

Foundations 1B

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Lesson 1: The Holy Spirit – Who is He?

A. The Holy Spirit is 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. In other words, if 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.

¹³And 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, ¹⁴who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

Romans 8:9, “You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.”

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

John 14:23, 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.”

“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 is our Helper

1. He is our Teacher

“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).

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!

2. He is our Guide

“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).

3. He gives us understanding and revelation

Ephesians 1:17, "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better."

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 a Down Payment of our Inheritance

Ephesians 1:13-14, "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, 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.”

The Holy Spirit is amazing! He empowers us, teaches us, and directs our every step. Additionally, He intercedes for us according to God's will, surrounding us with His love. No wonder Paul the Apostle wanted us all to enjoy “the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,” as well as the grace of Jesus, and the love of God!

2 Corinthians 13:14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

H. Discussion Questions

1. How does viewing the Holy Spirit as a person, rather than a force or power, influence our relationship with Him?

2. How does the Holy Spirit's role in creation, as mentioned in Genesis 1:1-2, enhance our understanding of His presence and power?
3. What are some ways you have experienced the Holy Spirit guiding, teaching, or empowering you in your own life?
4. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit is a “deposit guaranteeing our inheritance” and how does this assurance impact the way you live out your faith?
5. In Romans 8:26-27, it says the Holy Spirit intercedes for us when we don't know what to pray. How does this understanding of the Holy Spirit's role in prayer affect your approach to prayer and your relationship with God?

Chapter 2: The Fullness of the Spirit

A. Be Baptized in the Holy Spirit

When we receive Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us. That's the beginning of our new life. But Jesus promised something more: power from heaven to live boldly, love deeply, and carry His gospel into the world.

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 baptism in the Holy Spirit is not about earning more of God—it's about yielding more of ourselves to Him. It's the moment when the Spirit not only lives *in* us but comes *upon* us in power.

The disciples first received the Spirit when Jesus breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). Yet, a short time later at Pentecost, they were filled again—this time with power to change the world.

Acts 2:4, “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues^[a] as the Spirit enabled them.”

The same Peter, who once denied Jesus, preached that day with boldness, and three thousand were saved. The timid became fearless. The ordinary became unstoppable. The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead filled them with heaven’s power.

1. God Has More for You

The Holy Spirit’s work doesn’t stop with salvation. Throughout the book of Acts, believers were filled and refilled as they prayed, worshiped, and laid hands on one another. In Samaria, believers received the Holy Spirit when Peter and John prayed for them.

Acts 8:17, “Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.”

In Ephesus, twelve believers were filled when Paul laid hands on them—they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Acts 19:6, “When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues^[a] and prophesied.”

God still fills His people today. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is for every believer who hungers for more of God’s presence. It brings boldness, power, and a deeper awareness of His love.

There is more:

- More power to love.
- More courage to witness.
- More intimacy in prayer.

- More overflow of His gifts and presence.

2. An Open Invitation

The baptism in the Holy Spirit isn't a one-time event—it's an open invitation to live daily in God's presence and power. As we pray, worship, and yield to Him, rivers of living water flow from within us.

John 7:38, "Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."

The Holy Spirit within us gives us life; the Holy Spirit upon us gives us power.

This is how we change the world—not by might, not by human effort, but by His Spirit.

So he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty. (Zech. 4:6)

B. Walk in the Spirit

1. What does this mean?

To "walk in the Spirit" means to depend on God's power instead of our own.

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

Galatians 5:25, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."

2. Live in Constant Fellowship with the Holy Spirit

Walking in the Spirit is a daily choice—a life of prayer, faith, and obedience.

Jesus said,

John 15:4, "Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

When we invite the Holy Spirit to guide us, He fills our hearts with peace, wisdom, and strength. The Holy Spirit doesn't just visit us—He fellowships with us. He wants us to walk with Him moment by moment, listening to His voice, depending on His guidance, and enjoying His presence.

