbolic picture of you coming out of that grave, risen to a new life in Christ.

Your future—Since we have been planted like Christ in death, we shall be raised like Christ in the resurrection. Baptism is a beautiful illustration of the death, burial, and resurrection of the person who believes on Jesus Christ. Immersion is the way God arranged for us to symbolize it. You don't want to use just any symbol. Sprinkling doesn't depict the full meaning of baptism. Immersion does. The method and the meaning are bound up together.

Write your own testimony of how you were saved. Include the details of how you were baptized and what it meant to you:

LESSON FIVE: DAY FOUR

The Motive for Baptism

There are three reasons for getting baptized. First, it proclaims your commitment to Jesus. It is a way to say, “Lord, I am identifying myself with You, openly and publicly.” It doesn't *make* you a Christian, but it certainly does demonstrate that you're a Christian. Wearing a wedding ring doesn't make me married, but it does show that I am married and am not ashamed of letting everyone know it. I belong to a woman I love with all my heart, and my wedding ring is a way of showing it. When Jesus was baptized, He was identifying Himself with us. When you are baptized, it publicly identifies you with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Second, it portrays your conversion to Christ. Your baptism is a testimony that you are a believer in Jesus. You are saved and you want everyone to know it. Your friends see you being baptized, and they hear you proclaim what Christ has done for you. I have known many people who were saved watching a friend's baptism.

Third, you are obedient to your command from God. Baptism is not a suggestion, it is a command from the Lord. In Matthew 28:19-20, Christ said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” We are to observe that which Christ commanded, which is to baptize.

What command does Jesus leave with His disciples in Matthew 28:19-20?

In your own words, what does baptism symbolize?

Read 1 Peter 3:18-21. In verse 21, Peter seems to say that baptism saves us. How do we know that he does not mean that being baptized in water saves us?

LESSON FIVE: DAY FIVE

The Blessing of Obedience

It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (Mark 1:9-11)

Jesus lived His life as an example for us as believers. He said in *John 5:30*, “I do not seek my own will, but the will of the Father who sent me.” When Jesus was baptized, He was showing his willingness to be obedient to the Father. His baptism foreshadowed His death, burial and resurrection, and was a public testimony of His identification with us—dying for our sins, and being resurrected to give us victory over death. Jesus' obedience pleased the Father: “You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

When we are obedient by identifying ourselves with Christ in baptism, it also pleases the Father. Baptism can't save us. It's an outward expression of an inward reality. But it is an act that Christians are called to obey.

KEY THOUGHT

The way to understand the part of the Bible that you don't understand is to begin to obey the part you do understand.

Read the three accounts of Jesus' baptism in Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, and Luke 3:21-22, then read John's testimony in John 1:29-34.

What was John the Baptist's attitude before Jesus' baptism?

What was Jesus' response?

Why did Jesus decide to be baptized?

What was God's response to the occasion, and why is it significant?

Why does it please God when we follow Him in believer's baptism?

LESSON SIX: HOW TO HANDLE TEMPTATION

Learning to Be an Overcomer

"Every Christian experiences temptation, but the mature believer learns to overcome temptation and experiences victory."

There are three ways man tries to handle temptation:

- _____ to it.
- _____ in your own strength.
- _____ through Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 - "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

1. The _____ of temptation: all of us.
 - a. Being saved does not make you _____ to temptation.
 - b. Being tempted is _____
_____.

Hebrews 4:15 - "Jesus was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin."

Why doesn't God remove all temptation from us?

God's plan for you is not _____ from temptation, but _____ over temptation.

2. The _____ of temptation.

One of three sources:

- The _____
- The _____
- The _____

"The unholy trinity of temptation"

a. The world—the foe.

What is the world?

Not the world of _____.

Not the world of _____.

John 3:16 - "God so loved the world (the world of people) that He gave His only begotten Son..."

The world is the world _____, the world _____.

The world is a system or order of things that is contrary to God.

1 John 2:15 - "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

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

James 4:4 - "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever

therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

1 Peter 3:3 - "Do not let your adornment (world) be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart..."

The Devil Made Me Do It?

