

# Transforming Lives Ministry

## Discipleship Series Foundation 1



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<b>Foundations 1</b>	<b>4</b>
Lesson One: Who is God?	<b>4</b>
A. God is the Creator	4
B. God is Loving	5
C. More of God's Character	5
D. God is Holy	7
Lesson Two: Separation from God	<b>7</b>
Lesson Three: Who is Jesus?	<b>10</b>
A. Jesus is God	10
B. Through Jesus all things were created!	10
C. Jesus Never Sinned!	11
D. Jesus Has Great Authority	11
E. Jesus loves us!	11
F. Jesus is Coming Back!	12
Lesson Four: What has Jesus done for us?	<b>12</b>
A. He came down to earth from heaven to save us.	12
B. Jesus Suffered	13
C. Jesus died on a cross	14
D. Jesus Rose From the Dead	14
Lesson Five : Salvation	<b>15</b>
A. Two Criminals	15
B. Realize the Problem	16
C. Repent	17
D. Have Faith in Jesus Christ	18
E. Tell Others	19
F. Assurance of Salvation	21
Lesson Six: The Grace of God	<b>22</b>
A. Salvation is a Free Gift	22
B. Not By Works	23
Lesson Seven: The Holy Spirit Part 1	<b>24</b>
A. The Holy Spirit is God, the third person of the Trinity	24

B. The Holy Spirit was involved in creating the world.	25
C. The Holy Spirit lives in every Christian	25
D. The Holy Spirit guides, teaches, and empowers every Christian	26
E. The Holy Spirit is a Person	26
F. The Holy Spirit is Down Payment of our Inheritance	27
G. The Holy Spirit Intercedes For Us	27
Lesson Eight: The Holy Spirit Part 2	<b>27</b>
A. Walk in the Spirit	27
B. Benefits of walking in the Spirit	31
C. The Holy Spirit Gives Spiritual Gifts	32
Lesson Nine: God's Most Important Command - Love	<b>33</b>
Lesson Ten: Baptism in Water	<b>37</b>
Lesson Eleven: Baptism in the Holy Spirit	<b>39</b>
Lesson Twelve: Depending on God's Power for Everything	<b>42</b>
Lesson 13 - Now that I am a Christian I have a New Identity!	<b>44</b>

# Foundations 1

## Lesson One: Who is God?

### A. God is the Creator

Genesis 1:1-4 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.

God is the creator of all things. The sun, the moon, and all the stars in the sky came into existence because God created them. Who is God? He is the one who is powerful enough to create everything through his words! How many stars did God create? According to experts who study the information given by the Hubble telescope, there are 12,500,000,000,000,000,000,000 stars! God's power is without limits. Jesus said, "with God all things are possible."

Matthew 19:26, "Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'"

In Genesis chapter one, we learn that God created all the plants, animals, insects, birds, and fish in the sea. We are told God then created man in his image.

Genesis 1:26-28 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." 27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. 28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

God created Adam and Eve in his image and gave them the ability to have children. He commanded them to be fruitful and increase in number, to fill the earth and subdue it.

We are told that after God created Adam and Eve and he placed them in a garden. The place was called the Garden of Eden. They had everything they needed. They had plenty of food. The food grew all around them and there was always enough. In the afternoon, in the cool of the day, God would come and visit with Adam and Eve. (Genesis 3:8)

Genesis 2:15, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”

Genesis 3:8, “Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.”

It seems that God came regularly in the cool of the day to meet with Adam and Eve. We learn from this that God cares about his people and wants to have a loving relationship with them.

## B. God is Loving

Psalm 36:7, “How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.”

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 4:9-10 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

God has an unfailing love for us. He demonstrated his love by sending his Son, Jesus, to die for our sins. In the Old Testament book of Exodus, we see how God revealed himself to Moses.

## C. More of God’s Character

When Moses (one of God’s servants who wrote parts of the Bible) asked if he could see God’s glory, we are told that God allowed Moses to see him in part.

Exodus 33:18-23, “Then Moses said, ‘Now show me your glory.’ And the Lord said, ‘I cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.’

Then the Lord said, 'There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.’”

### God reveals himself to Moses.

5 Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. 6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, 7 maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.” (Exodus 34:5-7)

God is compassionate (verse 6)

God is gracious (verse 6)

God is slow to anger (verse 6)

God is abounding in love (verse 6)

God is abounding in faithfulness (verse 6)

God maintains love to thousands (verse 7)

God is Forgiving (verse 7)

God is also holy, which means he is totally separate from any kind of sin or rebellion. As we see in verse 7, those who are not forgiven by God will be punished for their sins and the effect of their sin will be passed to their descendants.

Exodus 34:7, “maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”

## D. God is Holy

1 Peter 1:16, "Be holy, because I am holy."

1 Samuel 2:2, "There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God."

Psalms 22:3, "Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises."

Leviticus 20:26, "You are to be holy to me because I, the Lord, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own."

God is holy, which means he is totally separate from all sin. For us to have a relationship with God, we too must be holy. We will learn in Lessons 5 that this requires us to put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the next lesson we will see how sin separates human beings from God.

## Lesson Two: Separation from God

God desires to have a relationship with human beings. This is why he created Adam and Eve. Because Adam and Eve sinned, they caused a separation between God and people.

