



GLOBAL TRAINING
NETWORK

Personal Spiritual
Growth:
*“Until Christ
is Formed
in You”*

V3.0 June 2025

Personal Spiritual Growth

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Lesson 1-3 focus on Identity

Lessons 4A+B focus on our vertical relationship with God

Lessons 5A+B focus on our horizontal relationship with others

Goal of all Spiritual Training: Transformation ...

- in the life of every believer,
- into the likeness of Christ,
- by the grace of God,
- through the Word of God,
- by the power of the Holy Spirit,
- in fellowship with the people of God,
- for the glory of God!

Personal Spiritual Growth

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION



Read these three verses and ask who are the people highlighted in each verse and what is God's ultimate plan for them? Circle or underline any key words or phrases.

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Contrast OT vs NT (2 Cor 3), Moses vs Believer, fading glory vs increasing glory, Tablets of stone vs Heart, Condemnation vs Righteousness

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. (Romans 8:29-30)

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:2)

New life (born of God), new name (child of God), new purpose, new hope

- **What do you observe? What is God's plan for every follower of Jesus?**

Speaking to and about believers, Goal = transformation into Christ likeness, Spiritual growth is a process, God sees the process as completed (called, justified, glorified), Philippians 3:12-14 – Focus on one thing (Christ-likeness)

- **Explain how the transformation process of this butterfly is similar and different to that of a person who decides to follow Jesus Christ.**

Similar: process of transformation, takes time, new creation,

Different: Christian transformation continues after new birth, a butterfly does not continue transforming

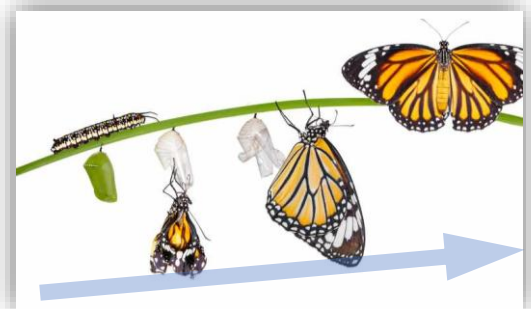
- **How do 2 Corinthians 5:17 and 2 Peter 3:18 relate to this process?**

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

[Position "in Christ" / Transformed]

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Peter 3:18)

[Ongoing experience / Continually being transformed]



- **God intends for us to grow toward Christ-likeness. We are not to merely wait for holiness; we are commanded to pursue it. Read 1 Peter 1:13-16.**

Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." (1 Peter 1:13-16)

- **What are some practical ways that a follower of Jesus Christ can pursue holiness?**

Know God's character through the Word and relationship, Know your identity in Christ, Know the promises of God, grow in community with others, practice humility/confession/repentance, Practice spiritual disciplines of grace: Word, Prayer, Worship, Serve, Give, Witnessing, Silence, Thanksgiving, etc.

"Holiness"

Romans 6:19-23, Heb 12:14, Eph 4:20-24

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 and 1 Timothy 4:7-8 and make observations about how these passages help to explain the process of living and growing as a follower of Jesus. How might these two pictures help to explain the Christian life as the Apostle Paul describes it in these passages?

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

Training is critical, How we live is important

Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. (1 Timothy 4:7-8, NIV)

Ephesians 4:11-16 provides the picture that we are growing individually but also focused on growing together as a body.

"Discipline" in the Greek is "gumnazo" from which we get the words gymnasium and gymnastics. The word means to exercise or discipline. Physical disciplines promote strength while the spiritual disciplines promote Godliness.

- **What are some ways that you train to compete as an athlete? How might these be similar/different to spiritual training as you grow in godliness?**

Know your strengths, compete with the best, good diet and rest, practice, hard work/effort, put muscles under stress to get stronger, Often we can't see the progress externally but our bodies are changing internally, endurance, perseverance, in it for the long term, put in the effort because you live the sport, not driven by receiving praise or recognition from others, ...



In community with others



Private life

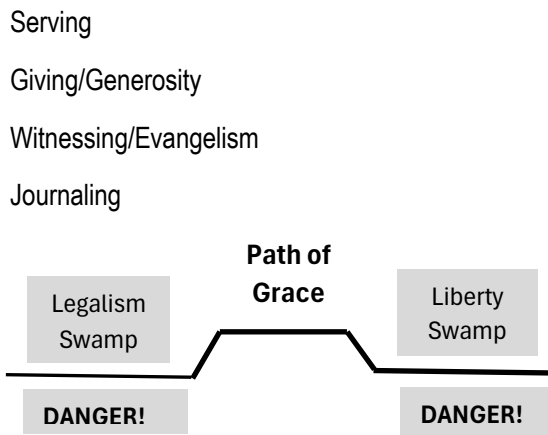
Here’s how some leading authors have defined the *Spiritual Disciplines* ...

- The spiritual disciplines are the God given means we are to use in the Spirit-filled pursuit of Godliness. (Donald Whitney, *The Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Life*)
- God has given us the disciplines of the spiritual life as a means of receiving His grace. The Disciplines allow us to place ourselves before God so that He can transform us. (Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*)
- Spiritual disciplines are any activity that can help you gain power to live life as Jesus taught and modeled it. (John Ortberg, *The Life You Always Wanted*)

What are the most commonly known Spiritual Disciplines?

These are all tools to pursue holiness by God’s grace!

Intake of the Word of God
 Prayer
 Fasting
 Worship
 Thanksgiving/Celebration
 Confession
 Silence and Solitude



To be a disciple of Jesus we must learn from and follow Him. Learning and following involves discipline. Jesus modeled the Spiritual Disciplines for us.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

To be yoked to Jesus – can’t be proud, stiff-necked to bear the yoke, humility is needed

Then he said to them all: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? (Luke 9:23-25)

We must never think that we can discipline and train ourselves in our own strength alone. By God’s grace, He has also given every Jesus follower the Holy Spirit to empower us to walk this walk of faith. We will talk more about the role of the Holy Spirit in Lesson 3.

- **Read Titus 2:11-14 and Philippians 2:12-13**

These two passages show us that effort is required in the life of a believer.

Effort and Grace are not in conflict. **Earning and Grace** are in conflict.

We must never think that our obedience or good works ever earns God’s favor or love.

A Helpful Model for Personal Growth: The Navigator's Wheel

The "Navigator's Wheel" illustration focuses on the key components of a vital Christian life and is a good mental checklist for evaluating growth and balance in your spiritual life.

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The Volitional Dimension: How You Relate to Yourself



The Hub: Christ the Center (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20)

Making Christ central in your life is an act of your will. Surrendering totally to Christ's authority and Lordship may be at conversion or after some months or even years. God creates within you the desire to do what He wants you to do in order to express His Lordship in your life.

Eph 1:15-19, 3:14-19 (Know God better)

The Rim: Obedience to Christ (Spirit-filled Life) (Romans 12:1; John 14:21)

Some acts of obedience to God are internal. But even these internal acts of obedience, such as attitudes, habits, motives, sense of values, and day-to-day thoughts, eventually surface in relationships with other people. The proof of your love for God is your demonstrated obedience to Him.

Also 1 John 5:3,
John 15:10

The Vertical Dimension: How You Relate to God

Love God with all your heart (Deut 6:4-6, Matt 22:34-40)



The Word (2 Timothy 3:16; Joshua 1:8)

As God speaks to you through the Scriptures, you can see His principles for life and ministry, learn how to obey, and become acquainted with the Christ who is worthy of your unqualified allegiance. A vital personal intake of God's Word is essential for health and growth.



Prayer (John 15:7; Philippians 4:6-7)

Prayer is a natural response to God as you hear Him speak to you through His Word. It is sharing your heart with the One who longs for your companionship and who cares about your concerns. Prayer unleashes the power of God *in your personal battles and in the lives of those for whom you pray.*

The Horizontal Dimension: How You Relate to Others

Love your neighbor (Lev 19:18, John 13:34-35, 1 John 4:19-21)



Fellowship (Matthew 18:20; Hebrews 10:24-25)

Learning from and encouraging others creates a chemistry pleasing to God. God has directed Christians to build each other up through inter-dependence and loving relationships with each other.

Witnessing (Matthew 4:19; Romans 1:16)

The natural overflow of a rich vibrant life in Christ should be sharing with others how they too can have this life. God has given believers the privilege and responsibility of reaching the world with the Good News about Christ.

Additional References: Matthew 22:34-40; 1 John 4:19-21, John 13:34-35, Deuteronomy 6:4-6, Leviticus 19:18)

As we close out this introductory lesson, take a minute to write down a few of your key learnings that will provide a foundation for the rest of this training.

- Christ-likeness is the goal
- Transformation is a point in time and a destination over time
- Effort is not in conflict with Grace
- Spiritual disciplines of grace help us pursue holiness
- The Wheel is a helpful personal spiritual assessment tool
- Know God's character and our identify in Christ

Our memory verses for this lesson are 2 Corinthians 3:18 and 1 Timothy 4:7-8. To help begin the process of memorizing these verses, re-write each verse in the boxes below and practice repeating each with a partner. Think about how the picture associated with each verse may help you remember the meaning of the verse.

Memory Verse

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

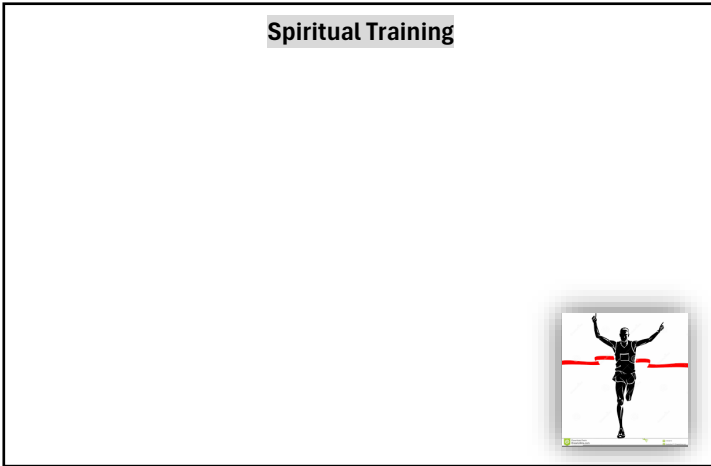
(2 Corinthians 3:18)



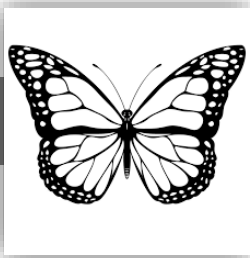
Memory Verse

Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

(1 Timothy 4:7-8)

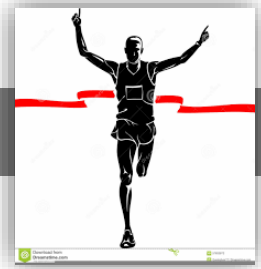


Discuss Ephesians 4:1 as key to Ephesians. Our Beliefs, Creeds, and Doctrine in Chapters 1-3 must balance with our Behavior, Conduct and Duties in Chapter 4-6. This is a picture of walking in a manner worthy (or in balance like a scale).