In the early seventies, the late comedian Flip Wilson turned the phrase "The Devil made me do it" into a pop-culture cliché. In reality, much of what gets blamed on the Devil is sin of our own making. Too often, Satan's real handiwork goes unnoticed, while much of what is credited to him can be attributed to mankind's sinful nature, which the Bible calls the *flesh*.

b. The flesh—the _____ foe.

Romans 12:1 - "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

1 Corinthians 6:19 - "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?"

What is the flesh? It is not your _____ body.

The flesh is the _____.

Ephesians 2:3 - "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

Psalms 58:3 - "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies."

c. The devil—the _____ foe.

Ephesians 6:12 - "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

3. The _____ of temptation.

We are tempted in three areas: _____,
_____ and _____.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 - "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- a. The world tempts in the area of the _____.
- b. The flesh tempts in the area of the _____.
- c. The devil tempts in the area of the _____.

Understanding The Biblical Concept of Body, Soul, and Spirit

With my body, I have physical life, I know the world beneath me. With my soul, I have psychological life; I know the world around me. With my spirit, I have spiritual life; I know the world above me.

Plants have a body, but not a soul or a spirit. Animals have a body and a soul, but not a spirit. Only man has a body, soul and spirit.

- When my body is right, I am healthy,
- When my soul is right, I am happy.
- When my spirit is right, I am holy.

God intends for us to be healthy, happy and holy.

4. The _____ of temptation.

- a. In youth—it is primarily the sins of the _____.
- b. In middle age—it is primarily the sins of the _____.
- c. In old age—it is primarily the sins of the _____.

5. The _____ of temptation.

a. Against the external foe the key word is _____.

1 John 5:4-5 - "For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

1 John 2:15 - "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

b. Against the internal foe the key word is _____.

2 Timothy 2:22 - "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

1 Corinthians 6:18 - "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man does is without the body; but he that commits fornication sins against his own body."

c. Against the infernal foe the key word is _____.

James 4:7 - "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Ephesians 6:11 - "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

Revelation 12:11 - "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

LESSON SIX: DAY ONE

Temptation into Triumph

As a Christian, you can expect to be tempted. Satan wants you living a life of sin so that you are useless in the Christian life. Overcoming temptation is something every believer wants to learn how to accomplish. However, you can learn to use temptation as a means to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Therefore let him who thinks he stand take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:12-14)

There are three basic approaches to dealing with temptation. Some people simply give in to it. Their philosophy says, "Don't worry about temptation. If it feels good, do it. Whatever is natural must be right." So they exist like animals, living for their own self-gratification.

There are others who spend all their time fighting temptation with their own strength. They fight and fail, because mankind can never overcome our own evil nature.

Finally, there are those who overcome temptation through the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. They turn temptation into triumph. If that seems like a pipe-dream to you, I want you to know that you *can* conquer temptation. It is possible to experience victory in this life.

Is it a sin to be tempted?

In your own words, what is temptation?

What do we learn about temptation in the following passages?

1 Corinthians 10:13

James 1:13-14

2 Peter 2:9

LESSON SIX: DAY TWO

No One Is Immune

We are all subject to temptation, from the most righteous person you know to the lowliest criminal. The Lord Jesus was tempted. Peter was tempted. King David was tempted. Each of us are faced daily with an array of temptations: pride, materialism, dishonesty, lust, greed, sexual sin-the list goes on and on. Being saved doesn't make you immune. It is not a sin to be tempted. Jesus was God's Son, yet was tempted by Satan. The Bible says He was tempted in all things as we are, yet remained sinless. But there is one particular area where we are most susceptible to temptation.

"Therefore let him who thinks he stand take heed lest he fall." The proud tempts the devil to test him. If you think you cannot fall, then you are headed for a big tumble, because that's the area where we let our guard down and stop watching for Satan's attack.