God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. It was their job to take of the Garden, to rule over the animals, and to be fruitful and multiply. God blessed them, saying, "All this is for you. Help yourself to anything you like. But never touch the tree in the middle of the Garden. That tree gives knowledge of good and evil. The day you eat its fruit, you will die."

Genesis 2:8-9, "Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

Genesis 2:16-17 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

God did not mean that Adam and Eve would die instantly the moment they ate the fruit from the tree. He meant that in time they would die. If Adam and Eve had not eaten the forbidden fruit, they would not have died.

One day a snake came to Eve and said, "Has God told you that you can eat the fruit from all the trees?" Eve said, "God has told us we can eat all the fruit except for what grows on The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." (Genesis 3:1).

Genesis 3:1-3 Now the serpent was craftier than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

The serpent replied, "That's not true! This fruit will not harm you. God knows that if you eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, you'll become just like Him, and will be able to decide for yourself what is right and what is wrong."

Genesis 3:4-5, "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

The woman looked at the fruit and thought about how good it looked. She thought how wonderful it would be to be as wise as God. She believed the serpent's lie and ate the fruit. She then gave some to Adam and he took a bite as well.

Genesis 3:6-7, "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves."

As soon as they ate the fruit, a change came over Adam and Eve. They became unhappy and fearful of God. They realized that they were naked, and immediately felt ashamed.



Afterwards, Adam and Eve heard God calling them. Without thinking, they hid in the bushes. But God knew where they were. When God asked them if they had eaten from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (that He had told them not to touch), they blamed each other for their sins.

Genesis 3:8-13 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”

10 He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

11 And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

12 The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

God was sad that Adam and Eve disobeyed Him. He told them that they had to leave the Garden of Eden, "From now on you'll have to scratch a living from the soil. You'll need to make clothes and grow food. Nothing will come easily -- not even childbirth. And one day, you will die."

Genesis 3:22-24, “And the Lord God said, 'The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever.' So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side<sup>[e]</sup> of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”

This is how man became separated from God. God is love, but he is also holy and sinless. He cannot be with people if they are not sinless as well. That is why we need to be forgiven of our sins and why God sent His only Son to die on the cross for our sins – so we could be forgiven and made holy.

Remember, God wants to be in a relationship with us. It is our sin that stops this from happening. But if we can have our sins forgiven, we can have fellowship with God. Jesus can forgive our sins, but first we need to understand who Jesus is and what he has done for us.

## Lesson Three: Who is Jesus?

### A. Jesus is God

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

John 1:14, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

John 5:18, "For this cause therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God."

John 10:30-33, "I and the Father are one." The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God."

John 20:28, "Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Col 2:9, "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form."

Hebrews 1:8, "But of the Son He says, 'Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.'"

### B. Through Jesus all things were created!

John 1:3, "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

Col 1:16-17, "For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

### C. Jesus Never Sinned!

1 Peter 2:22, "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

### D. Jesus Has Great Authority

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

John 3:35, "The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands."

1 Peter 3:22 [Jesus] who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Isaiah 9:6, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

### E. Jesus loves us!

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

Romans 8:39, "neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

## F. Jesus is Coming Back!

Matthew 26:64, "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Matthew 16:27, "For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done."

Luke 21:27, "At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

## Lesson Four: What has Jesus done for us?

Christianity is all about who Jesus is and what Jesus has done for us. Many people and many religions talk about what they can do for God or gods (idols), but as Christians we talk about what Jesus has done for us.

Let us look at what Jesus did for us.

### A. He came down to earth from heaven to save us.

John 6:51, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

John 6:38, "For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me."

Because Jesus loves us, he left the glories of heaven and became a man. Jesus chose to be born in a manger to a humble family. By entering the world in this way, he identified with the poor and the outcast.

Matthew 1:21 "And she [Mary] will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins."

Luke 2:9-12 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. "And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger."

He did not own his own home and we are told that he made himself nothing.

Luke 9:58 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

Phil. 2:5 – 8a Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself...

## B. Jesus Suffered

- Jesus was spit upon Mark 14:65 “Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy!” And the guards took him and beat him.”

- Jesus was mocked Mark 15:20 “And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.”

- He was denied by Peter and betrayed by Judas Mark 14:68 “But he denied it. “I don’t know or understand what you’re talking about,” he said, and went out into the entryway.”

- He was blindfolded and beaten Mark 14:65 “Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy!” And the guards took him and beat him.”

- He was scourged Mark 15:15 “Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.”

- A crown of thorns was put on his head Mark 15:17 “They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him.”
- He was struck with a reed Mark 15:19 “Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him”
- We are told in Isaiah that Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief Isaiah 53:3 “He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.”

### C. Jesus died on a cross

Isaiah 53:6, “We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

Romans 5:8, “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Luke 23:33, "When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals -- one on his right, the other on his left."  
He died so we could be forgiven.

Rom. 4:25, "He who was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification."

1 Peter 2:24, “and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. Jesus rose from the dead!”

Jesus Christ came into this world to die for our sins. Jesus came to give his life for us (Matt. 20:28).

### D. Jesus Rose From the Dead

While Jesus was alive, he had predicted that he would rise from the dead. He challenged his enemies:

"Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." He was speaking about his body (John 2:19-22).