TRANSFORMING

2 Cor 3:18; Romans 8:29-30



TRAINING

1 Tim 4:7-8; 1 Cor 9:24-27

Personal Spiritual Growth

Key learnings:

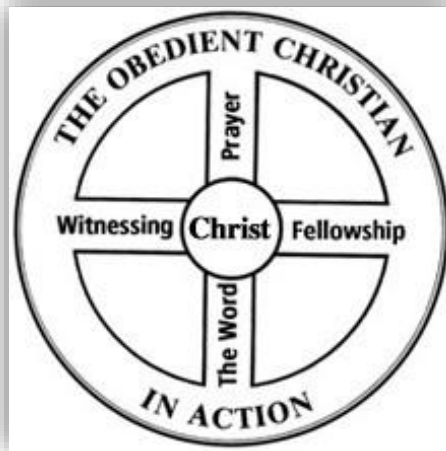
Focus on One thing (Philippians 3:12-14)

Titus 2:11-14

Philippians 2:12-13

- Requires faith
- Requires effort
- Requires God's grace
- Requires power of Holy Spirit
- Requires humility
- Requires time
- Requires time alone with God
- Requires community with others
- Requires perseverance
- Requires Perspective
- Requires good knowledge of identify
- Requires understanding that this journey will not be finished in this life

LESSON 1 SUMMARY



"Until
Christ
Is Formed
In You"

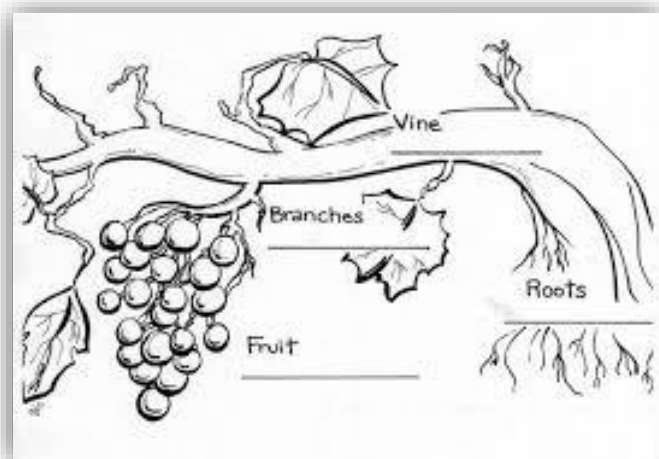
Personal Spiritual Growth

Context: God is infinite and personal; Upper Room Discourse – John 13-17, Final Teaching with Apostles.

LESSON 2: A LIFE CENTERED ON CHRIST

Read John 15:1-8.

- What is the context of John 15 (John 13-17, Upper Room Discourse)?
- Identify the Gardener, the True Vine, and the Branches in this passage.
- What is the relationship between the roots, the vine, the branches and the fruit in the picture below? What enables the fruit to grow?
- What is necessary for us as branches to be more fruitful?
- Explain how this illustration applies to our lives as disciples of Jesus?



"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain 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.

V2 "in me" = Christians

V2 "cuts off" can mean "to lift up" or "to clean"

Purpose of abiding = bear fruit!

⁵"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. (John 15:1-8)

- **What does it mean to ABIDE or REMAIN in Christ? Consider Galatians 2:20.**

Intimate relationship, fully dependent of Jesus – Critical for believers to know our true identity in Christ!

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

- **What is the position of every believer? What is our purpose?** In Christ! Bear fruit for God's glory. We are never commanded to bear fruit but rather it is the expected outcome of abiding in Christ.
- **What is not true of those who are secure "in Christ"?** Never loose salvation (John 6, 10, Roman 8:38-39)
- **Based on John 15:7-8, identify at least 4 characteristics of a disciple who is abiding in Jesus?**
Love for the Word of God, transformed prayer life, life of growing love and obedience, fruitful, focused on the Father's glory. Notice that "fruit" is not defined. It could be fruit of evangelism, fruit of the Spirit, fruit of disciple-making, etc.



This picture will help us remember the importance of abiding in Jesus. Based on our study in John 15, summarize a few key points that will help you remember your connection to Jesus as the True Vine and your responsibilities as a branch.

New Heaven and Earth

Lost, Dead in sin, under God's wrath



Salvation: "In Christ", "New Creation" Branch
"Indwelt with Holy Spirit"

Justified, Reconciled, Redeemed, Adopted, Forgiven, Sealed, Made alive, Set free, Baptized, Sanctified, ...

"Being Transformed" (2 Cor 3:18)
"Filled with Spirit" (Eph 5:18)
Walking in the Spirit (Gal 5)

Remember what we learned from 2 Corinthians 5:17?

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Read Ephesians 2:1-10 and describe your identity before trusting Jesus as Savior and your new identity as one saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Who I Was

- Dead in sin
- Followed ways of this world – Ruler of Kingdom of air
- Disobedient
- Gratify desires of flesh
- Object of God's wrath

Who I Am

- Alive in Christ
- Saved by grace
- Raised and seated with Christ
- Rich in Christ
- God's workmanship


Who I was!

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

Who I am!

⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:1-10)

WHO I AM IN CHRIST

Read through this list of biblical truths that define your true identity in Christ and **UNDERLINE** any that were new to you, **CIRCLE** any that you'd like to discuss further, and **star**  any that you needed to be reminded of today.

I AM GOD'S...

- possession Genesis 17:8/ 1Cor 6:20
- child John 1:12
- workmanship Ephesians 2:10
- friend James 2:23
- temple 1 Cor 3:16/ 6:16
- co-laborer 1 Timothy 5:18
- witness Acts 1:8
- soldier 2 Timothy 2:3
- ambassador 2 Cor 5:20
- chosen Ephesians 1:4
- beloved Romans 1:7/ 2 Thess 2:13
- precious jewel Malachi 3:17

I HAVE BEEN...

- redeemed by the blood Rev 5:9
- set free from sin /condemnation Rom 8:1-2
- set free from Satan's control Col 1:13
- set free from Satan's kingdom Eph 2
- chosen before foundation of world Eph 1:4
- predestined to be like Jesus Ephesians 1:11
- forgiven of all my trespasses Col 2:13
- washed in the blood of the Lamb Rev 1:5
- given a sound mind 2 Timothy 1:7
- given the Holy Spirit 2 Cor 1:22
- adopted into God's family Romans 8:15
- justified freely by his grace Romans 3:24
- given all things pertaining to life 2 Pet 1:3
- given great and precious promises 2 Pet 1:4
- given ministry of reconciliation 2 Cor 1:22
- given authority over the power of enemy Lk 10:19
- given access to God Ephesians 3:12
- given wisdom Ephesians 1:8

I AM...

- complete in him Colossians 2:10
- free forever from sin's power Romans 6:14
- sanctified 1 Cor 6:11
- loved eternally 1 Peter 1:5

- kept from falling Jude 1:24
- eternally kept in the palm of his hand Jn 10:29
- not condemned Romans 8:1-2
- seated in heavenly places Eph 1:3
- light in the darkness Matthew 5:14
- salt of the earth Matthew 5:13
- his sheep Ps 23 / John 10:14
- a citizen of heaven 1 Peter 2:11
- protected from the evil one 1 John 5:18
- secure in Christ Jn 10:28-29
- more-than-a-conqueror Romans 8:37
- born again 1 Peter 1:23
- a victor 1 John 5:4
- healed by his strips Is 53:6

I HAVE...

- access to the Father Romans 5:2
- a home in heaven Jn 14:1-2
- a living hope 1 Peter 1:3
- an anchor to my soul Hebrews 6:19
- power to witness Acts 1:8
- the mind of Christ 1 Cor 2:16
- boldness and access Hebrews 10:19
- peace with God Romans 5:1
- assurance of salvation 1 John 5:11-13

I CAN...

- do all things through Christ Philp 4:13
- find mercy and grace to help Heb 4:16
- come boldly to the throne of grace Heb 4:16
- quench all the darts of the evil one Eph 6:16

I CANNOT...

- be separated from God's love Rom 8:35-39
- perish or be lost John 10:28, John 3:16
- be taken out of my Father's hand John 10:29
- be charged or accused Romans 8:33
- be condemned 1 Cor 11:32

As a follower of Jesus Christ, you have the **ASSURANCE** of many things. Identify the assurance promised in each verse.

1 John 5:11-13 SALVATION

John 16:24 ANSWERED PRAYER

1 Corinthians 10:13 VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION

1 John 1:9 FORGIVENESS

Proverbs 3:5-6 GUIDANCE



Let's return to our wheel illustration that we will reference throughout this training. A life centered on Christ is essential. Knowing your identity in Christ and all you possess in Him is the foundation for growing and maturing in your walk as a Christian.

Making Christ central in your life is an act of your will. Surrendering totally to Christ's authority and Lordship may be at conversion or after some months or even years. God creates within you the desire to do what He wants you to do in order to express His Lordship in your life.

Memory Verse

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

(John 15:5)



Memory Verse

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

(Galatians 2:20)



Memory Verse

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come.

(2 Corinthians 5:17)





TRANSFORMING

2 Cor 3:18; Romans 8:29-30



TRAINING

1 Tim 4:7-8; 1 Cor 9:24-27

Personal
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Growth

LESSON 2 SUMMARY



"Until
Christ
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ABIDING

John 15:1-8; Gal 2:20



Personal Spiritual Growth

LESSON 3: OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST (THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE)



Discuss: What do we know about the Holy Spirit from the Old Testament compared with the New Testament?

OT: involved with creation; empower/anooint people for God’s work; temporary – come and go;

Examples: **Joshua:** Numbers 27:19; **David:** 1 Sam 16:2-13; **Saul:** 1 Sam 10:10; **Judges**

What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament?

NT: Permanent indwelling, starts at salvation, power to live out new life in Christ, resurrection power!

Holy Spirit regenerates, indwells, seals, teaches, gives gifts, empowers, convicts of sin, illuminates, guides, unifies (John 14:15-17, Eph 1:13-14, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:9-11)

Read these two passages and discuss how the picture below explains the Spirit-filled life of a Christ follower compared with someone who is unsaved and with a Believer who may not be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Read Ephesians 5:15-20

¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. **Instead, be filled with the Spirit,** ¹⁹ speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:14 – 3:3

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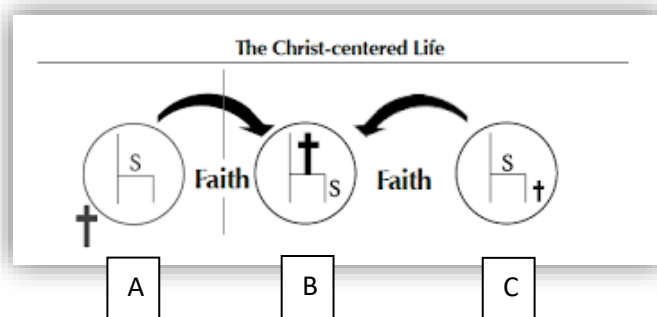
¹⁴ **The person without the Spirit** does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. ¹⁵ **The person with the Spirit** makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, ¹⁶ for,

B

“Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

C

3 Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. ³ You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans?