2 Corinthians 13:14, “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

This fellowship leads to joy, gratitude, and worship.

Ephesians 5:18, “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,”

True joy doesn't come from what we drink or own—it comes from the presence of God filling our hearts.

3. The Fruit and Freedom of the Spirit

When we walk in the Spirit, our lives begin to show the fruit of His presence.

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

The Spirit also brings freedom.

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

The Spirit gives us power to overcome sin.

Romans 8:13¹³ For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

The Spirit gives us boldness to share our faith

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

The same Spirit that empowered Peter and Paul empowers us today.

4. The Gifts of the Spirit

The Holy Spirit gives each believer spiritual gifts to build up the church and bless others.

1 Corinthians 12:7, “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”

1 Corinthians 12:4, “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.”

When we walk in the Spirit, God releases His gifts through us—healing, words of wisdom, prophecy, discernment, and miracles—all expressions of His love.

5. Three Lies That Go Against God’s Word

Lie #1: You received all of the Spirit you’ll ever need at salvation—there’s no separate filling or baptism in the Holy Spirit today.

Truth: Scripture shows believers receiving the Spirit at salvation *and* being filled/empowered afterward for witness and power.

Acts 4:8, “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people!”

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

We’re also commanded to keep being filled.

Ephesians 5:18, “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,”

Lie #2: Walking in the Spirit is just trying harder to be good; you don’t need to ask or depend on Him daily.

Truth: The Christian life is not by might nor by power but by His Spirit.

Zechariah 4:6b, "...‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty.”

Romans 8:14, “For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.”

Lie #3 : Spiritual gifts (tongues, prophecy, healing, etc.) ended—or they’re optional and unimportant.

Truth: The Spirit distributes gifts to each one for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:11, “All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.”

We’re told to eagerly desire them, especially prophecy.

1 Corinthians 14:1, “Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy.”

Every believer is a steward of grace with gifts to serve others.

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.”

Gifts don’t replace fruit, but they express God’s love and power alongside it.

1 Corinthians 13:1-2, “If I speak in the tongues^[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”

1 Corinthians 14:12, “So it is with you. Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church.”

6. Conclusion: Two Lifelong Lessons

* Walk daily in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit is not distant—He is your constant companion, counselor, and guide. When you depend on Him, you live in peace, freedom, and power.

* Be continually filled with the Holy Spirit.

God never runs out of what you need. Keep asking, keep seeking, keep drinking from His presence. The Christian life began in the Spirit—and it can only be lived in the Spirit.

C. Discussion Questions

1. Why does God want to fill us with the Holy Spirit?
2. What does it mean to “walk in the Spirit” every day?
3. How can you tell when the Holy Spirit is working through you?
4. What daily choices help you stay filled with the Holy Spirit?

Chapter 3: Water Baptism

A. The Example of Jesus and His Disciples

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

“Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’

Jesus replied, ‘Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then John consented. 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. And a voice from heaven

said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’”

Matthew 3:13-17. Jesus commanded his disciples to go into the whole world and baptize all his disciples.

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19, 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.

Acts 8:35-38, “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.”

The same thing happened to a Philippian jailer and his whole family. As soon as they believed in Jesus, they were baptized. They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and 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 dying to your old way of life. Coming up out of the water is a symbol of your new life walking with Jesus.

B. Now What Should We Do?

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 says, “Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?”

“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. 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.

C. Discussion Questions

1. Why should a Christian be baptized?
2. What does baptism show about our new life in Jesus?
3. Why is baptism done in front of other people?

Chapter 4: Love

A. True Love

1. Where does it come from?

True love comes from God. "God is love." I John 4:16b "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. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." (I John 4:9-10)

2. Our Response

We love because he first loved us (1 John 4:19) We cannot give what we don't have. God's greatest command for us is to love Him and love others. But we must first receive his love and believe we are loved. In response, we naturally

love God back and love others with the love He has put in our hearts.

B. How Do We Show our Love for God?

1. We love God by obeying 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).

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 love God by talking to him.