We read about the importance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

1 Corinthians 15:1, "Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."

Romans 4:25, "He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification."

What we learn from Jesus' resurrection:

1. It proves that everything he said and promised was true!
2. It shows us that Jesus has power over death.

Like Jesus, one day all of us will be raised up from the dead.

## Lesson Five : Salvation

### A. Two Criminals

There were two criminals crucified on the right and the left-hand side of Jesus. At first, both criminals insulted Jesus.

Matthew 27:41-44, "Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, 'He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.' Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing."

After being with Jesus for a short time, one of the robbers totally changed his attitude.

Luke 23:39, "One of the criminals who hung there, hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

40 But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

43 Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

What an amazing time to repent and turn to Jesus. This was the last day of his criminal life. As far as we know, this criminal had never followed God. However, he is crucified next to Jesus. At first, he also insulted Jesus. But after spending a very short time with the Lord, he repented, defended Jesus, and asked Jesus to remember him when he entered his eternal kingdom.

This is a great picture of salvation. The criminal knew he was a sinful man and said, "We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve." The criminal changed his ways, which is the definition of repentance. Then he called upon Jesus to save him. By faith he believed that Jesus could save him when he entered his eternal kingdom. Jesus saw his repentance and faith and said, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

The moment the criminal died he went straight to paradise to be with Jesus forever. What a wonderful story. We are not saved because we have served Jesus our whole lives. This man did nothing for God. He had no ability to serve the Lord, for his hands and his feet were nailed to a cross. However, he did do three things. First, he realized he was a sinful person. Second, he repented and turned from his evil ways. And third, he asked Jesus to remember him when he entered into paradise.

This is how people become Christians and spend eternity with Jesus. Another name for paradise is heaven. Following are three steps to becoming a Christian.

## B. Realize the Problem

Your problem is the same as every other person on the planet - you are a sinner. We read in Romans 3:23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." God is holy, which means he is sinless. Heaven is also holy. Only through the forgiveness of sin can God accept us and allow us to enter into heaven.



In summary, we all have a problem. The problem is that everyone is separated from holy God because of sin and therefore cannot go to heaven.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.

We are all lost because of our sins. The good news is that Jesus came to earth to save all of us who are lost.. “For the Son of Man [Jesus] came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). This is why Jesus died on the cross. It was his sacrifice on the cross that made it possible for people to be forgiven.

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

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Mark 10:45 “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

John 15:12-13 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

Titus 2:13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

## C. Repent

Acts 3:19, “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.”

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Matthew 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Ezekiel 18:32 For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live!

Acts 17:30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

What is Repentance?

Repentance means to turn around and go the other direction. We turn away from our sin and turn to God. We turn from our old way of life and follow Jesus.

Mark 1:15 says, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

## D. Have Faith in Jesus Christ

The word faith and the word believe have the same meaning.

We read in Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

Two examples of faith:

1. We are confident that God exists even though we cannot see him. This is faith.
2. With our physical eyes we cannot see the goodness of God, yet we believe with full assured that he is good. This too is faith.

To believe means that we place our trust in God’s truth. In other words, we are fully convinced that everything God has said is true.

1 Corinthians 15:2-4, “By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

Two more Examples of faith:

If we read in the Bible, “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures” and we are convinced this is true, then we have faith.

If we are confident that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again on the third day, then we believe the gospel.

The problem that every human being has is that we are separated from God because of our sin. God has a solution for our problem. If we repent and believe in Jesus, God will destroy the problem of sin. Once sin is destroyed, we are no longer separated from God. Jesus has destroyed sin by dying on the cross. Everyone who repents of their sins and believes in Jesus and what he has done for us can now have eternal life with an eternal personal relationship with God.

God desires to have a good relationship with human beings. Because God is love, he sent Jesus to die for our sins. "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son so that anyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16) As soon as we believe, we receive eternal life, and one day we will go to paradise with God forever.

We can pray a prayer like this, "Jesus, I believe in you. I admit that I need forgiveness. I want to turn away from my sin and turn to you. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I trust in this sacrifice. Thank you that I can now go to heaven."

Once you do this Jesus promises to come into your life.

John 14:23 Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them."

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

Now that you have received Jesus into your life, share what you have done with others.

## E. Tell Others

You have received the love of God, eternal life, and forgiveness. Now it's time to tell your friends and family. They need to hear that God loves them so much that he sent his only son to die for their sins.

Romans 10:13-14, Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Here are 7 things to remember when telling people about Jesus.

1. Pray! Pray for boldness, pray for wisdom on what to share, pray for opportunities, and pray for people to open their hearts to receive.
2. Listen. Spend at least as much time listening as talking.
3. Testimony. Share what happened to you. You have a testimony of what God did in your life. Boldly tell others all the good things God has done for you.
4. Don't Argue. Talk about what Jesus did in your life and what he can do in theirs. Don't get caught up in arguments about political, moral, and ethical issues. Tell people about Jesus' love and how he can save them from their sins.
5. Separation. Share the problem, which is separation from God. Memorize or write down Romans 3:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." and Romans 6:23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Share these verses with them.
6. God's Answer. Talk about God's answer to the problem of being separated from God. When Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, he paid the penalty for our sins. Share 1 Peter 2:24: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed."
7. Pray with them to receive Jesus. If they believe what you are telling them, ask them to pray with you. Tell them they can receive Jesus right now and receive eternal life.