S = Self

† = Jesus

┆ = The throne of your life

Who is the King over each area of your life?

What is the difference between being indwelt versus being filled with the Holy Spirit?

Indwelling: one time, at salvation, receive 100% of Holy Spirit, guarantee of eternal redemption (Eph 1:13-14, 4:30).

Filling: moment by moment, yielding to the Spirit's leadership in your life (Eph 5:18)

Example: room wired with electricity (indwelt); turning on the switch to access the power (filling)

God has given us the Holy Spirit so that we can experience intimacy with Him and enjoy all He has for us. We cannot experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us if we fail to depend on the Holy Spirit. Walking in the Spirit moment by moment is a lifestyle. It is learning to depend on the Holy Spirit for His abundant resources as a way of life (Galatians 5:16, 25 and 5:22-23)

Discuss the differences between indwelling and filling. Whenever we sin, at that moment we are not "filled".

God's love for us does not change based on our behavior. His love is constant. Our sense of fellowship or closeness to God may feel more distant until we confess, repent and get back walking in step with the Spirit.

Based on these verses, what is the greatest evidence of living a Spirit-filled life?

[OBEDIENCE]

²¹Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" ²³Jesus answered 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 home with him. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. (John 14:21-24)

¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. (John 15:10)

³For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. (1 John 5:3)

²²But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. (James 1:22)

²²And Samuel said, "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. (1 Samuel 15:22)

How can we experience this moment-by-moment dependence upon the Holy Spirit?

Abiding in Christ = Growing and Obeying (evidence of saving faith)

Faith that saves = Faith + NOTHING / Faith that Grows = Faith + OBEDIENCE

Practice Spiritual breathing:

Exhale: Confess your sin the moment you become aware of it, agree with God concerning it and thank Him for His forgiveness according to 1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:10-25. Confession requires repentance, a change in attitude and action.

Inhale: Surrender control of your life to Christ, and rely upon the Holy Spirit to fill you according to Ephesians 5:18.

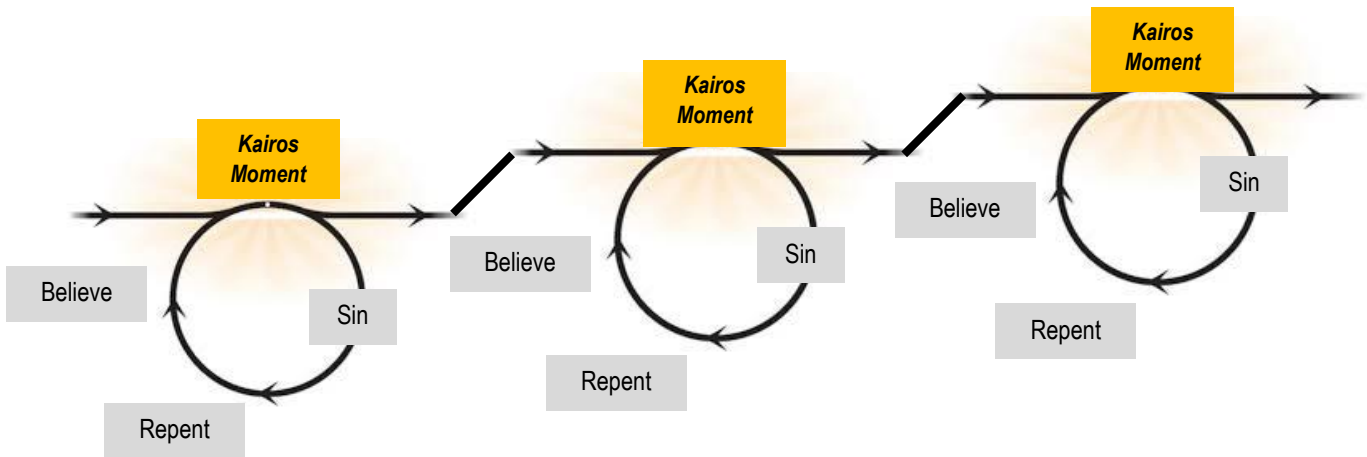
God commands us to be filled with the Spirit.

God promises He will always answer when we pray according to His will (1 John 5:14-15).

Father, I need You. I acknowledge that I have sinned against you by directing my own life. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite Jesus to again take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as You commanded me to be filled, and as You promised in Your Word that You would do as I ask in faith. Thank You that I have all of You, Holy Spirit, at all times. My desire now, is that You would have all of me, at this moment. Thank You for filling me and directing my life.

How might this diagram help to illustrate our daily walk with the Lord?

“Kairos” = moment in time not chronological time, learning/growth opportunities.

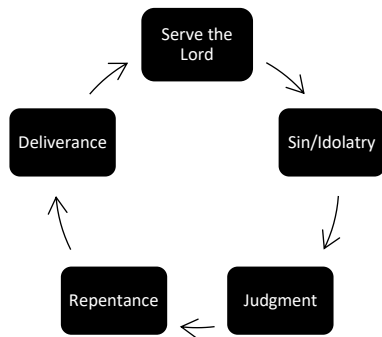


The call to be a disciple involves a daily process of laying down our lives to follow Jesus. We often look at our lives as a linear process starting with salvation and ending in heaven. Our relationships with God are much more dynamic and fluid with ups and downs, starts and stops along the way. In the picture above, the believer is walking along with the Lord. Then a “Kairos” moment takes place. Kairos is a Greek word for time that is not chronological time but rather a moment in time, a key life event or learning experience. These moments can be positive or negative. They are meant to be opportunities for growth. Jesus used the word “Kairos” in Mark 1:15.

“The time has come”, he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the Good News.”

These cycles of repenting (changing our minds) and believing (putting our faith into action in a new direction) brings us back to walking in step with the Holy Spirit resulting in spiritual growth.

We can see this cycle of repenting and believing throughout the book of Judges in the Old Testament. **(Judges 2)**



Group discussion related to how this looks in the life of a believer.

Over time, you may see smaller cycles of sin, longer gaps between cycles.

Because of indwelling Spirit, there is assurance of God’s continuing love and grace even in the midst of sin and Fatherly discipline (Hebrews 12).

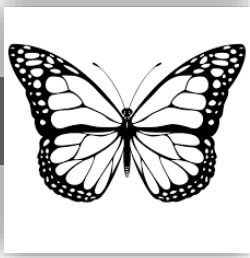
Memory Verse

Do not get drunk in wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18

The memory verse for this lesson is Ephesians 5:18. Write a brief summary in the box below of what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit and the process for yielding to the Holy Spirit moment-by-moment in your life.





TRANSFORMING

2 Cor 3:18; Romans 8:29-30

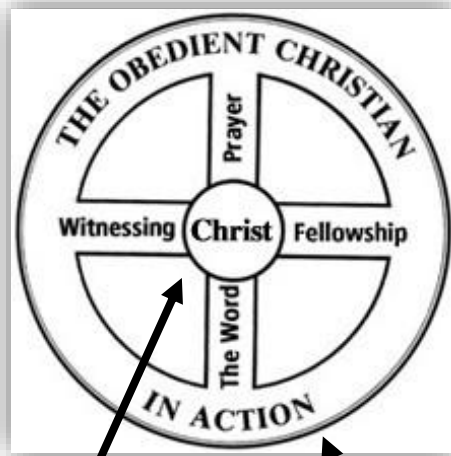


TRAINING

1 Tim 4:7-8; 1 Cor 9:24-27

Personal
Spiritual
Growth

LESSON 3 SUMMARY



"Until
Christ
Is Formed
In You"

ABIDING

John 15:1-8; Gal 2:20

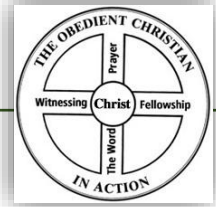


SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

Eph 5:15-21; 1 Cor 2:14-3:3



Personal Spiritual Growth



LESSON 4: OUR VERTICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Review the Wheel

A. THE WORD

The "Word-Hand" shows five methods of learning from the Bible.



HEARING

Hearing the Word from godly pastors and teachers provides insight into others' study of the Scriptures as well as stimulating your own appetite for the Word. (Romans 10:17)

READING

Reading the Bible gives an overall picture of God's Word. Many people find it helpful to use a daily reading program which takes them systematically through the Bible. (Revelation 1:3, 1 Timothy 4:13-14)

STUDYING

Studying the Scriptures leads to personal discoveries of God's truths. Writing down these discoveries helps you organize and remember them. (Acts 17:11)

MEMORIZING

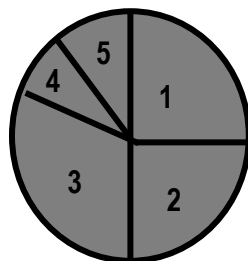
Memorizing God's Word enables use of the Sword of the Spirit to overcome Satan and temptations...to have it readily available for witnessing or helping others with a "word in season." (Psalm 119:9,11)

MEDITATING

Meditation is the thumb of the Word Hand, for it is used in conjunction with each of the other methods. Only as you meditate on God's Word, thinking of its meaning and application in your life, will you discover its transforming power at work within you. (Psalm 1:2-3)

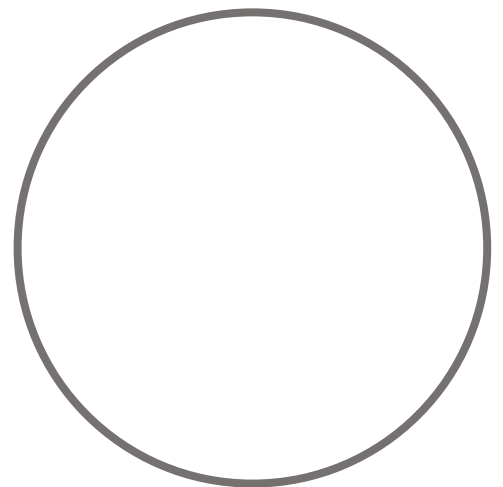
Divide the WORD circle below into 5 segments that represent how you take in the Bible on a regular basis. Mark off each section according to the percentage of time you dedicate to each discipline.