Praying is talking to God. Tell God your problems. Ask him to help you. Talk to him about everything.

“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 love God by being thankful.

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 love God by confessing our sins.

“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 love God by repenting 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 show our love for God by putting Him first.

“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 must 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).

This means:

- Your desires are not first.
- Your parents’ wishes are not first.
- Your plans are not first. God is first.

We must ask ourselves:

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

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 must be first. His will and His desire must control our lives, not the sinful things our fleshly bodies 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!"

C. How Do We Show Love for Others?

I Corinthians 10:24, "No one should seek their own good, but the good of others." Having this kind of love is how we obey all of God's commands.

Galatians 5:14, "For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." How do we love our neighbors as ourselves and who is my neighbor? Jesus told us that our neighbor is anyone we see in need. Showing love to them is meeting that need. A Pharisee once asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" Instead of answering his question directly, he told the lawyer a story.

Luke 10:25-37, "On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" 27 He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." 29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went

away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii[c] and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’ 36 “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

37 The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

In the same way Jesus loves us, love others and stop for the one in front of us. This may involve being generous with our money, our time, and our talents. Ask God for wisdom for the best way to help those God places in your path.

John 13:34, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”

The word “love” is defined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8:

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but

rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).”

Love is patient, therefore be patient with one another, even when the other person does things that are hurtful or unpleasant. Bear with one another in love and forgive one another as we are told in Col. 3:13.

In Luke 6:27, Jesus even says, “... love your enemies...”

Enabling, condoning, or putting up with abuse, however, is different. In those situations, the loving thing to do is to report the abuse to a wise authority in order to protect the weak and innocent.

Love is kind. Speak kind words to others and do acts of kindness. Jesus said in Matt. 7:12, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8).

Proverbs 10:12, “Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers over all wrongs.”

1 Cor. 13:8, “Love never fails....”

A very important way to show love to our neighbor is by sharing with them how Jesus offers forgiveness for our sins and eternal life if we believe in Him. The Holy Spirit will give you courage and the right words to say. Share your own personal story about how Jesus has changed your life.

Jesus even says to love our enemies.

Luke 6:27, 32 “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you... 32 If you love those

who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.”

John 13:35, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

How can we do this? In our own power, we can't. But if we yield to the Holy Spirit by listening to His voice and obeying His words in the Bible, He begins to change our hearts. This is a supernatural wonder. Jesus says to love others like he loves us and to forgive others like he forgives us. Pray and ask God to give you His heart and see people the way He sees them. We are all sinners and God loves us all. Jesus said those who have been forgiven much, love much. (Luke 7:47)

Jesus, our perfect example, said he did not come into the world to condemn it, but to save it. (John 3:17). When we understand how much God loves us and how much we have been forgiven, and we receive His love and forgiveness into our hearts, we are set free from the bondage of sin and are now able to love others with God's love in us by the power of His Holy Spirit.

D. Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean that “God is love”?
2. How can we show love to God?
3. How can we show love to other people?

Lesson Five: Giving

A. What the Bible Says About Giving Money

1. In the Old Testament, God told His people to give Him the first 10% of what they had.

This was called a tithe. They gave food, money, or animals to help take care of the temple and the people who worked there.

God promised to bless them if they gave, but He also warned that not giving would bring a curse upon them (Malachi 3:10).

Malachi 3:10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

2. When Jesus came, everything changed.

Now, we don't give because we have to—we give because we want to. Jesus took away the curse of not giving (Galatians 3:13), but the blessings of giving still remain. God still loves when we give from a thankful heart. If we are willing to give, God will “open the floodgates of heaven” and pour out blessings. Galatians 3:13 shows us that we are not under the curse of the law: Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.”

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9:7, “God loves a cheerful giver.” That means God is happy when we give with joy, not because we feel forced.

2 Corinthians 9:6–8 Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give... for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly.

Another verse says, “Give, and it will be given to you... For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (Luke 6:38).