John 1:12, "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

Romans 10:13, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Here is a sample prayer you can lead others in: “Dear Jesus, I know that I have sinned and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins on the cross and rose from the dead. I trust and follow you as my Lord and Savior. Guide my life and help me to do your will. In your name, amen.”

## F. Assurance of Salvation

Salvation depends completely on Jesus. As we continually put our trust in him, we will experience the power of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives. It is the power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives that gives us the assurance that we are saved. We are never saved because we sin less or do more good things. However, we are assured that Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit when we grow. As we grow, we will sin less often and do more things that please the Lord.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22, “Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.”

God is so good that he made a way for us to be forgiven and be with him in heaven forever. Now that we are Christians it is important to remember that God is the one who makes this happen. It is not our good works that save us; it is God’s grace.

1 John 5:11-12 gives us a strong promise about being saved. It says:  
*"And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."*

Here’s how 1 John 5:11-12 can assure us of our salvation:

1. **God Gives Us Eternal Life:** The verse tells us that eternal life is a gift from God. We don’t have to earn it; God freely gives it. This lets us know that eternal life is something we can have now if we believe in Jesus.
2. **Life Comes Through Jesus:** It says that this life is in God’s Son, Jesus. This means that when we believe in Jesus and have a relationship with Him, we have eternal life.

3. Simple and Clear: Verse 12 says, "Whoever has the Son has life." This means if you have accepted Jesus, you have eternal life. It's that simple. We can be sure we're saved by trusting in Jesus.
4. A Certain Promise: The verse shows that having Jesus is what matters. It's not about how we feel or what we do but about having Jesus in our lives. This makes it clear and gives us confidence.
- 5.

So, 1 John 5:11-12 helps us know for sure that we have eternal life if we believe in Jesus. It's a promise we can trust!

## Lesson Six: The Grace of God

### A. Salvation is a Free Gift

While Jesus was dying on the cross for our sins, remember there were two criminals next to him. One was on his right and the other was on his left. They had done horrible things and deserved to be punished. Early in the day both men insulted Jesus, but later in the day one of them changed. The criminal on his left started to insult Jesus by saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" The criminal on Jesus' right said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 "And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." 42 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" 43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise." This story is found in Luke 23:32-43 and Matthew 27:44.

The criminal on Jesus' right is now in heaven. In fact, that very day as Jesus had said, he was in Paradise! What did he do to deserve salvation? Did he go to church? Did he pray every day? Did he evangelize? NO! He could do nothing because he was nailed to a cross. But he did believe in Jesus. So he asked Jesus just to remember him. And Jesus graciously forgave him.

We need to understand that salvation does not come because we do good things! Salvation comes because of what Jesus did by dying on the cross. If we believe that Jesus died for us on the cross and trust in Him, we will be saved.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have ever lasting life" (John 3:16).

Because God loves us, he sent his son into the world. Jesus died on the cross for our sins, he was buried and on the third day he rose from the dead. If we believe this, we will have eternal life. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all our sin and there is nothing we can do to add or pay for this salvation.

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast”  
(Ephesians 2:8-9).

Grace means that you are given something that is free of cost.

We receive the grace of God through faith. When we truly believe in who Jesus is and what he has done for us, we are forgiven.

God even tells us that salvation is “not from yourselves, it is the gift of God”. This means that even faith is given to us as a gift. He did this because he loves us. Our response needs to be thankfulness!

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## B. Not By Works

We do not receive salvation through good works. Going to church, praying, and sharing our faith are good things but they will not save us. We are saved by faith. We can give to the poor, help others, and sing praise songs all day long, but these things will not save us. We are saved because of what Jesus did for us; He died on the cross for our sins.

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

- We are saved by the grace of God.
- Salvation is a free gift.

Acts 15:11 “But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved.”

Acts 4:12 “For there is no deliverance through any other person, nor has any other name on earth been given by which we must be saved,”

Acts 16:31”Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”

God is ready and willing to give salvation to anyone who asks with faith.

Revelation 3:20, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears my voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

“And the Spirit and the bride say ‘Come!’  
And let the one who hears say, ‘Come!’  
And let the one who is thirsty come;  
let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.”  
(Revelation 22:17)

## Lesson Seven: The Holy Spirit Part 1

### A. The Holy Spirit is God, the third person of the Trinity

There is only one God, and he describes himself as a trinity: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit. They are co-equal and co-eternal. The Holy Spirit is in some mysterious way separate from God the Father and Jesus, yet one with them as well. This is difficult to understand, but we need to remember that God is infinite.

God is infinite and beyond our finite minds to understand how great God is. For example, with the Hubble telescope, we have found 125 billion galaxies. Each galaxy has perhaps 200 billion stars, which is 12,500,000,000.000.000,000,000 stars! God merely spoke and all the stars were created! They all spin, orbit, and never run into each other. Our star, the sun, is so big that you could fit a million earths into it! And yet there is a star in our galaxy that is so large you could fit five billion stars into it. It’s called XY Scuti. With this



in mind, should the fact that we can't completely understand God really be a problem for us?