Sometimes people ask, "If God really loves us, why doesn't He kill Satan and stop temptation? Why not remove the allurements of sin?" But if God did that, you and I would lose the ability to be overcomers in Jesus Christ. Is there any victory in crossing the goal line before the other team has taken the field? Is there any victory in stealing home when the other team hasn't shown up? Without opposition there is no victory. God hasn't called us to a life of ease, but a life of victory in Jesus Christ.

What are the three temptations John describes in 1 John 2:16?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What is the lust of the flesh?

What is the lust of the eyes?

What is the pride of life?

In which area do you find yourself tempted most often?

What temptations do you think the Christians you know struggle with the most?

LESSON SIX: DAY THREE

Overcoming the World

The Greek word for “world” is *cosmos*. It means a system, or an order. There is a system the Bible calls “the world,” and it is a system of evil. First John 2:15 warns us to “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” We are not supposed to be loving this world and its evil system. That’s why James says that “friendship with the world is enmity with God” (James 4:4).

It is possible for Christians to become so much a part of this world that they don’t stand out for God. Christians are supposed to be different, since they are God’s saved people in an unsaved world. We are cast from a different mold. That’s why Paul says to the Romans, “Be not conformed to this world,” which can literally be translated, “Don’t let the world press you into its mold.”

To overcome the world we need faith. John tells us the victory that overcomes the world is our faith. We don’t fight worldliness, we rely on our faith. The only way to get through the temptations of this world is to focus on Jesus Christ. Then when the world offers you its crumbs, you can reject it because you have feasted on the Lord Jesus. Scripture says that if you love the world, you aren’t loving God. So if you want to defeat the temptations of the world, love God more.

James 4:4 tells us that the world is the enemy of God. List some elements in our society that may seem good on the surface, but are actually God’s enemies:

What is the soul?

What primarily tempts the soul?

How can you fight temptations of the soul?

Read Romans 12:1-2. In order not to be conformed to this world, we are told to do two things:

In verse 1, we are told to:

In verse 2, we are told to be:

The World of Fashion

In 1 Peter 3:3, when Peter writes of women adorning themselves, the word used to depict a woman’s adorning was *cosmos*—the same word commonly used for “world” or “order.” In other words, a woman putting on her makeup is putting her face in order. When she spent time fixing her clothes and her hair, she was ordering her looks.

We still use that word to describe a woman making herself up—we get the word “cosmetics” from it!

LESSON SIX: DAY FOUR

Overcoming the Flesh

The flesh tempts us primarily in the body. Your body will be tempted toward lust, laziness, overindulgence, and sexual immorality. The flesh wants to use the body as the vehicle for its expression. When King David was walking the walls of his palace, he spotted a beautiful woman taking a bath. Rather than turn away, he stopped and stared. Lust rose up inside him. He felt his sex drive go into gear as his passions were attacked by the flesh. His mind started to play out scenarios, and instead of returning to his wife, he asked to have that beautiful woman brought to his room. His physical body was under attack by the flesh, and David succumbed to sexual temptation.

When facing the temptations of the flesh, the key word to remember is flight. The Bible says to flee immorality. It says to flee youthful lusts. So if you are faced with a fleshly temptation, or to watch a movie that you know will arouse sexual impurities, run away from it. Young people can't park their car in some secluded rendezvous and expect to remain clean. You can't put yourself in that kind of situation. You've got to flee fornication. Some men say, "I watch that stuff, but it doesn't bother me." Unfortunately, they are lying. The Bible says, "Can a man take a fire in his bosom and be not burned?" (Proverbs 6:27).

When Joseph was tempted by Potiphar's wife, he didn't wait around to consider his options—he ran out of the room. Flight is the key to overcoming fleshly temptation.

List some temptations of the body that you see believers struggling with:

What are some practical things we can do, on a daily basis, to avoid the temptations of the flesh?

Joseph overcame the temptation of the flesh by flight. Read the story of Sampson and Delilah in Judges 16. Why did Sampson fail when he was tempted?