3. When we give to help others, God blesses us.

This is why people say, “You can’t outgive God,” they mean that no matter how much you give—your time, money, kindness, or help—God will always give you back even more in return. He blesses you in ways you can’t even imagine. You may give away something and feel like you’ve lost, but God finds ways to give back more—sometimes through peace, joy, provision, help when you need it, or even unexpected opportunities.

4. Giving shows our trust in God.

It helps others, and it helps our hearts grow in love and kindness. Whether we give a little or a lot, what matters most is that we give with joy, love, and faith.

B. What does God want us to give besides money?

God wants us to give all of ourselves to Him.

Becoming a Christian means we don’t just receive forgiveness for our sins, or join a church, but we give (surrender) every part of our lives to God. This is a transfer of ownership where we give our hearts desires and our thought life to God. We choose to submit to the Holy Spirit as he teaches and guides us

through life. We also choose to submit to God by obeying what He says in the Bible.

Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” (Luke 9:23)

“You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:19–20)

C. What are some things God asks me to give (surrender) to Him?

1. Control of my life

Proverbs 3:5-6, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

“Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.” (Psalm 37:5)

2. My Sin and Old Way of Life

Surrender includes repentance—turning away from sin and toward obedience.

“Put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life... and put on the new self.” (Ephesians 4:22–24)

“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)

3. My Relationships

Jesus asks for ultimate allegiance—even above our closest relationships.

“Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.” (Matthew 10:37)

4. My Worries and Anxieties

Matthew 6:25-27; 33-34, 25, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life [e] ? “Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you... 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” I Peter 5:7

D. What Surrender Is — and Is Not

Surrender is not:

- Losing your personality
- Becoming passive or weak
- God controlling you against your will

Surrender is:

- A willing, trusting response to God’s love
- Cooperation with the Holy Spirit
- Freedom from self-centered living

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” (2 Corinthians 3:17)

E. The Heart of Christian Surrender:

Surrender flows from love, not fear.

Again, “We love because he first loved us.” (1 John 4:19)

And Jesus assures us that surrender leads to real life:

“Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” (Matthew 16:25)

F. Discussion Questions

1. Why does God want us to give with a happy heart?
2. What are some things we can give besides money?
3. How does giving show that we trust God?

Lesson 6: Communion

A. What is Communion?

Communion is also called the Lord’s Supper, is a special time to remember Jesus. He started this during His last meal with His friends. He said, “Do this in remembrance of Me” (Luke 22:19).

When we take communion, we remember how Jesus gave His life for us, how He died for our sins, and how we’re forgiven

because of His love.

B. Why Communion Matters

Communion helps us remember what Jesus did for us.

Jesus gave up His body and poured out His blood so we could be saved. It reminds us that our salvation is a gift, but it came at a great cost.

C. Who Can Serve Communion?

You don't have to be a pastor or leader to serve communion.

If you follow Jesus and understand what communion means, you can lead others in it. What matters most is your heart and your love for Jesus.

D. How to Lead Communion

1. Prepare the elements

Bread stands for Jesus' body, broken for us. You can use bread or crackers.

Juice (wine) stands for Jesus' blood, given for the forgiveness of our sins.

Prayer to help everyone focus their hearts.

Example: "Let's take a moment to prepare our hearts as we remember what Jesus has done for us."

2. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–26

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of

me.”²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

3. Distribute the Bread

Say something like: “This bread represents the body of Christ, broken for you. Take and eat in remembrance of Him.”

Allow a moment for quiet reflection so people can think about Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross for us.

4. Distribute the Cup

Say something like: “This cup represents the new covenant in His blood, shed for the forgiveness of our sins. Drink in remembrance of Him.”

Again, allow time for the people to think about Jesus pouring out his blood on the cross and dying for our sins.

5. Close with Prayer or a Worship Song

Thank God for His sacrifice, grace, and love.

E. Discussion Questions:

1. What do the bread and cup remind us of?
2. Why do we take time to think about Jesus during communion?
3. How should communion change the way we live?