The Lord says in Isaiah 55:8-9, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

God is one, but he has revealed himself as a Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Deuteronomy 6:4 says, "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!"

Isaiah 44:6, "Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me.'"

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

Since God is infinite and his ways are higher than the heavens, no one should be surprised that we can't fully understand God. By faith we believe that God is one and yet he exists in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

## B. The Holy Spirit was involved in creating the world.

Genesis 1:1-2, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."

## C. The Holy Spirit lives in every Christian

Whenever anyone becomes a Christian, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit become a part of their lives.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him."

"Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:38).

1 Corinthians 3:16, “Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”

#### D. The Holy Spirit guides, teaches, and empowers every Christian

“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26) .

“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come” (John 16:13).

Acts 1:8, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Look at all the things these scriptures tell us. We see that the Holy Spirit is our advocate, he teaches us, he reminds us of the truth, he guides, he discloses what is to come, and he gives power for us to be witnesses to the world. It is the Holy Spirit who teaches us and makes God’s Word come alive. The Bible is the only book where the author is available to sit down and join you every time you read it!

#### E. The Holy Spirit is a Person

Note: when we say that God or the Holy Spirit is a "person," we do not mean that He is a human being. We mean that God possesses "personality" and is a rational Being with self-awareness. Theologians often define “person” as "an individual being with a mind, emotions, and a will."

It is important to understand that the Holy Spirit is not just a force or a power, but an actual person equal to God the Father and God the Son. The Holy Spirit guides, teaches, and empowers every Christian. Like a person, the Holy Spirit can be grieved.

Ephesians 4:30, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

Because the Holy Spirit is a person, it is also possible to quench, or resist the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 5:19, “Do not quench the Spirit.”

Acts 7:51 “You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit!”

## F. The Holy Spirit is Down Payment of our Inheritance

Ephesians 1:13, “And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.”

As we experience the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, these things remind us of all of God’s promises. He is the seal and the mark in our lives that we are saved and going to heaven.

## G. The Holy Spirit Intercedes For Us

Many times, when we don’t know what to pray. Fortunately, the Bible says the Holy Spirit prays for us.

Romans 8:26-27, “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.”

# Lesson Eight: The Holy Spirit Part 2

## A. Walk in the Spirit

Gal 5:16, “So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”

Gal 5:25, “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

Zechariah describes how we should depend upon the power of the Spirit as we live our Christian life.

Zechariah 4:6, “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit’ says the Lord Almighty.”

As Christians, we need to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit, rather than our own strength. It is good to confess to God our weakness and pray for his strength. By faith we need to deepen our dependence on the Holy Spirit.

How do we deepen our dependence on the Holy Spirit and walk in the Spirit?

1. Pray. We can pray simple prayers like, “God, help me! I need you.” Or, “Help me to depend upon you today.” Prayer is the most important way for us to have a life that is filled with the presence of God. Every morning we should pray, “Lord, help me to walk in your Spirit.”

Read carefully the words of Jesus in Luke 11:9-13, which specifically says that God will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask, seek, and knock.

Luke 11:9-13 “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. 11 “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for [f] a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

2. Agree with the Holy Spirit. We read in Amos 3:3, “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” Part of walking together in unity is agreement. When you walk with someone, you must agree on two things - where you are going and how you are going to get there. We walk in the Spirit when we do things the Holy Spirit wants us to do and take the path, he wants us to take. For example, if the Holy Spirit says to love your neighbor as yourself and you decide to hate your neighbor, then you are not walking in the Spirit. You have picked a different path than the one given to you by the Holy Spirit.

We find in the Bible the path the Holy Spirit wants us to follow: “Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

We also find the path that the Holy Spirit wants us to walk when we pray and are sensitive to his guidance.

It is good to pray, “God, I want to cooperate with all that you want for my life. Help me to depend upon you and your power and help me to yield to your Spirit. Amen.”

3. We need to read, think about, and follow the Bible. Something supernatural happens when we read the Word of God! There is a unity between our human spirit and the Spirit of God when we read, listen to, or meditate on the Bible.

In Galatians 3:5 we are asked, “So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?”

We receive the Spirit and God works miracles in our lives when by faith we believe what we have heard from him. God can do miracles in our lives and continually fill us with His Spirit as we believe his Word!

4. We live in fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

Read carefully these words, “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen (2 Corinthians 13:14).”

This is Apostle Paul’s prayer for all believers, that they would experience fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Everyone who is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has a life in the Spirit. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

I Corinthians 6:19, “You should know that your body is a temple for the Holy Spirit that you received from God and that lives in you. You don't own yourselves.”

That means that we are now united with him. It is important to live in the awareness that God is with you and his power is available moment by moment to help you walk with him.

We need to have an experiential relationship with the Holy Spirit. By faith we have an awareness and experience of his presence in our lives. It is a reality beyond a knowledge of who God is or what he has done for us. We have an intimate relationship with God, and he is intimately involved in our lives. By faith we need to walk in this awareness.