LESSON SIX: DAY FIVE

Overcoming the Devil

In addition to the world and the flesh, a third source of temptation is the devil himself. Satan primarily tempts us not in the areas of the body or the soul, but the spirit. He gets us to doubt God's promises, to question God's love for us, even His very existence. Satan's plan is to keep you in spiritual gridlock, rendering you useless and impotent for the cause of Christ in this world.

When the devil comes around, whispering accusations in your ear, the key word is *fight*. James says that if we resist the devil, he will flee from us. You aren't told to flee from Satan, but to fight him. He isn't going to leave you alone, so you're going to have to learn to fight him in the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, the devil doesn't care about your strength or your good intentions, but he fears the blood of Jesus Christ. When the devil comes and tempts you, fight back with the blood of Jesus. Bring the Word of God against him. Fight back with the truths of Scripture. Hold up your commitment to Christ against him. Put your sin under the blood of Jesus and you will no longer have to be on the defensive. You can just say, "Satan, I bring the blood against you. I resist in the name of the Almighty God. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and you're trespassing on His property. Be gone!"

Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Satan doesn't want you to understand the power that you have to overcome temptation, but God does. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

What is your spirit?

How is it different than your soul?

How does Satan tempt your spirit?

How can you fight that temptation?

First Peter 5:8 says that Satan "walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." We are told to be sober and vigilant. List some ways we can be on *guard* against Satan's temptations:

Jesus Resists Satan’s Temptations with the Word of God

Hebrews 4:15 tells us the Jesus “was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, Jesus countered each temptation by quoting Scripture. When Satan brings temptations and accusations in your life, use the example of Jesus and resist him with promised from God’s Word.

LESSON SEVEN: HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

The Power of the Spirit-Controlled Life

“Every believer needs to learn how to be Spirit-filled, so that they can experience the full measure of the Christian life.”

Ephesians 5:18 – “Be not drunk with wine...but be filled with the Spirit.”

When we are filled with the Spirit, the Christian life will not be a _____
but a _____.

1. The _____ for the Spirit-filled life:

a. Our _____.

It is commanded:

Ephesians 5:18 – “...be filled with the Spirit.”

The command to be filled with the Spirit is:

_____ in mood.

_____ in tense.

_____ in number.

_____ in voice.

b. Our _____.

We need to be filled with the Spirit in:

Our _____ life.

Ephesians 5:19 - "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

Our _____ life.

How can a wife submit? By being filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:22 - "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord."

How can a husband love his wife as Christ loved the church? By being filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:25 - "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it."

Our _____ life.

Ephesians 6:5 - "Servants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ."

Our _____ life.

Ephesians 6:12 - "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood,

but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Our _____ life.

Ephesians 6:19 - “...That I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.”

c. Our _____.

Ephesians 5:16 - “...redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

John 15:5 - “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in Him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

2. The _____ for the Spirit-Filled Life:

a. Complete _____.

b. Continual _____.

c. Conscious _____.

3. The _____ of the Spirit-Filled Life:

a. In relationship to God, there will be a spirit of _____.

Ephesians 5:19 - “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

- b. In relationship to circumstances, there will be a spirit of _____.

Ephesians 5:20 - "Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- c. In relationship to others, there will be a spirit of _____.

Ephesians 5:21 - "Submitting to one another in the fear of God."

LESSON SEVEN: DAY ONE

Start Your Engine!

Imagine a man saved his money for years to buy a brand new automobile. He parks it in his driveway, shows it to his friends, and sits in it all afternoon so people will notice his new car. But he doesn't know how to start it, so everywhere the car goes he has to push it. As silly as that seems, that's the way many Christians are with their spiritual lives. They know the Holy Spirit dwells in them, but they never have quite figured out how to be filled with the Spirit. They've got faith, but they end up pushing their faith around rather than allowing their faith to carry them.

Just as an automobile receives its power from the engine, the believer receives the power to live the Christian life from the indwelling Holy Spirit. The power to live victoriously, however, only comes when we surrender complete control to the Holy Spirit. This means turning over every area of our life to Him—our bodies, our will, our desires, our thought life, our finances—and letting Him control our actions.

What do the following verses tell us about the Holy Spirit?