Lesson 7: How to Begin Reading the Bible and Growing Closer to God

A. Read or listen to the Bible

The Bible consists of 66 smaller books that make up the complete bible. These were written by many different people but inspired by the Holy Spirit. These 66 books are divided into two parts, Old Testament and New Testament. The Old Testament begins with creation, and the New Testament begins with the birth of Jesus Christ.

I suggest you start with the gospel of Mark, in the New Testament.

It's simple and tells the story of Jesus. Pick a place and time that you don't have many distractions. Begin with prayer, which is simply talking to God. He is a Spirit, so it helps to focus on him by closing your eyes when you pray. The Holy Spirit will give you understanding as you read if your heart is open to knowing truth and you are listening to his voice. He will usually speak to you as a thought or a revelation of understanding. Just read whatever amount you want but try to at least read until you feel you've learned something meaningful.

B. Questions You Can Ask Yourself and Reflect On After Reading the Bible

1. Did I learn anything about God?
2. Did I learn anything from the characters in the story?
3. Is there anything I should repent of?
4. Am I challenged to do something?
5. Is there something I should give thanks for?
6. Is there a promise to believe?

End your time with prayer – talk to God, listen, and enjoy his presence.

Reading the bible and praying are ways we grow in our personal relationship with him.

C. More Ways to Grow Closer to God

1. Worship Him

Worshipping God with songs from your heart is also a good way to draw close to Him. Singing can be a form of meditation, prayer, praise and thanksgiving. Feel free to make up your own tunes with your favorite verses.

Psalm 100:3-4 describes how we can enter into His presence: “Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.”

2. You can also start a journal and write down what stands out to you.

The Holy Spirit is our teacher, and He will reveal special understanding and sometimes convictions as you read the Bible. Writing helps your mind think clearer and remember better what you learned.

D. Reasons and Benefits for Reading the Bible

The many reasons and benefits of reading the Bible, also known as God’s Word, are seen in the book of Psalms, chapter 119. Here are a few:

“I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” (119:11)

“... strengthen me according to your word. Keep me from deceitful ways...”

(119:29b, 30a)

“I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts.” (119:45)

“Teach me knowledge and good judgement, for I trust your commands. Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I obey your word. You are good, and what

you do is good; teach me your decrees.” (119:66-68)

“Your word Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.” (119:89)

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.” (119:105)

“I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts.” (119:99-100)

“You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word.” (119:114)

“Your statutes are always righteous; give me understanding that I may live.”
(119:144)

“How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”
(119:103)

“I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word.”
(119:147)

“All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.” (119:160)

“Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.” (119:165)

From the book of Joshua, it says in chapter 1, verse 8, “Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will prosper and successful.”

Psalm 1:1-3, “Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked

or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.”

E. What Next?

I suggest reading the rest of the New Testament at your own pace. You could also read a little from Psalms or Proverbs each day. It's good to start your day with Jesus and end your day with Him. He will set your mind with a proper perspective of hope and purpose in the morning. You will grow in wisdom and success as you meditate on His Words. At night you will find peace before you sleep as you give him all your cares and trust him as your loving shepherd.

God bless you on your journey with God. He is with you and promises never to leave you!

F. Discussion Questions:

1. Why should we pray before reading the Bible?
2. What can we learn about God when we read the Bible?
3. How can we make Bible reading a daily habit?
4. What else can I do to draw closer to God?

Lesson 8: 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 and give them eternal life!

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?"

A. Seven 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. Share Your 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. Explain the need for salvation

Share mankind's problem, which is separation from God. Memorize

or write down these verses so you can be ready to share them with unbelievers:

Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 3:23, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

6. Explain God’s Solution

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.

Tell them these verses:

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:

“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.”

B. Discussion Questions

1. Why should we tell others about Jesus?
2. If you are a Christian, what is your testimony of how you decided to give your life to Jesus and follow him?
3. Why is prayer important before sharing your faith?