5. Continually give thanks to God and sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

In Ephesians 5:15-20 we read, “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

We see in this verse that the opposite of being filled with the Holy Spirit is to get drunk with wine. People all over the world try to find happiness through alcohol. However, once they are drunk, they do all kinds of foolish and evil things. God has given us a better way to find happiness, peace, and joy. He says, “Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit”. We are even shown how to be filled with the Holy Spirit. First, “speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.” Second, “Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord”. And third, “always give thanks to God the Father for everything.” If we want to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit, then we need to be continually filled with praise and thanksgiving!

6. We walk in the Spirit when we have a deep desire to experience more of God.

In John 7:37-39 we read these words from Jesus, “On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.’ 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”

It is important that we thirst for the Holy Spirit in our lives. He is a person, and he wants to have fellowship with you. He also wants you to desire fellowship with him. Tell him daily that you desire to walk in fellowship with him.

## B. Benefits of walking in the Spirit

### 1. Fruits of the Holy Spirit

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

As we walk in the Spirit, we experience all these fruits, “love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”

The first fruit of the Holy Spirit is love. The more we walk in the Spirit, the more we can experience and be empowered to share the love of God.

The second fruit is joy. True lasting joy comes from the Lord! It is a vital part of our Christian life. We are told that it is the joy of the Lord that is our strength.

Nehemiah 8:10, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

The third fruit of the Holy Spirit is peace. The Holy Spirit teaches us how to overcome fear and anxiety so we can experience peace! The more we walk in the Spirit, the more peace we receive from God.

Love, joy, and peace are just the first three fruits of the Holy Spirit. Six more fruits of the Holy Spirit are listed in Galatians 5:22-23, which are “forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”

### 2. The Holy Spirit gives us Freedom

2 Corinthians 3:17, “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

3. As we walk in the Spirit, we receive power to overcome addiction and sin. Galatians 5:16, “So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”

4. The Holy Spirit gives us boldness and spiritual power to witness to others.

Acts 1:8, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

The only way Jesus’ disciples could go out and preach the gospel was through the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit who drew us to Jesus, and it is the Holy Spirit that transforms us. Zach. 4:6, “... ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty.” God has so much for us as we walk in the Spirit.

### C. The Holy Spirit Gives Spiritual Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:7-11, “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,[a] and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.”

The Holy Spirit gives every believer spiritual gifts. These gifts are given so that we can minister to and encourage others. This is how the church is strengthened.

The Holy Spirit wants to speak to us and lead us. He does this through the Word of God and through spiritual gifts like prophecy, words of wisdom, and words of knowledge. He can lead us through the gift of discernment, so we can judge between what is good and evil.

Romans 12:6-8, “We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.”

1 Corinthians 12:28, “And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.”



Everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ receives one or more spiritual gifts. It is important that we learn what gifts we have and use them.

1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

## Lesson Nine: God's Most Important Command - Love

### LOVE GOD AND OTHERS!

Jesus made it very clear how we are to live as his followers in Mark 12:28-31:

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.'"

God wants us to love him and to love others.

If we ask, what do I do now that I am a Christian? The answer is, love God and love your neighbor.

#### A. How Can We Show Love for God?

##### 1. We obey Him.

Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23).

"In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3).

In order to obey God, we must know what the Bible says and follow it. Listen to the Word of God at church. Read the Bible and obey it. Even with this book you are reading right now, you should listen carefully to each lesson and follow its teachings. This does not mean that everything we do for God will be easy. But if we truly love God, we will gladly do whatever He tells us.

## 2. We talk to Him.

Praying is talking to God. Tell God your problems. Ask him to help you. Talk to him about everything. Praying is one the best ways we can spend time with God.

“Never stop praying” (I Thess. 5:17).

Jesus taught that everyone should pray and not give up.

“And he spoke a parable to them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1).

## 3. We thank Him.

Thank him for everything he has done for you. Thank him for salvation. Thank him for everything he has given you.

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you ...” 1 Thess 5:18.

“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving ...” Col 4:2.

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name ...” Heb 13:15.

## 4. We confess our sins to Him.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

“Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

We should try to not sin, but all of us will sin. When we do, we need to confess our sins to God. Tell him your sins and ask him for the strength to not repeat them.

5. We repent of our sins.

Confession is good, but we also need to turn from our sins and not do them again. The word repentance means to turn. We turn away from sin and do not do it any longer.

Jesus said, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32).

Jesus also said, "In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10).

"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

6. We put Him first in our lives.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30).

With everything we have and with all that we are, we must love God. This means that he has to be first in our lives.

"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me" (Matthew 10:37-39).

- Your desires are not first.
- Your parents' wishes are not first.
- Your plans are not first.

God is first.

- What does God desire for my life?
- What does God wish for me to do?
- What is God's plan for my life?

These are the kinds of questions we need to ask. When we have a choice, we choose God's will and not our own.

God must be more important than anything we desire. For example: we may like getting drunk, but God is more important than our sinful desire. We may think sexual immorality is fun, but God has to be first. His will and His desire must control our lives, not the things we want.

It is extremely important to remember that everything God has for us is good. When we do things God's way, we find life, meaning, and joy. Obeying God brings blessings. Obeying God brings peace. Obeying God helps us to have wonderful marriages and wonderful families. It is always better to do things God's way! Jesus said in John 10:10, "I have come to bring life and that more abundantly!"