Psalm 139:7-10

Matthew 28:19-20

John 3:5-8

John 14:26

John 15:26

John 16:13-14

LESSON SEVEN: DAY TWO

Don't Be Drunk, Be Filled

Paul tells the Ephesians, “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). I believe many Christians have not understood that verse. They realize it warns us not to get drunk, but they don't recognize that it also commands us to be filled. The Christian life is not just a matter of “don'ts”, it is also a matter of “do's.” *Don't* be under the influence of alcoholic spirits; *do* be under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

God has commanded you to be filled. To not do so would be disobedient. Ephesians 5:18 is not just a good suggestion, it's a command! It is written in the imperative, which means it is necessary for you to do this. The Christian who is not Spirit-filled is living in rebellion against God. It is also written in the present tense, so it commands you, right at this moment, to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And the command is written in the plural, so it is not just for pastors and missionaries but for all Christians everywhere. Every Christian should be filled, right now, with the Holy Spirit.

In your own words, what does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

How can a Christian be filled with the Spirit?

Read John 16:5-15. What is the Holy Spirit called in verse 7?

According to verse 8, the Holy Spirit will:

According to verses 13 and 14, the Holy Spirit will:

According to 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, how do we know the deep things of God?

The Comforter

One of the names given to the Holy Spirit in the Bible is “Comforter.” The Spirit offers us comfort in our time of need. That word can also be translated “Advocate” and was commonly used that way in the courts of Jesus’ day to describe the one who was called to aid another. It can be translated “Strengthener,” meaning an element that invigorates another. However, the literal translation is “the one who stands by our side.” The Spirit is with you always conforming, strengthening, aiding, and assisting you as you live out your faith.

LESSON SEVEN: DAY THREE

Spiritual Fruit

Sometimes there is uncertainty about what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Some people confuse being Spirit-filled with having and using spiritual gifts. The true mark of being Spirit-filled is not that we learn how to exercise our spiritual gifts, but that we bear the spiritual fruit of “love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, longsuffering, gentleness, self-control” (Galatians 5:22).

When believers are not Spirit-filled, the results are obvious:

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal, and behaving like mere men? (1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

When we are controlled by our old sin nature, the flesh, our lives are characterized by envy, strife, and divisions. As we yield control of our hearts and minds to the Holy Spirit, and let Him completely fill every area of our lives, we will start to see our lives bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

According to Galatians 5:22-23, what does the Spirit produce in the life of a Christian?

How does He produce those?

Which of those has He produced in your life?

Which of these are you most looking forward to seeing produced in your life?

According to Ephesians 5:9, how will the fruit of the Spirit evidence itself in our lives?

LESSON SEVEN: DAY FOUR

Three Requirements for Filling

There are three requirements for being filled with the Spirit. The first thing you must do is make a *complete commitment* to Him. You open the door of your heart, welcome Him in, and give Him complete control of your life. You allow Him to come into every area of your life: your marriage, your job, your friendships, your finances. You open it all up to Him. Your complete commitment to Him is necessary before He can fill your life.

There must also be a *continual control*. The Spirit needs to be continually filling your life and controlling your mind. The reason Paul used the contrast of being filled with the Spirit to being drunk with wine is because they have a similar effect on people. When you are drunk, the alcohol takes over and controls you. The way you walk and talk and think are all altered. You may become generous, or violent, or talkative. You are dominated by the influence of the alcohol. So it is with the Holy Spirit. He controls you, and you aren't the same anymore. A person gets drunk by drinking and stays drunk by drinking more. Likewise a person commits himself to the Holy Spirit, then needs to continually be dependent upon the Spirit.

Third, there needs to be a *conscious claiming*. You must claim the filling of the Holy Spirit. "Just as you received the Lord Jesus, so walk in Him," the Bible says (Colossians 2:6). You received Jesus by faith, so you must continually walk in faith. Just say, "Lord I open myself up to you. Thank you for filling me with Your Spirit. I'm not looking for a feeling, I'm just claiming by faith the fact that I am filled."