1. Hearing
2. Reading
3. Studying
4. Memorizing
5. Meditating



(Example)

Additional References:
 Psalm 1:1-3, Josh 1:8, Ps 19:7-8,
 Matt 4:4, Col 3:16, Heb 4:12, John 8:31-32



Hear The Word

What do **Luke 11:28** (Blessed are those who hear the Word and obey it), **Romans 10:17** (Faith comes by hearing and hearing through the Word of Christ), and **1 Timothy 4:13** (Devoted to public reading of Scripture) say about hearing God's Word (public reading of Scripture)?

What other ways, beside hearing your local pastor preach on Sunday, can you hear God's Word?

How can you practice being an active listener when you hear the Word of God?

Read God's Word

How important was reading/feeding on the Word of God to Jesus? "It is written" Matthew 4

How much time do you spend on average each day reading the Bible (be honest)?

What plan do you follow to read the Bible consistently?

What is the purpose again of the spiritual disciplines?

Grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ (2 Peter 3:18, 1 Tim 4:7-8)

If you want to be transformed and become more like Christ, discipline yourself to read the bible.

How often should we read it? British preacher, John Blanchard writes,

"Surely we only have to be realistic and honest with ourselves to know how regularly we need to turn to the Bible. How often do we face problems, temptations and pressure? Every day! Then how often do we need instruction, guidance and greater encouragement? Everyday! To catch all these felt needs up into an even greater issue, how often do we need to seek God's face, hear His voice, feel His touch, know His power? The answer to all these questions is the same: Everyday! As the American evangelist D.L. Moody put it, "A man can no more take in a supply of grace for the future than he can eat enough for the next six months, or take sufficient air into his lungs at one time to sustain life for a week. We must draw upon God's boundless store of grace from day to day as we need it."

Helpful Suggestions

1. Set aside time to read God's Word each day (71 hours to listen to entire Bible, 15 minute daily, read in one year)
2. Find a Bible reading plan (You Version has many options; read through the Bible in a year).
3. Find at least one word/phrase/verse to take with you to meditate on throughout the day.
4. Share what you are learning with someone.

Daily Devotional Reading of the Word (SOAP)

S – Scripture

O – Observation

A – Application

P - Prayer

Read Repeatedly

Read Thoughtfully (meditate)

Read Patiently (wait to hear from God)

Read Selectively (Who, What, Where, When, Why?)

Read Prayerfully

Read Reflectively (Look for big picture, main theme)

Read Purposefully (2 Tim 3:16-17)

Study God's Word

"Reading gives us breadth, studying gives us depth." -- Jerry Bridges

Reading and study have their place in Bible intake, and we need to periodically remind ourselves to slow down and go deep when reading the Bible. You don't need much formal training to become a student of the Bible. Like with any sport, there's no substitute for getting on the field and into the game. You can talk about it only for so long but the only way to really improve is to actually practice and play the game. Listening to gifted pastors and teachers is helpful for our spiritual growth. Using good reference tools are also important. But there is simply nothing better than studying the Bible for ourselves.

Why Study the Bible?

1. Bible Study is essential to GROWTH!

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation. (1 Peter 2:2)

- Attitude (Crave, Hunger)
- Appetite (Pure spiritual milk of the Word)
- Aim (Spiritual growth)

2. Bible Study is essential to SPIRITUAL MATURITY!

¹¹ We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:11-14)

- Time
- Training

"The opposite of ignorance is not knowledge but obedience!"

3. Bible Study is essential to SPIRITUAL EFFECTIVENESS!

¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for **teaching, rebuking, correcting** and **training** in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17) (Teach the truth, Rebuke – confront sin when you wander from the path, Correct – guidance to get back on path, Training – practical application for godly living)

What can we learn from Ezra?

Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.

1. Devoted (Attitude)
2. Study
3. Observance (Obedience)
4. Teach Others (live it out)

How about the Bereans?

Acts 17:11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Bible Study Method: A three-step process that will guarantee life change (From Living by the Book, Howard Henricks)

- 1. Observation:** In this first step you ask and answer the question, ***What do I see?***
You ask what are the facts? You become a bible detective, looking for clues. Who is the author? When was it written? Where does the story take place? Who is the primary audience? Who are the characters? What do you know about the culture? What is emphasized? What is repeated? What things are related? What things are alike? What things are different? What things are true to life?
- 2. Interpretation:** In this step you ask and answer the question, ***What does it mean?***
Ask questions of the text to look for meaning, find answers and then integrate your answers into a meaningful whole. Consider the type of writing (i.e., prophesy, poetry, history, etc.), context of the passage, the culture, consult other resources. Work to summarize the main point for the passage in one sentence and then identify the sub-points in the passage that reinforce the main point.
- 3. Application:** This final step is where you ask and answer the question, ***How does it work?***
How does this work for me and for others in practical ways. Here are 8 questions to ask yourself as you look to apply God's Word or put what you have studied into practice in your life (Matthew 18:19-20, James 1:22-25).

Is there an EXAMPLE to follow?
Is there a SIN to avoid/confess?
Is there a PROMISE to claim?
Is there a PRAYER to repeat?
Is there a COMMAND to obey?
Is there a CONDITION to meet?
Is there a VERSE to memorize?

Helpful Hints for studying a passage in the Bible

1. Get a notebook and a pen
2. Write down observations from the text
3. Look up all cross references
4. Write down your questions
5. Look up key words in a concordance
6. Outline the passage, chapter, book
7. Utilize available tools (Commentaries, Dictionaries, Study Guides)
8. What does the passage mean? What was the author communicating to his original audience?
9. Ask application questions
10. Don't leave your quiet time with the Lord until He has impressed something on your heart

Practice Observation/Interpretation/Application with Joshua 1:1-9

As you begin to use the **Observation, Interpretation, Application** model to study Joshua 1:1-9, it will be helpful to begin with observations related to the context of this passage. The book of Joshua follows the five books written by Moses. Here are just a few background questions to help set the context for this short study.

What role did God call Moses to play? Why did the nation of Israel not immediately enter the Promised Land following the exodus from Egypt? What were the people of Israel like? Were they easy to lead? What was the relationship between Moses and Joshua? Why was Moses not allowed to lead the people into the land? Why did Moses have to review the covenant with the people on the edge of the Jordan River as they prepared to enter the land?

Read: Joshua 1:1-9

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: ²“Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. ³I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. ⁴Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. ⁵No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. ⁶Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

⁷“Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸Keep 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 be prosperous and successful. ⁹Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

1. Observations: What do I see?

Who is the author? When was it written? Where does the story take place? Who is the primary audience? Who are the characters? What do you know about the culture? What is emphasized? What is repeated? What things are related? What things are alike? What things are different? What things are true to life?

Author: Joshua, trained by Moses, commissioned by God previously to replace Moses as leader

Where: On the plains of Moab, waiting to cross the Jordan to enter the Promised Land.

Audience: Millions of Israelites who have survived the forty years of wandering in the wilderness. All those 20 years or older have died in the wilderness as God's punishment for their unbelief and rebellion at Kadesh Barnea.

Who are the main characters: Moses, Joshua, Israelites, God

What did Joshua witness: trouble Moses had as a leader, rebellion and grumbling of the Israelites, the faithfulness and power of God through many miracles and sustaining Israel for 40 years, ...

What words/phrases are repeated: Be strong and courageous (3x), God's promise to never leave him (2x), God's promise to bring them into the land (2x)

How might Joshua have been feeling: fearful? Uncertain? Doubtful?

How might Joshua provide a picture of Jesus?

How might we be more like the Israelites?

2. Interpretation: What does it mean?

Consider what you have observed and what has come before and after this passage to help understand the main point.

Consider what is consistent with how God has communicated in other parts of the Bible related to this passage.

What is the main point/idea in this passage? Summarize the main point in a sentence.

What are the sub-points as you look at each verse that reinforce the main point?

Write your one sentence summary with a few sub-points?

One sentence summary and sub-points:

As God was with Moses, so He will be with Joshua to achieve His purposes and promises, as Joshua walks in faith, courage, and obedience.

- Joshua can trust in the promises of God.
- Joshua can be strong and courageous knowing that God goes before him and is with him.
- Joshua can walk in obedience to the Word of God as a demonstration of his faith in God.

3. Application: How does it Work?

Example to follow: Joshua – faith, obedience, servanthood.

Sin to avoid/confess: unbelieving, rebellious heart (Like Israelites).

A promise to claim: I will never leave you forsake you (also Matthew 28:20, Hebrews 13:5)

Prayer to repeat: Father, help me to remain strong and courageous whenever fear begins to take control of my heart, knowing that you will never leave or forsake me.

Command to obey: Keep God's word in your heart; Mediate on it daily; When fearful, remember God's promises and presence.

Condition to be met: If you remain faithful to the Word of God, you will be prosperous and successful spiritually.

Verse to memorize: Joshua 1:8-9

Is there an **EXAMPLE** to follow?

Is there a **SIN** to avoid/confess?

Is there a **PROMISE** to claim?

Is there a **PRAYER** to repeat?

Is there a **COMMAND** to obey?

Is there a **CONDITION** to meet?

Is there a **VERSE** to memorize?

Share a few personal applications that you take away from the study of this passage:

Memorize God's Word

What are some benefits of memorizing Scripture? (Psalm 119:9, 11; Joshua 1:8-9)

How does Jesus' confrontation with Satan (Matthew 4:1-11) illustrate the power of Scripture that is committed to memory?

Describe a time when Scripture memory helped you during a witnessing, counselling or teaching opportunity.

How to memorize a verse effectively:

1. Before you start to memorize the verse, read it aloud several times.
2. Learn the topic, reference, and the first phrase as a unit.
3. After reviewing this a few times, add the second phrase. Gradually add phrases until you know the whole verse.
4. Work on the verse audibly whenever possible.
5. As you memorize and review the verse, think about how it applies to your own life.
6. Always review the verse in this sequence:
 - a. Topic: "Assurance of Salvation"
 - b. Reference : "1 John 5:11-12"
 - c. Verse(s): And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.
 - d. Reference: "1 John 5:11-12"
7. The most critical element in scripture memory is REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW. The most important time to review a verse repeatedly is right after you can quote the whole verse without making a mistake. Review the verse a minimum of once daily after that. The more you review the greater the retention.
8. An important concept is the principle of OVERLEARNING. A verse should not be considered memorized simply at the point when we can quote it accurately. Only when we have reviewed it frequently enough for it to become ingrained in our memory should we consider a verse memorized.

Using the tips on page 25, practice memorizing one of the Memory Verses from Lessons 1-3.



Transforming

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)



Training

Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. (1 Timothy 4:7-8)



Abiding

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)



Christ-centered Life

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)



Spirit-Filling

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

Start by re-writing the verse you selected.

Topic: _____

Scripture Reference: _____

Verse:

Meditating on God's Word

"A man may think on God every day and meditate on God no day." -- William Bridge

What is the difference between New Age meditation and Biblical meditation?