## B. How Can We Show Love to One Another?

### 1. Serve Others

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45)

### 2. Forgive One Another

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

### 3. Encourage and Build Each Other Up

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

### 4. Pray for Others

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." (Ephesians 6:18)

### 5. Meet Physical Needs

"If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?" (1 John 3:17)

### 6. Help Each Other Through Tough Times

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.”  
(Galatians 6:2)

#### 7. Show Patience and Kindness

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.” (1 Corinthians 13:4)

#### 8. Be Generous

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” (Luke 6:38)

## Lesson Ten: Baptism in Water

Now that we are Christians, we need to love God by obeying his commandments. One of his commandments is that we would be baptized.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.”

As Christians, we need to follow the example of Jesus Christ. Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. As followers of Jesus, we need to be baptized as well.

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. <sup>14</sup> But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” <sup>15</sup> Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.

<sup>16</sup> As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:13-17)

Jesus commanded his disciples to go into the whole world and baptize all of his disciples.

“Go therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you, for I am with you always, even until the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

We see in the Bible that as soon as someone believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, they were baptized. When Philip preached the gospel to a man from Africa, he believed in Jesus. This man wanted to be baptized and Philip baptized him immediately.

“Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?’ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.” (Acts 8:35-38)

The same thing happened to a Philippian jailer and his whole family. As soon as they believed in Jesus, they were baptized.

<sup>31</sup> “They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household. <sup>33</sup> At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized.” (Acts 16:31, 33)

Baptism is a great opportunity to invite your friends, relatives, and neighbors so that you can make a public demonstration of your faith in Jesus Christ!

"Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven." (Matthew 10:32)

Baptism is a symbol of your relationship with Jesus. Going down into the water is a symbol of you dying to your old way of life. Coming up out of the water is a symbol of your new life walking with Jesus. We are now a new creation in Christ Jesus. We are now born again and we are to walk in this new life that God has given us.

Romans 6:3-4 says, “Don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”

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

The word baptism means to dip or to immerse. Therefore, we believe in totally immersing a person in water. You are buried with him in baptism (you go totally down into the water) and are raised with him to newness of life.

Only those who understand baptism and have accepted Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross for their sins should be baptized. Therefore...

1. Young people should only be baptized if they understand salvation and have faith in Jesus Christ.
2. If you were baptized as a baby in another denomination, you should be baptized again now that you understand the meaning of baptism and believe in Jesus.

#### Final Note

No one is saved through baptism. We are saved through faith in what Jesus Christ has done for us. But every Christian should be baptized out of obedience to what Jesus taught and showed us as an example.

## Lesson Eleven: Baptism in the Holy Spirit

### A. Beginning in the Spirit

(Quick Review) The Christian life begins in the Spirit.

When we truly believe in Jesus, who he is and what he has done for us, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Every believer receives the Holy Spirit when he or she is saved.

Ephesians 1:13-14, “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

Romans 8:9, “You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.”

"...know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For you are bought with a price..." (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

The Holy Spirit is such a wonderful gift! Amazingly, God lives in us by his Spirit!

### B. Empowered by the Holy Spirit

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8

After Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared to his first disciples. We read in John 20 that Jesus breathed on them the promised Holy Spirit.

19 In the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. 21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:19-22).

Several weeks later the disciples were waiting for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon them so they could be God's witnesses to the world. All of Jesus' disciples received the Holy Spirit when Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." However, a few weeks later when all the believers were together in one place, they were all "filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues."

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them" (Acts 2:1-4).



As we saw, Jesus had already breathed on them the promised Holy Spirit, but now, while the disciples are waiting upon God, they are filled and speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. We see from this that we can receive the Holy Spirit and then, at a later time, be filled with the Holy Spirit. What was the result of the disciples being filled with the Holy Spirit?

The same day Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, preached the good news of Jesus Christ and about three thousand people were saved.

Acts 2:41, "Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day."

In Acts chapter 8 we see that new believers, who were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus, received the Holy Spirit after Peter and John placed their hands on them.

"When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit" Acts 8:14-17.

In the city of Ephesus, Paul placed his hands upon 12 new believers - they were filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke in tongues, and prophesied.

Acts 19:6-7, "When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all."

The Holy Spirit lives in us when we are first saved, but we can be **continually filled** with the Holy Spirit's power throughout our lives. Ephesians 5:18 says, "Don't drink too much wine, for many evils lie along that path; be **filled** instead with the Holy Spirit." The word "filled" in Greek means to be "continually filled." This shows that being filled with the Spirit isn't a one-time thing; it's an ongoing process that requires us to keep submitting and to stay open to the Spirit's power and presence in our lives.

With the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, all the followers of Jesus spoke in new tongues. Also, Peter was so empowered by the Holy Spirit that after he preached his message, and about 3,000 were added to the church that day. Another sign that followed being filled with the Holy Spirit was prophecy. When Paul placed his hands on twelve men in Ephesus they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

When Peter and John went to Samaria and laid their hands on those who had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

We see in the book of Acts that people were filled and received gifts as Spirit filled leaders laid their hands on them. The first disciples were waiting upon the Lord in unity in an upper room when the Holy Spirit came like a might rushing wind. Tongues of fire appeared and rested upon each one.

Here is an important truth - God always has more for us!

As we wait on the Lord, he has more for us.

As we spend time with Jesus, we can receive more.

As Spirit filled leaders lay their hands on us, we can receive more.

As we pray, God will give us the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:13, "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

As we step out into ministry, God has more for us.

## Lesson Twelve: Depending on God's Power for Everything

By faith we need to daily depend upon the power of God for everything.

We must believe that...

- Joy comes from God
- Health comes from God
- Prosperity comes from God
- Good crops come from God

- Power to minister to others comes from God
- Blessings come from God
- Power to overcome sin comes from God
- Peace comes from God
- Every good thing comes from God

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows” (James 1:17).

What things do you desire or need? Is it a spouse, healing, or finances? We must depend upon God for everything! We cannot trust in ourselves. We cannot trust in others to give us these things. We cannot go to the witch doctor, pray to ancestral spirits, or make sacrifices to idols to receive these things. We must go to the one true God of the universe that created us and loves us. This is why prayer (talking to God with our own words) and depending upon God is so important.

God has promised us that if we put him first in our lives, he will take care of us!

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:33).

“Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God” (Psalm 20:7).

“I have come to bring you life and that more abundantly (John 10:10b).”

This is why it is so important to pray every day!

Matthew 7:7-11, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”

Matthew 18:19, “Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.”

Matthew 21:22, “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

People will do all kinds of evil things to get what they want. They will lie, they will go to the witch doctor or shamans, they will fight, or they will steal. But God tells us that we need to ask Him.

1 Peter 5:6-7 “You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you”.

In 2 Kings 1, “Ahaziah, King of Israel, fell off the balcony of his palace and was seriously injured. Instead of turning to the Lord, he sent messages to the temple of a pagan god, Baalzebub, to ask whether he would recover from his injuries. The prophet Elijah told Ahaziah, because he had chosen to inquire of a pagan god, rather than the Lord, that he would not leave the bed that he was lying on and that he would die. He died.”

2 Kings 1:2-4 “Now Ahaziah had fallen through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria and injured himself. So he sent messengers, saying to them, “Go and consult Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, to see if I will recover from this injury.”  
3 But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, “Go up and meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and ask them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going off to consult Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?’  
4 Therefore this is what the Lord says: ‘You will not leave the bed you are lying on. You will certainly die!’” So Elijah went.”

The story can be applied to the witch doctor or shamans. If you do not turn to God, you will not be blessed. It will bring nothing but trouble.

Let us all trust in God for everything!

## Lesson 13 - Now that I am a Christian I have a New Identity!

Following are some of the blessings that give us our new identity.

### Blessed / Chosen / Holy / Blameless

Ephesians 1:3-4, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight in love.”

### Filled with the Holy Spirit

John 14:16-17 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

### A Child of God

1 John 3:1 See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

### A Members of God’s Household

Ephesians 2:19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household.

### Citizens of Heaven

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

### Seated in the heavenly places

Ephesians 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

### God delights and rejoices over you with singing

Zephaniah 3:17. “The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”

### Completely forgiven

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness, for by his wounds you have been healed.

### Washed clean

Isaiah 1:18 “Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

Part of a chosen race / A royal priesthood / Part of a holy nation

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Free

Galatians 5:1, “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” (John 8:36)

A temple of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 6:19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

Adopted into the family of God

Romans 8:15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”

Co-heirs with Jesus Christ / Heirs of God

Romans 8:17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

You were sanctified which means to be made a saint

1 Corinthians 6:11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

An ambassador of Christ

2 Corinthians 5:20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

#### God's co-laborer

1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

#### A sweet aroma

2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.

#### Never alone

Deuteronomy 31:6 Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

#### God's masterpiece

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

#### Wonderfully made

Psalms 139:14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

#### We have his incomparably great power working in us!

Ephesians 1:18-20, <sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength <sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms

#### We have a guaranteed victory

1 John 5:4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

This is a partial list that shows our identity in Christ. When you go to God in prayer, you can pray with complete confidence. Never say, "Who am I?" as if you were inferior to any other believer in the world. We are not inferior to any believer who has ever lived. We are all fellow partakers of God's promises. Christianity is not about our goodness or performance. We do not earn the power to pray. Freely we receive from God and freely we give. Christianity is about all that Jesus has done to bring us into an eternal loving relationship with him.

When we try to do good things so that God will love us or answer our prayers, we are NOT obeying the truth. 1 John 4:10 says, "This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." By faith we receive God's love. By faith we believe all the promises of God about our identity - that we are loved and highly favored. We are His beloved children. We minister out of the love we have received. We know we are loved by God and we know that those we pray for are also loved by God. Let's focus on God's goodness and love, not on our inadequacies.

As children of a loving Heavenly Father, we know our identity and can therefore live and minister out of rest. Rest means to stop working to earn God's favor. God accepts us because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. We can rest because we know our salvation is securely provided by God's grace. Because of this, we pray from a place of victory. Continually remind yourself of all the promises listed above. Meditate on His goodness. Thank Him for all He has done for you. God wants you to enjoy your relationship with Him. He wants you to rejoice in Him always. The Joy of the Lord is your strength. Praise the Lord and thank Him for all His wonderful works.