Read Acts 2:1-15. How would you describe the apostles under the influence of the Holy Spirit?

In Ephesians 5:18-20, to what does Paul contrast being filled with the Spirit?

How are the two similar?

Complete this statement—Holy Spirit, in order to make a complete commitment of my life to you, I surrender control of the following areas of my life:

LESSON SEVEN: DAY FIVE

Walking in the Spirit

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (Galatians 5:16)

As you learn to walk day by day in the Spirit, you will see it in your relationship to God, your relationship to your circumstances, and your relationships with other people. Your relationship to God will be energized by a spirit of adoration. You'll want to praise God and sing to Him. You'll find yourself constantly singing and praising the Lord. You can't help but praise God when you are filled with the Spirit. Your relationship with God will be strengthened as you adore Him.

You'll also find you have a spirit of appreciation, giving thanks to God for all the wonderful things He has done in your life. Your outlook on your circumstances will change, because you will begin to see your life through the eyes of God. You will no longer be under your circumstances, but will praise God that each circumstance is a divine appointment to move you toward Christlikeness.

Finally, you will develop a spirit of accommodation, which will change your relationship to other people. You'll find the Spirit helping you to submit joyfully to others, as unto the Lord. You'll find yourself looking for ways to serve your brothers and sisters in Christ. That's because the Spirit of God has changed your heart.

Are you walking in the power of the Spirit?

Read Romans 8:11-16. According to verse 11, where does God's Spirit dwell?

According to verse 13, how do we put to death the deeds of the body?

According to verse 14, what characteristic is true of God's children?

How does the Holy Spirit assist our communication with God? See Jude 20, Philippians 3:3, and Romans 8:26 for your answer.

Jude 20

Philippians 3:3

Romans 8:26

LESSON EIGHT: HOW TO KNOW THE WILL OF GOD

Discovering God's Perfect Plan for Your Life

“God has a will for your life, and He wants you to know it.”

We need to ask God two questions:

- _____ are You Lord?
- _____ would You have me to do?

Jeremiah 10:23 - “O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself.”

Three principles that help us to know the will of God:

1. Guidance is _____.

“Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do” (Acts 9:6).

Ephesians 2:10 - “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

Psalms 37:23 - “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.”

Psalms 32:8 - “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.”

Isaiah 58:11 - “The Lord will guide you continually.”

Proverbs 3:6 - “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

KEY THOUGHT

God wants for you what you would want for yourself if you had enough sense to want it.

3 kinds of God's will:

a. God's _____ will. God can never be thwarted in His overall purpose.

b. God's _____ will.

2 Peter 3:9 - "The Lord is...not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

1 Thessalonians 4:3 - "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality."

c. God's _____ will. God has a plan for everyone's life.

Examples of God's:

- Sovereign will - "The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" (Revelation 11:15).
- General will - If you marry, you should marry a Christian. "Be ye not unequally yoked" (2 Corinthians 6:14 KJV).
- Specific will-He will confirm the person you should marry.

6 myths concerning the will of God:

1. The _____ myth that God will give you a road map.

KEY THOUGHT

The will of God is not a road map, it is a relationship.

2. The _____ myth. If I do the will of God, it will be terrible.
3. The _____ myth. God's will is just for a certain class of people; God calls preachers and missionaries, but not ordinary people.
4. The _____ myth. It requires something dramatic to know the will of God. While God may speak to you in a miracle, generally, He does not.

1 Kings 19:11-12 - “And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains, and broke the rock in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a **still small voice.**”

Most of the time, the will of God is in the still small voice.

5. The _____ _____ myth. I missed what God had planned, so it is too late for me.

Joel 2:25 - “I will restore to you the years that the locust has eaten.”

If you missed His will the first time, let God “re-program” you.

6. The _____ myth. God's will is like an Easter egg hunt. God has a will for me, but He is deliberately hiding it so I can't figure it out.

2. Guidance is _____.

There must be:

a. _____

Acts 9:6 - "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

b. _____

Psalm 25:9 KJV - "The meek will He guide."