Consider:

Joshua 1:8

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Psalms 1:1-3

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

Information overload can choke our absorption of Scripture. The average weekly edition of the NY Times contains more information than Jonathan Edwards would have encountered in his entire 18th century lifetime

Helpful Suggestions:

1. Select a passage.
2. Repeat it different ways emphasizing different words each time.
3. Rewrite it in your own words.
4. Look for applications of the text.
5. Pray through the text.
6. Don't rush – take your time.

Summarize this portion of Lesson 4 by explaining the Word-Hand with a partner.

Review the memory verse: 2 Timothy 3:16-17.



Memory Verse

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

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Pray for each other to have a renewed hunger to be life-long students of God's Word.

B. PRAYER

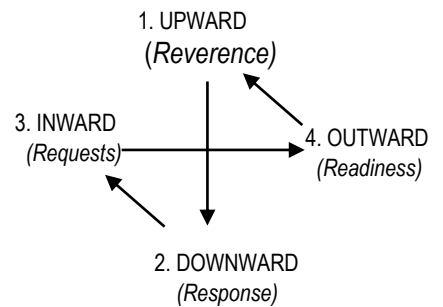
Why do we pray?



Prayer is

What helps you and hinders effective praying in your life?

Excerpt from the book *Transforming Prayer: How Everything Changes When You Seek God's Face*, by Daniel Henderson



Read Matthew 6:5-13

- Who are the three groups that Jesus is addressing in this passage related to prayer?
- How would you describe each of the three prayer approaches that Jesus highlights?
- Because Jesus said to “go into your room to pray in secret”, is it appropriate to pray with others?
- Why do you think Jesus gave us this model or format for praying?
- What questions do you have about prayer?



When Jesus said, “Pray like this”, it was not just a suggestion or one of many options. It was a command for our good and His glory as we pray. We are not permitted to freelance with traditional alternative approaches or override this model with our own clever “improvements.”

The prayer pattern described on the following pages is based on a very basic premise. The first half of Jesus’ model prayer is entirely Godward (or upward). The second half is manward (or downward). This can be summarized by the phrase: “*He is worthy. We are needy.*”

Even when there is only a short amount of time to pray, starting with a passage of Scripture then engaging in a pure articulation of worship captures the participants with His worthiness. Then, moving to a time of trusting Him with our needs is natural. Our requests are informed and inspired by our worship.

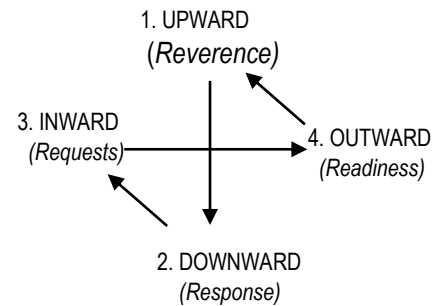
⁹ “*This, then, is how you should pray:*

(God is worthy)

“*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

(We are needy)

¹¹ *Give us today our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’ (Matthew 6:9-13)*



In reviewing Jesus’ teaching on prayer from Matthew 6:5-13, I think we realize that our own traditions and bad theology can also land us in a rut of prayer that just does not work.

As we prepare to clearly understand and apply a pattern that can enliven our prayer life and give us a biblical, balanced approach to prayer, let’s review a quick list of “pray this way, not that way” principles:

- Pray to seek God’s face, NOT just His hand. (Psalm 27:4, 8)
- Pray with your heart fixed on God’s glory, NOT just your personal satisfaction.
- Pray from the treasury of God’s Word, NOT from a list of your own ideas.
- Pray according to the Spirit’s instruction, NOT only from human reason.
- Pray with a heart completely surrendered to His will, NOT with a hurried personal agenda.
- Pray in anticipation of living triumphantly in the war zone, NOT in satisfaction with your comfort zone.
- Pray that God would change you, NOT simply change things.



In which ways listed above do you need to most transform your prayer life?

What is Worship-based prayer?

One challenge that many believers face today is a total lack of discipleship or training in prayer, especially with leading others in prayer. While there are several helpful models and approaches, many have found the concept of Worship-Based Prayer to be a very powerful and practical approach to implementing prayer into their churches, small groups, and even their own lives. It is certainly not the only way to pray, but we have found it to be especially helpful for groups just setting out to learn to pray corporately, or for congregations that may have grown stagnant in their typical prayer routines. This is largely because:

1. It is Scriptural. It is based on the "Lord's Prayer" or the model prayer in Matthew 6.
2. It draws people's focus toward God, as opposed to their own needs or requests.
3. It provides a model to experience life giving prayer that can be applied to nearly any passage of Scripture.

The 4/4 Pattern of Prayer

Worship-based prayer is built on a "4/4" Pattern, like a musical conductor would use, which is taken directly from the Biblical text we often refer to as "The Lord's Prayer" in Matthew 6.

Upward: Reverence

In the prayer pattern Jesus gave His disciples, He instructs us to begin with a focus of worship ("*Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your name . . .*"). We call this upward focus the "Reverence" stroke. This is the principle of "worship-based" rather than need-based prayer. It begins with the character of God as we take time to focus our entire being on the wonders of who God is. Ultimately, prayer is my response to the character of God, which leads to praise and thanksgiving. As I get to know the God Who is, I will naturally respond to Him. This response is called prayer.

"...Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed by Your name." Matthew 6:9

Helpful Prayer Focuses:

- Praising God for His attributes/character: praise is my response to the person, presence, position, power, greatness, majesty, and the love of God. Praise is glorifying God for Who He is and what he is affects you. It is the most appropriate way to enter into His presence. Since its source is God Himself, praise centers on the excellencies, perfections, and glories of His nature, His character, and His role in human affairs.

"Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable." (Psalm 145:3)

"Yet Thou art holy, O Thou who art enthroned upon the praises of Israel." (Psalm 22:3)

- Thanksgiving is my response to the goodness, the graciousness of God. Thanksgiving is thanking God for what He has done and for what He is going to do. Since its source is the actions of God, thanksgiving declares positively both that He is the Giver of every good and perfect gift and that to the believer every gift is good, perfect and acceptable.

"What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" "To Thee I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving..." (Psalm 116:12,17a)

"Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name...for with such sacrifices God is pleased." (Hebrews 13:15-16)

Begin with a Psalm or another portion of Scripture, as you read, ask yourself: What does this passage reveal about God and His character? Invite the Holy Spirit to give you understanding of what the text tells you about the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Discover truths about God's nature, names and person in the text you are reading. Begin your prayer time seeking His face in worship in your own words.

- I praise you because you are
- I have seen your power in
- Thank you for showing me your grace when ...

Downward: Response

Jesus taught a second element of biblical prayer when He said, "***Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven . . .***" This speaks of our response to God's character in prayer as we consider His will, from His Word and for the sake of His purposes on earth. This also involves yielding to the control of the Holy Spirit as I respond to His invitations to a fruitful and obedient life. Introspection and surrender mark this time of response. It is a season of pledged obedience to the will and Word of God, desiring the accomplishment of His will in our lives.

The will of God is not only the highest good, the greatest achievement and the best any person could hope for in this life, it is also the command of God. Therefore, because God is God, and God is our loving Heavenly Father, prayer becomes that time when I seek Him, not to bring Him to my viewpoint, but to bring myself to His, by the discovery of His will and way.

Helpful Prayer Focuses:

- Worshipful response to who God is.
- Acknowledge and Surrender to God's Will.
- Listening, allowing God's Spirit to speak; then obeying.

Inward: Requests

Now that we have rightly worshipped the One True God--- and we have wholly surrendered to His will for our lives --- We can now boldly bring our requests before Him, knowing that we are asking "in His name" and for His glory.

"Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."
Matthew 6:11-12

This is the next element Christ teaches in His model prayer. This involves a period of heartfelt requests with the themes of resources and relationships.

Of course, Jesus had just said our Father knows our needs before we ask (Matthew 6:8). This is not a time of informing God of our needs as much as it is a conscious trust in God as the perfect definer and provider of our needs. It involves prayer about personal requests and the concerns of others. This focus also includes corporate concerns, such as congregational challenges or broader issues in the body of Christ. In all this, we recognize that, "...God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

Petition is my response to the power and wisdom of God, who is our Heavenly Father. I ask specifically, and He answers specifically.

Intercession is my response to the love of God for all people, especially those in His family.

Helpful Prayer Focuses:

- Offering requests in accordance with God's will
- Passionate petitions of personal needs

Outward: Readiness

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” Matthew 6:13 NIV

This outward stroke reminds us of the spiritual battle before us, and more importantly, reassures us of the spiritual resources within us, the Holy Spirit. When we pray, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,” we recognize our own inability to overcome the temptations and attacks of daily life. We entrust our welfare for the warfare to the delivering force of our Divine Enabler, through the power of His presence and promises. We pledge ourselves to walk in obedience and victory as the fruit of our praying. Look for promises to guard you against temptations, toils and snares that await you beyond the door of your prayer room. This is a great way to integrate Scripture memory into your prayer time as you become battle ready.

Ephesians 6:10-20 provides us with a clear understanding of our enemy and the mighty power of God available to us for this spiritual battle. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world, but instead, our weapons have divine power for demolishing strongholds that are set up in direct opposition to God (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

Paul challenges us to “fight a good fight” as he himself did (I Timothy 6:12), to be a “soldier of Christ that pleases the One who enlisted us as soldiers.” (II Timothy 2:4), to put on the “full armor of God” (Ephesians 6:11, 13).

Christians will not be able to prevail unless we know who our adversary is: “For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against organizations and powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen power that controls this dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil.” We need to know our enemy’s strategies and methods:

“Be careful – watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion, looking for some victim to tear apart.” (I Peter 5:8)

“...able to stand safe against all strategies and tricks of Satan.” (Ephesians 6:11)

Telling what we have experienced in the grace of God is a powerful weapon for the glory of God. Speak up – tell what God has done for you. Say aloud, “God has done this in the past, and He will do it again.” Confess the mighty works of God, the past victories you have received, and what you expect Him to do.

Let us always remember that we reign in life through Jesus. All authority has been given to Christ; and we share the authority with Him because He has given it to us.

Helpful Prayer Focuses:

- Putting on the "Full Armor of God".
- Claiming God's Promises for the battle.
- Knowing He will answer .
- Focusing on His glory above all else.

Upward: Reverence

End where you began, with your eyes on Him.

“For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen.”

Conclude focused on His Lordship, power and glory.

Try it for yourself

Psalm 46

Reverence: Who is God?

Read and prayerfully extract truths about God: Refuge and strength (v1); All-present (v1); Helper in trouble (v1); Holy (v4); Most High (v4); Powerful voice (v6); Lord of Hosts (vv 7,11); With us (vv 7,11); Refuge (vv7,11); Judges the earth (v8); Brings peace (v9); defeats His enemies (v9); Exalted (v10)

Prayer prompts:

- I praise you Lord that you have been my refuge when _____
- I praise you that you gave me strength when _____
- I praise you that you are strong, you can _____
- I praise you that you have been (or are) present when _____

Response: How should I respond?

- Lord I confess and surrender my fears (v2) about _____
- Lord I welcome your very present help (v5) in _____
- Lord I submit my thoughts and plans about _____ to the power and authority of your voice (v6)
- Lord of Hosts, rule over my _____
- I submit my _____ (situation, thoughts, and plans) to you.

Requests: What should I pray about?

Resources:

- I ask for a sense of security (v1) about _____
- I ask for your strength (v1) in order to _____
- I pray for your gladness and joy (v4) in the midst of _____

Relationships:

- I pray for your presence and help (v1) in _____ (relationship)
- Because you make wars cease (v9), I ask you to work in _____ to bring peace and reconciliation.
- Help _____ to be still and know that you are God in his/her relationship with _____ (v10)

Readiness: Where do I go from here?

- I trust in your presence and protection (vv7, 11) today as I _____
- Because you are mighty in confronting your enemies (v9), I will trust you to overcome my struggle with _____

Reverence: Who is God?

- You are exalted (v10) among _____

The Fruit of Worship-based Prayer

God is glorified! — One of the great results of transforming prayer is that people recognize God at work because they have joined Him in that work through their prayers. Their hearts are sensitized to His presence, His power, and His purposes. Their lips are free to recognize Him as the source of all good things. Their souls are eager to cry out, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Your name give glory!” (Psalm 115:1).

For people who fail to pray, everything is a coincidence that has little recognition of God at work. For those who pray, everything is a co-incident, as they have joined the Lord in His work through the privilege of prayer. The principle is simple. When we pray, God gets the thanks and the credit for what happens.

We are sanctified! — *Sanctified.* Did you notice that word in the morning paper today? Of course not. It is not a word in common use, but it packs a powerful meaning. It means to be “set apart” to God. It means God is working in me, around me, and through me to make me holy, more like Jesus. The great fruit of transforming prayer is that praying Christians, while not perfect, are growing every day to the point that they act, think, speak, and serve like Jesus.

The church is edified! — When transformation occurs within hearts, ignited by the truth and presence of Christ, everything else begins to change for the sake of the health of the church and the fulfillment of the mission. Jude 20 says, “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. . . .” The Amplified version elaborates, “But you, beloved, build yourselves up [founded] on your most holy faith [make progress, rise like an edifice higher and higher], praying in the Holy Spirit.” To say that the church is “edified” means that the lives, marriages, families, and ministries of the church are built up, made strong and healthy — through biblical prayer, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The world is mystified! — Over the years, we have heard significant debate about the best way to reach the unchurched and what influences the hearts of unbelievers who attend our church services. First Corinthians 14:25 is the only verse in the New Testament that speaks specifically to the experience of an unbeliever coming into a church service. In essence, when the Spirit is working among God’s people and the truth is honored in their midst, it says that the unbeliever sees this in the lives of believers and “the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.” I believe this is a clear description of the glory (manifest presence) of Christ among His people.

The early disciples, who “filled Jerusalem” with their doctrine and “turned the world upside down” (Acts 5:28; 17:6), truly mystified the religious people of the day. When the Jewish leaders interrogated Peter and John, it was said, “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

The world is not transformed by relevant Christians, strategic Christians, visionary Christians, leadership-savvy Christians, wealthy Christians, attractive Christians, educated Christians, active Christians, or articulate Christians. These are all interesting qualities, and might be helpful on occasion — especially in building big religious organizations and selling books. Ultimately, the world is transformed by sanctified Christians through whom the life of Jesus becomes a mystifying manifestation.

The enemy is notified! — Satan is not omniscient. He is supernatural and powerful, and supported by myriads of demonic forces, but he cannot read our thoughts. The best he can do is observe our behavior, eavesdrop on our conversations, and implement a strategy to send his fiery darts against our minds — based on his understanding of our vulnerabilities and habits.

When we are in the habit of experiencing transformation as we seek God’s face, the enemy’s efforts to defeat, discourage, distract, or destroy us are met with the reality of our Christ-ward focus and the victory that comes from intimacy with Jesus. To Satan’s dismay, he sees us praying, trusting God, and becoming more like our Lord as we do so. He is notified that we are engaged in a pursuit of the promises of transformation and impact for the Savior.

God's Word makes it clear.

Colossians 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray continually.

Both are commands ... This means too little time, too many responsibilities, too many kids, too much work, too little desire, too little experience, etc., do not exempt us from the expectation to pray. God expects every Christian to be devoted to prayer and to pray without ceasing.

Other references: Psalm 32:6, Isaiah 55:6, Jeremiah 33:2-3, Matthew 7:7, Luke 18:1, John 16:24, Romans 12:12, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6, 1Thessalonians 5:17, James 5:13,16

Prayer is not just commanded but it is a royal invitation.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

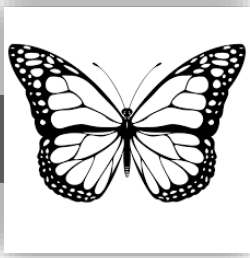
You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions (James 4:3). To ask "rightly" involves transformed passions. In prayer, real prayer, we begin to think God's thoughts after Him: to desire the things He desires, to love the things He loves, to will the things He wills. Progressively we are taught to see things from His point of view.

References about God's will and prayer: Matthew 26:36-42, John 14:13-14, John 16:23, 1 John 5:14-15

What can hinder our prayers?

- Wrong motives (James 4:3)
- Unconfessed sin (Ps 66:18, Is 59:2, Prov 28:13)
- Unforgiving spirit (Matthew 6:14-15)
- Outward show/hypocrisy (Matt 6:5)
- Disobedience
- Lack of faith (James 1:6-7)
- Stinginess (Prov 21:13)
- Relationship with spouse (1 Peter 3:7)
- Idolatry
- Not praying in the Spirit (Eph 6:18, Jude 20)
- Not abiding (John 15:7)
- Not praying in Jesus name (in His authority, as he would pray) (John 14:13, 15:16, 16:23-24)





TRANSFORMING

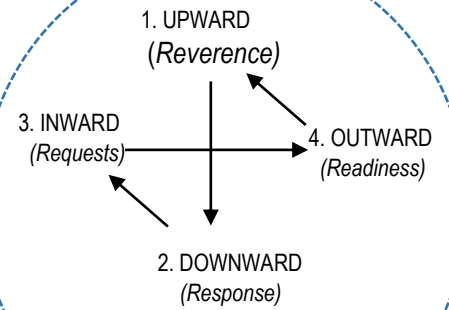
2 Cor 3:18; Romans 8:29-30



TRAINING

1 Tim 4:7-8; 1 Cor 9:24-27

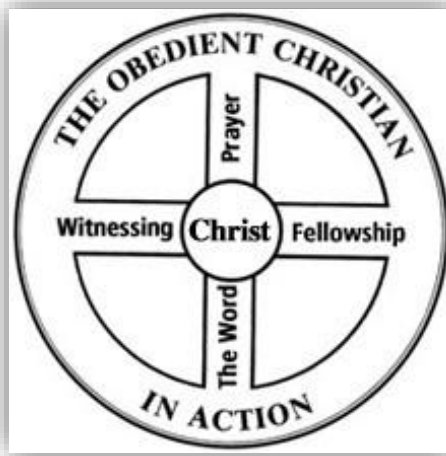
Personal
Spiritual
Growth



PRAYER
Matt 6:5-13



LESSON 4 SUMMARY



THE WORD

2 Tim 3:16-17; Ps 1:1-3



"Until
Christ
Is Formed
In You"

ABIDING

John 15:1-8; Gal 2:20



SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

Eph 5:15-21; 1 Cor 2:14-3:3



Personal Spiritual Growth

LESSON 5: OUR HORIZONTAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

A. FELLOWSHIP

When tested by the religious leaders as to what was the greatest commandment in the Law, Jesus replied, “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”. (Matthew 22:37-39)

In Lesson 4 we focused on demonstrating our love for God through the disciplines of the Word and prayer. In this lesson we will focus on our love for others first within the Church and then with those who don't know Jesus yet.

The Greek word for “fellowship” is “koinonia” which means partnership, communion or community. Within the body of Christ, the Church, there is to be a deep love for one another, a deep sense of community. In John 13, Jesus provided an example of the way believers are to love one another.



Read John 13:1-17.

- Who are the main characters?
- When did this take place in Jesus' ministry?
- What was so shocking about what Jesus did?
- What “example” did Jesus set for His disciples?
- How are we to live out this example with others?

Read John 13:34-35.

³⁴ “A new command I give you: Love one another.
As I have loved you, so you must love one another.
³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you love one another.”

- The command to love was not new (Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18).
- What was the old standard for love toward others and what was the new standard for love that Jesus established?
- As we love sacrificially and serve one another in this way what does Jesus say is to be the result?
- How might loving those within the body of Christ in this way have an impact on those who don't know Jesus yet?

There are two times in the New Testament where Jesus set us an example. One is in 1 Peter 2 related to His example for us to follow when faced with suffering for His name. The other is in John 13 when Jesus washed the feet of His disciples in sacrificial service and agape love. Jesus lived a life of submission to the Father's will. He willingly denied Himself. In Philippians 2 we are told that Jesus, humbled Himself, taking on the nature of a servant and became obedient unto death for our sin.

As His followers, we are called to a life of self-denial and servanthood as well. In Luke 9:23 Jesus said, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me."

What is so amazing is that God never calls us to a task without providing the means to accomplish the task. At the moment of salvation, every believer receives supernatural spiritual gifts from the Holy Spirit for the purpose of glorifying God and building up the body of Christ. (See Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, Ephesians 4:11-12, and 1 Peter 4:10-11).

Read Romans 12:3-8 and circle the spiritual gifts listed in this passage. You can review a complete list of spiritual gifts mentioned in the Bible on pages 42-43.

³For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. ⁴For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,^[a] do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

The gifting by the Holy Spirit is for the building up of the Church, to be used in love, and ultimately to glorify God. In 1 Corinthians 12 we see more teaching on the spiritual gifts that were being abused by the believers in Corinth. To exhort and rebuke the church for their pride and abuse of these gifts, the Apostle Paul further explained in chapter 13:1-8 that without love for God and others, these gifts were not effective for kingdom purposes.

Continue reading in Romans 12:9-21 for a comprehensive and mandatory list of traits that are to characterize the Spirit-filled life. Write down the list of practical examples of agape love.

⁹Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹²Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.^[a] Do not be conceited.

¹⁷Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Which examples of agape love and service would you like to develop in your life?

Why do you think it is necessary to consider serving and loving others within the church in these ways as something that requires discipline and intentionality?

God never wastes anything. The Bible says that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. You are a combination of many different factors. By identifying these factors you can discover God's will for your life through serving. To help remember these five factors, a simple acrostic was created: **S.H.A.P.E.**

S piritual Gifts	"What am I gifted to do?"
H earth (Passions)	"What passions do I have?"
A bilities	"What comes naturally to me?"
P ersonality	"How has God wired me to navigate life?"
E xperience	"Where have I been?" and "What have I learned?"

"Whenever God gives us an assignment, He always equips us with what we need to accomplish it. The combination of capabilities is called your S.H.A.P.E." -- Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life

What are your passions and natural talents?

What are life experiences you have been through that have prepared you for ministry to others?

Have you discovered your spiritual gift(s)? What are they?

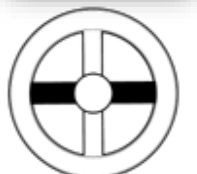
Future Training Possibilities related to Fellowship

- Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts
- Biblical Principles for Giving
- Biblical Peacemaking – Conflict Resolution
- Pastoral Counselling and Care

Memory Verse

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

John 13:14-15



List of Spiritual Gifts

From *Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts The Network Way*, Pages 59-61.

Administration

The divine enablement to understand what makes an organization function, and the special ability to plan and execute procedures that accomplish the goals of the ministry.

Apostleship (Not the gift of Apostle that was limited to the original office of Apostle)

The divine ability to start and oversee the development of new churches or ministries.

Craftsmanship (Mentioned in reference to the construction of the Tabernacle and Temple)

The divine enablement to creatively design and/or construct items to be used for ministry.

Creative Communication

The divine enablement to communicate God's truth through various art forms.

Discernment

The divine enablement to distinguish between truth and error. It is the ability to discern spirits, differentiating between good and evil, right and wrong.

Encouragement

The divine enablement to present truth so as to strengthen, comfort, or urge to action those who are discouraged or wavering in the faith.

Evangelism

The divine enablement to effectively communicate the gospel to unbelievers so they respond in faith and move toward discipleship.

Faith

The divine enablement to act on God's promises with confidence and unwavering belief in God's ability to fulfill His purposes even in the face of overwhelming obstacles and human impossibilities.

Giving

The divine enablement to contribute money and resources to the work of the Lord with cheerfulness and liberality.

Healing

The divine enablement to be God's means for restoring people to wholeness. The possessor of this gift is not the source of power but a vessel who can heal only those diseases the Lord chooses to heal.

Helps

The divine enablement to attach spiritual value to the accomplishment of practical and necessary tasks that free up, support, and meet the needs of others.

Hospitality

The divine enablement to care for people by providing fellowship, food, and shelter.

Intercession

The divine enablement to consistently pray on behalf of and for others, seeing frequent and specific results.

Interpretation

The divine enablement to make known to the body of Christ the message of one who is "speaking in tongues" (different language).

Knowledge

The divine enablement to bring truth to the body through a revelation or biblical insight.

Leadership

The divine enablement to cast vision and to motivate and influence people to harmoniously accomplish the purposes of God.

Mercy

The divine enablement to cheerfully and practically help those who are suffering or are in need, having compassion that is moved to action.

Miracles

The divine enablement to authentic the ministry and message of God through supernatural interventions that glorify Him.

Prophecy (Not the office of OT and NT Prophet)

The divine enablement to reveal truth and proclaim it in a timely and relevant manner for understanding, correction, repentance, or edification.

Shepherding

The divine enablement to nurture, care for, and guide people toward ongoing spiritual maturity and becoming like Christ.

Teaching

The divine enablement to understand, clearly explain, and apply the Word of God, causing greater Christlikeness in the lives of listeners.

Tongues

The divine enablement to receive a spontaneous message from God in public worship and to speak it in an unknown language to the speaker that is then made known to the church through the gift of interpretation.

Wisdom

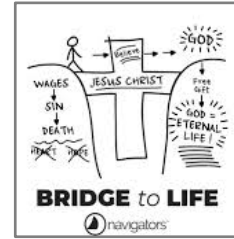
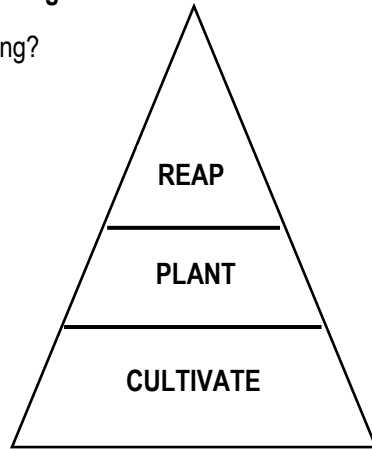
The divine enablement to effectively apply Spiritual truth to meet a need in a specific situation. The exercise of this gift skillfully distills insight and discernment into godly advice.

B. WITNESSING

What was God's kingdom promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 (also Psalm 67)?

Discuss the process of evangelism:

How is this similar to farming?



Discuss the process of farming (prepare fields, remove rocks, burn stubble from prior season, prepare for planting and just the right time, weeding, waiting for harvest.

How does the farming process relate to the cultivate, plant, reap stages of evangelism?

Share practical examples of this process from Acts 2:42-47 and your own personal experiences.

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

There is a close connection between our love for others and witnessing.

Most people will not share the gospel with large groups of people but instead, they will build relationships with those who live and work near them. As they pray for these people, care for them in practical ways, God will open doors to share the gospel. God brings the growth (1 Cor 3:4-8).

The Call to be His witnesses: (Witnesses, Fish for men, Ambassadors)

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." (Matthew 4:19)

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." (Acts 1:8)

¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 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. (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

What is evangelism?

"To present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit to sinful people, in order that they may come to put their trust in God through Him, to receive Him as their Savior, and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His Church."

-- J.I. Packer, Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God

What is the Gospel?

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, ... (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

What hinders us from evangelizing?

- Wrong definition of success – We think that we are responsible for saving people. We are just called to be faithful witnesses. God is responsible for the results (1 Cor 3:5-9).
- Wrong source of power. The power comes from the Holy Spirit, not our ability to communicate (Acts 1:8, Romans 1:16).
- Minimizing God's work of grace in our lives? God has given each of us a personal story of His grace in our lives we can share (1 Timothy 1:12-16; 2 Cor 2:14-17).
- Not being equipped and ready to testify to the gospel of grace. We should be prepared and equipped to share the gospel fearlessly, clearly, accurately and in love with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15, Acts 20:24)

Why must we consider evangelism as a discipline?

We must be equipped/prepared (1 Peter 3:15)

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ...

We must spend time around the lost. (Col 4:2-6)

² Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

“If I never won souls, I would sigh till I did. I would break my heart over them if I could not break their hearts. Though I can understand the possibility of an earnest sower never reaping, I cannot understand the possibility of an earnest sower being content not to reap. I cannot comprehend any one of you Christian people trying to win souls and not having results, and being satisfied without results.” -- Charles H. Spurgeon

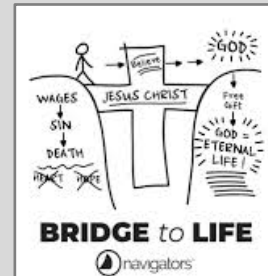
Share some approaches that you use to share the Gospel.

Examples:

- Wordless book (5 colors to tell story of God's love)



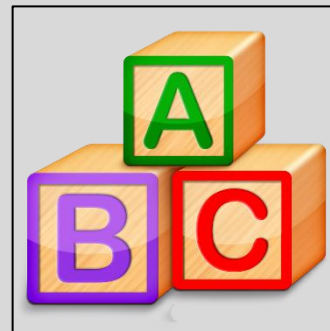
- Bridge to Life



- Phone and Hand using 2 Cor 5:21



- ABCs: A: Admit you're a sinner in need of a Savior,
B: believe that Christ died for your sin,
C: confess Jesus as your Savior and commit to follow Him



- Other examples from the group

Discuss challenges that people face to sharing the gospel and what has helped them overcome these issues.

Praying for the Lost

Praying for our unsaved friends is the best way to begin reaching them for Christ. The following verses give us a biblical outline for these prayers.

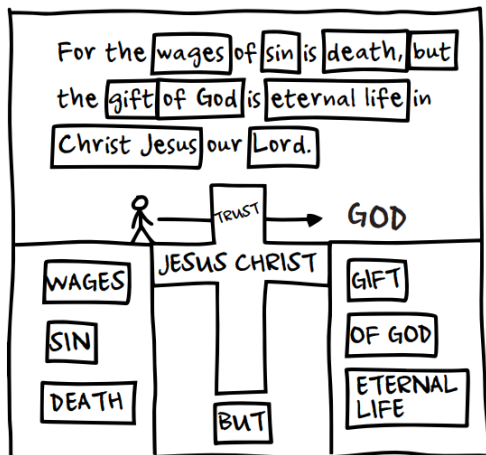
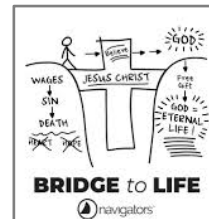
- I pray, Lord, that you draw _____ to yourself.
"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him . . . ". (John 6:44)
- I pray that _____ will hear and believe the Word of God.
". . . faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ".
(Romans 10:17)
- I ask you to prevent Satan from blinding _____ to the truth.
"The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God". (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- Holy Spirit, I ask you to convict _____ of his/her sin and his/her need for Christ's redemption
"When he [the Holy Spirit] comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness . . . But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth". (John 16:8,13)
- I ask you to send someone who will share the Gospel with _____ (Matthew 9:37-38).
Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Matthew 9:37-38)
- I also ask that you give me and other believers opportunity, the courage and the right words to share with _____.
Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.
(Ephesians 6:19-20)
- Lord, I pray that _____ will turn from his/her sin.
In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.
(Acts 17:30-31)
- Lord, I pray that _____ would place his/her trust in Christ and receive Your free gift of eternal life.
Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—
(John 1:12)
- Lord, I pray that _____ will confess Christ as Lord of his/her life, that his/her faith would take root and grow, and that he/she would bear much fruit for your glory
"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved". (Romans 10:9-10)

"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness". (Colossians 2:6-7)

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect ... (1 Peter 3:15)

The Bridge to Life (One verse evangelism)

One-Verse Evangelism® is a simple, interactive way to share Christ's love conversationally and visually. As you are in a conversation with a friend, you can illustrate Romans 6:23 on a napkin or piece of paper to share the Gospel.



Circle **WAGES** and ask, "How would you feel if your boss refused to pay you the wages that were due to you?" Of course, your friend would want justice, the wages he had worked for. Deep down, we all know that it is only right that we get what we deserve.

Draw a circle around **SIN**, asking your friend what he thinks when he hears this word. You might explain that sin is more an attitude than an action. It can be either actively fighting God or as simple as excluding Him from our lives. Now draw two opposing cliffs with a gap in between.