If He is Lord, there will be no _____, no _____,
no _____.

c. _____

If God speaks in a quiet _____, we need a quiet
_____ to hear it.

d. _____

If you are not yielded, why should God _____ you His will?

3. Guidance is _____.

Six practical ways to know the will of God:

a. The _____ of God.

b. The _____ of God.

KEY THOUGHT

We can't know the will of God apart from the Word of God.

If God has said it in the Word of God, that is His will for you, *period*.

c. The _____ of God.

Proverbs 24:6 - "...in a multitude of counselors there is safety."

d. The _____ of God-the inner witness.

Romans 8:14 - "...as many as are led by the Spirit of God."

e. The _____ of God.

Ephesians 5:15 - "...walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise."

Wisdom is seeing life from God's point of view.

Get your motive clear, get your heart right, and do what you think.

James 1:5 - "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God."

f. The _____ of God.

In Summary:

The will of God for you is _____.

The will of God is for your _____.

The will of God will never _____ you where the power of God and the grace of God cannot _____ and _____ you.

You are free to _____. You are not free _____
_____. You are not free to choose the
_____ of your choice.

LESSON EIGHT: DAY ONE

What Do You Want Me to Do?

If Jesus Christ were to meet you physically, face to face, what would you want to ask Him? I have asked that of many people, and the most common answer I receive is, "I'd want to know what the Lord would have me do." Of course, that encounter has happened already to one man, and he asked Jesus that very question.

Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' So he, trembling and astonished said, 'Lord, what do you want me to do?' And the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go into the city and you will be told what you must do. (Acts 9:1-6)

In that passage Paul asks the two greatest questions we all need to know. First he asks, "Who are you, Jesus?" Then he asks, "What do you want me to do?" We live in a generation of misguided men; clever creatures who know much but have lost their way. The good news we learn from Saul's experience is that guidance is promised. Jesus promised Saul that, if he arose and went into the city, he would be told what to do. We have the Spirit within us, impressing our hearts with the leadership of God.

In your own words, what is the will of God?

How have you sought to know God's will in the past?

How has He led you?

Read the story of Samuel's call in 1 Samuel 3:1-10. What was Samuel's reply when God spoke to Him?

Before God reveals His will to us, what must our response to Him first be?

God Uses F.A.T. Christians

No, it has nothing to do with your weight! The F.A.T. Christians that God uses have the following three qualities:

- Faithful
- Available
- Teachable

As you are seeking God's will for your life, and asking God to use you in a place of service for His kingdom, first make sure you are a F.A.T. Christian!

LESSON EIGHT: DAY TWO

God Has a Plan for You

There are at least three ways in which we may understand the will of God. First, there is His sovereign will. God's *sovereign will* is always done; there's nothing you can do to stop it. God is God and accomplishes what He desires. His sovereign will is mysterious, known entirely by God alone.

Second, there is God's *general will*. It encompasses the moral standards that God has set for us to follow. There are things God tells us that we must do, and things He considers wrong. God's general will is revealed to us in His Word. When God sets a fixed standard, it is always His will that we obey it. Because God commanded us “do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers,” we know that it would never be God's will for us to marry someone who is not a Christian.

The third way we understand God's will is His *particular will*. God has a special will for you, just as He had a particular will for Saul. Acts 9:15 describes God's will for Saul: “The Lord said to him, 'Go for he is a chosen vessel of mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings and the children of Israel.’” God had a special plan for Saul, and He has a special plan for us.

The reason God is interested in me is that He loves me. I might be one small, insignificant man in the sea of humanity, but God knows my comings and goings. The very hairs of my head are numbered. He loves me and calls me His own. And because He does, He has designed a particular plan for my life.

What is the difference between God's general will and His particular will?

In what specific ways has He called you to obey His general will?

Can you think of an instance where you really desired something, but it did not coincide with God's general will?

Read Ephesians 2:10. What can we tell from this verse about God's plan for our lives?

KEY THOUGHT

The will of God is not something I have to do; it is something I get to do.