Circle **DEATH** and ask what thoughts come to mind. Explain that death in the Bible always means some kind of separation—in its most basic sense, separation from life. Because God is the author of life, a spiritual death simply means separation from Him.

While circling the word **BUT** mention that it is important because it means that a sharp contrast in ideas is coming. What we have just looked at is the bad news; what comes next is the good news.

Draw a circle around **GIFT**. Ask, "If wages are what a person earns, then what is a gift?" Though every gift is free for the person receiving it, someone still has to purchase it.

Circle **OF GOD** and explain that the gift you are talking about is free. It is from God Himself. It's so special that no one else can give it. Ask, "How do you feel when someone gives you a special gift?"

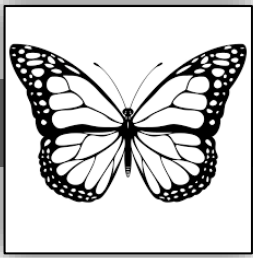
Circle **ETERNAL LIFE** next, and then ask, "How would you define these words?" Contrast one side of the cliff, death, with the other side, eternal life. Ask, "What is the opposite of separation from God?"

Write **JESUS CHRIST** so it creates a bridge between the two cliffs. Help your friend to consider that just as every gift has a unique giver, only Jesus Christ can give the gift of eternal life.

Write **TRUST** over the bridge.

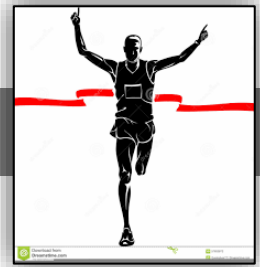
Explain that a true friend is a friend you can trust; Jesus is offering to be a true friend to him. All he has to do is admit that he is responsible for his sin—either of fighting against God or excluding Him from his life. Trusting Jesus means believing that He has power to forgive us for rejecting God and that He will wash us clean from all that we have done wrong in life.

Now, ask your friend if he wants to start a relationship with God that will last forever. If he says "Yes," invite him to pray a short prayer in his own words, asking Jesus to forgive him and make him new. Close by reminding him that this simple illustration shows what God is like: Someone who really cares about people—especially him. Invite him to read all about it in the Bible.



TRANSFORMING

2 Cor 3:18; Romans 8:29-30

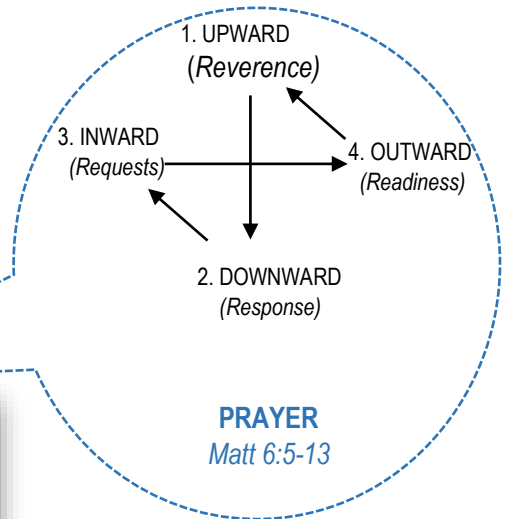


TRAINING

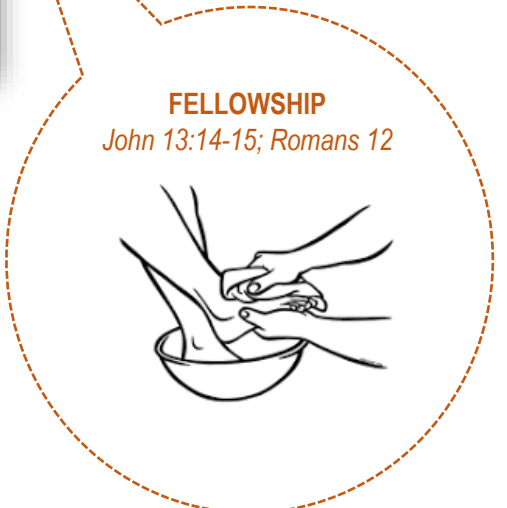
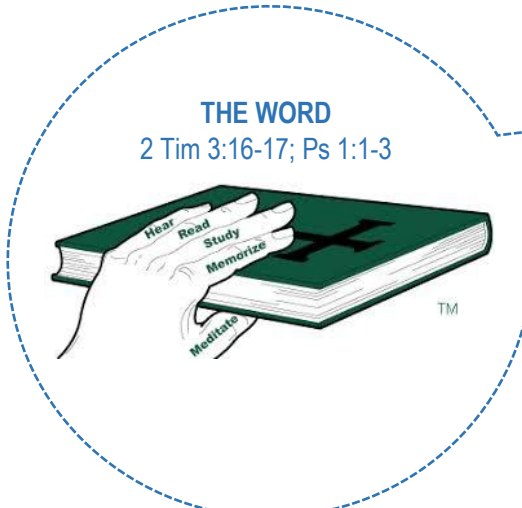
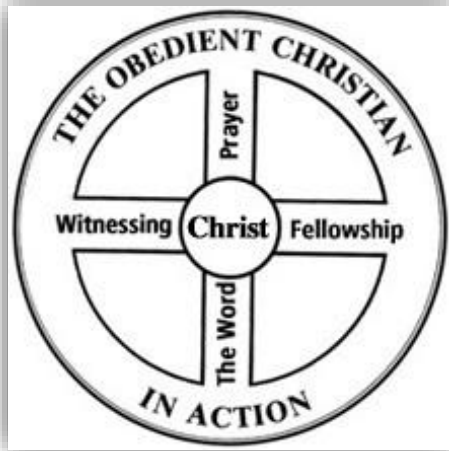
1 Tim 4:7-8; 1 Cor 9:24-27



Personal
Spiritual
Growth



LESSON 5 SUMMARY

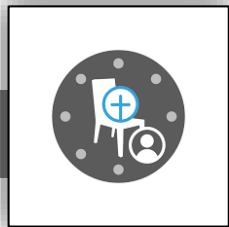


"Until
Christ
Is Formed
In You"

ABIDING
John 15:1-8; Gal 2:20

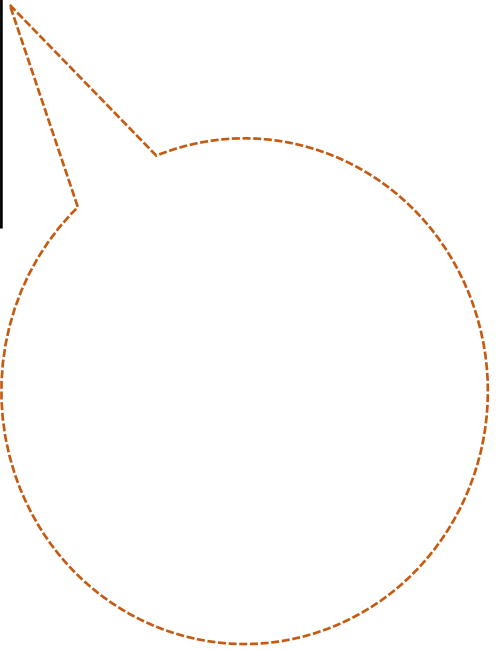
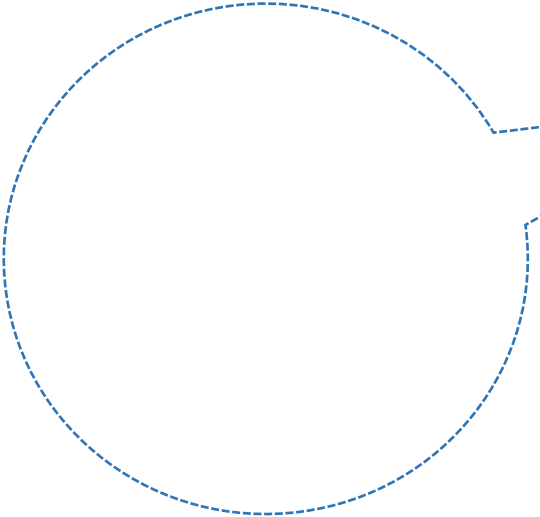
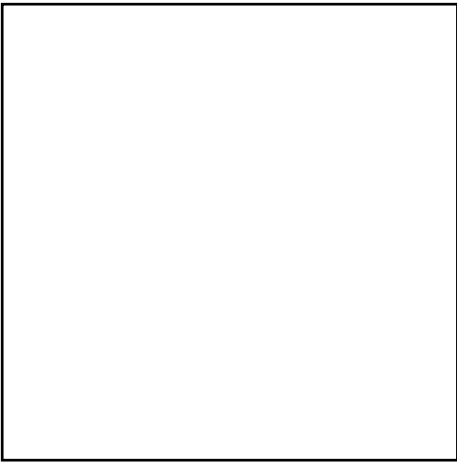
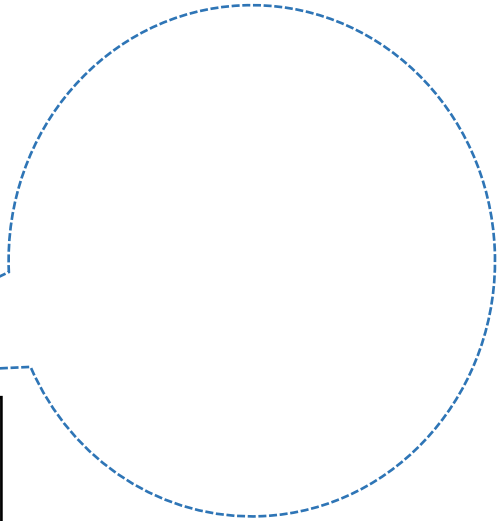
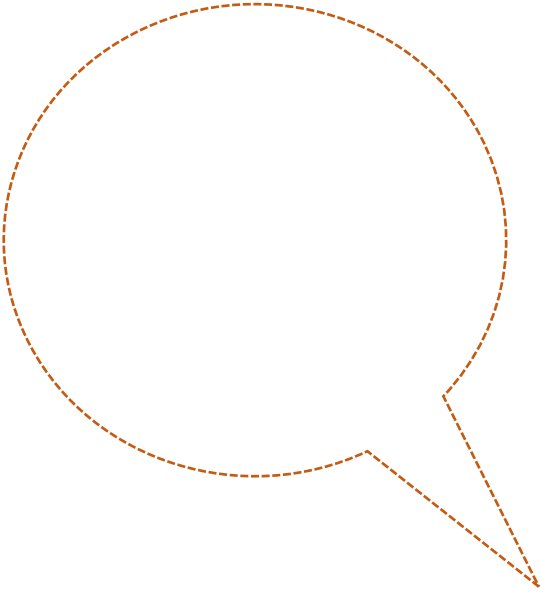


SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE
Eph 5:15-21; 1 Cor 2:14-3:3





Personal
Spiritual
Growth



"Until
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