LESSON EIGHT: DAY THREE

Not a Road Map, But a Relationship

God never provides a special road map for your life. Instead, He provides a relationship. When the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, God didn't give them a road map of where to go; He provided a pillar of fire and told them to follow it. He set up a relationship with the people. Christians want God to send them a simple map to follow that will outline everything they are supposed to do in life, but that's not how He works. That would take the romance and the excitement out of the Christian life.

Although it is not wrong to ask God about specific things in your life, such as what town you should live in, He is more concerned with *who* you are than *where* you are. He is more interested in your sanctification than whether you live in New York or New Mexico. His ultimate plan for you is that you become like Jesus. Romans 8:29 tells us that God has predestined us to “become conformed to the image of His Son.”

According to Ephesians 6:6-8, how should we do the will of God?

According to 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, what are three things we know that are always God's will for us?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

According to Hebrews 13:20-21, what is God's will for you?

How does verse 20 describe our relationship with God?

He is:

We are:

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19. What do we learn about God's will for us from this passage?

The Map Myth

Many Christians live their life hoping that they don't take the wrong turn and miss God's will. In reality, even when we choose a turn that God had not intended for us, God causes all things to "work together for good." God, in His sovereignty, can overrule our mistakes.

Follow God's leading and let Him direct your path, but when you take a wrong turn, allow God to make a "mid-course correction."

LESSON EIGHT: DAY FOUR

One Day at a Time

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told us, “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (Matthew 6:34). He wasn't telling us to be bad stewards and not save for the future; He wasn't telling us not to have dreams and goals. He was simply instructing us to live one day at a time. We don't need to worry about what God's will is for us next week, next month, or next year. We need to concentrate on doing His will today.

The problem many Christians have with the will of God is that they spend too much time trying to figure out the part that isn't clear and not near enough time obeying the part of God's will that He has plainly revealed. Start following God in the areas you do understand, and He will give you wisdom concerning the areas you don't understand.

Although we live in time, God lives outside of time, in eternity. He sees the big picture. As we trust Him, He unveils His plan for us on a day by day basis. We don't have to see the big picture all the time. We simply have to respond to God's leading and walk in the light that He gives us.

What promise does God give us in Psalm 32:8?

What do we learn about God's will in Psalm 37:23?

Read Psalm 40:6-8. Finish this sentence in your own words. Obeying God is more than keeping a set of rules and regulations. I truly do God's will when:

According to Proverbs 3:5, what two things must we do so God will direct our paths?

1. _____

2. _____

How does God promise to guide us in Isaiah 58:11?

Read Jeremiah 10:23. We know that God will guide our steps because:

LESSON EIGHT: DAY FIVE

God's Guiding Hand

God does not expect us to be psychics or clairvoyants, gazing into some crystal ball trying to guess whether to turn to the right or to the left. God gives us many practical ways that we can know His will. One of the primary ways God confirms His will for us is His Word. Psalm 119:105 says, “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” When you are facing a situation and you wonder what you should do, go to your Bible. Read God's Word and see what He has to say about your circumstances. Any solution that comes to you will be in accord with Scripture.

God also guides through the counsel of others. God gives wisdom to parents, grandparents, pastors, teachers and godly friends to provide direction in our lives. Many times they have been through the exact situation we are facing and God uses their advice to show us His will. Proverbs 24:6 says, “In a multitude of counselors there is safety.”

God also confirms His will by provision and circumstance. If, every time you try to walk through a door, God shuts it, He may be telling you to go in another direction. Where God guides, He provides. He will never expect you to do something, and not provide the resources to accomplish the task. If God wants you to get married, He will provide the spouse. If He wants you to be a missionary pilot, He will provide the airplane (and the training).

Spend time in God's Word, seek the wise counsel of other Christians, and follow His guiding hand. God has a plan for your life, and He wants you to know it.

How does God guide us through the His Word?

How has God used other Christians to guide you?

How can a Christian learn to listen to the Spirit's leading?

Name several instances where you can look back and see how God has used provision and circumstances to confirm His will in your life:
