

NEW Life!

Welcome! This Bible study is called **NEW LIFE**. It is about how our life should be lived now that we are Christians. You may take this advanced IBS course either before or after the advanced course called, **THE BOOK**. It should help you know more about how to grow as a new or young Christian. The questions for each lesson are included.

This opening page is very important. Read it carefully.

1. Before studying this advanced course you should have already completed the **Introductory International Bible School (IBS) Lesson** and the **Six-Lesson Course** which was included with it. Now you are ready to learn more about how to live your **'new'** life as a Christian. You should...

2. Pray to God, your spiritual father, before each study time. Ask him to help you understand what he has to say to you in the Bible. Pray about what these lessons will be teaching you.

3. Study each lesson carefully, looking up each section of scripture in the Bible each time it is given. Sometimes it will be especially helpful to read more of what the Bible says than just the verses listed in the lesson. Each time you read from the Bible you need to ask yourself: who is speaking and to whom is the writer speaking. Only then will you know if it applies to you.

4. Answer the questions for each lesson before going on to the next lesson. Look for: **"New Life" Advanced IBS Course Questions**.

5. Study all six lessons. Answer all questions for each lesson. If you are sending your questions by regular mail, you may take out the entire **IBS Course Questions** section and return all the question and answer sheets to your teacher-helper at the same time or you may do one or two lessons at a time and send them separately.

6. Mail in just the IBS Course Questions section. Write your name plus your teacher's name and number on it. Do not mail the whole booklet back to your teacher-helper. Your answers will be corrected by your teacher-helper and returned to you. Include all of your own comments, questions, or observations and send them at the same time. Be sure to write down the lesson, the page and question number you are referring to for each comment, question or observation.

7. Keep the rest of this booklet. Use it to check your answers when the corrected answer section is mailed back to you. Also, use it to help you in future Bible studies and as you become a teacher of others.

8. Include the names and address of all your friends who wish to study the Bible with IBS. Mail the names and addresses to your teacher-helper with your answers to the questions.

May God bless you as you study. I'm sure your teacher-helper will also be mentioning you to God day by day in prayer.

Page 1, Introduction

Lesson 1 -- You Have Changed!

Now you . . .

1. . . are a believer in the one and only God there is and his Son, Jesus;
 “Believe” – Do you want to know just what this means?
2. . . . are a repentant person; you have asked God to forgive your sins;
 “Repent” – What does it mean to ‘repent’?
2. . . . have publicly confessed that you believe what the Bible says about God and Jesus Christ;
3. . . . have “signed and sealed” this change by your baptism (immersion).
 This brought you into Christ’s family. What does this mean?
4. . . are a changed person, changed by God himself!
5. . . . are known to others as a Christian---Just what does all of this mean?

Our lessons are here to help you answer these questions.

God’s relationship with you has changed. And, he asks you to make changes on the inside and outside of your self . . .

1. Yes, he has changed your relationship with him just as he promised!
2. You are now a son or a daughter in God’s family just as he promised!
3. Your sins have been erased just as he promised!
4. You now have his Holy Spirit living within you just as he promised!

You may not actually see or feel these changes. But, you now have the faith to believe they are true because God, in his Word, says so. You do not just believe in him, you believe him. You believe who he is and what he says.

You became a child of God because of your faith and your willingness to accept and obey the gospel (the word ‘gospel’ means ‘good news’). It is the good news about Jesus. This good news tells us of God’s power to save us from sin. Paul said: ***“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: . . . ,”*** Rom. 1:16.

Here is the first Bible study help or Tip #1. One way to find the meaning of a word is to put the definition of the word in the sentence in place of the word itself and see if the sentence still makes good sense. Example: “gospel” is equal = (in meaning) to “good news” in Rom. 1:16. So, as an example: put the words “good News” in Rom. 1:16 in place of the word “gospel.”

1. You now believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

The Bible, say, ***“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life,”*** John 3:16. You have chosen to have eternal life instead of eternal death. ***“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him,”*** John 3:36.

Those who believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God are blessed with many benefits. You now believed in him. But believing in him is more than just saying you believe, it is putting your full trust in him, in everything he is and says. It is also being willing to do whatever he says.

Here is another example of putting a definition in a verse instead of the word itself. Tip #2, another definition: “believed” is = “putting your trust in some one or something.” John 3:36, “Whoever believes in (puts his trust in) the Son has eternal life,”

2. You now have repented of (turned from) your past sins. Jesus warned people, ***“ . . . unless you repent, you too will all perish,”*** Luke 13:3.

Tip #3: to repent means you mentally chose to change your will (or mind) about sin and you will not continue living in your sins -- thinking such sinful thoughts or continue doing sinful things.

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To repent is to “turn around.” You have changed your mind because you . . . now believe in Jesus. You have turned from sinning and continuing in sin to obeying God and Christ. The Bible says: ***“In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he***

has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead," Acts 17: 30, 31. So, our coming judge is the resurrected Jesus!

3. You confessed Jesus Christ to be God's Son. The Bible says: **"The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming; 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,"** Rom. 10:8-10.

Jesus said, **"Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven,"** Matt. 10:32. We all want him to acknowledge us! ["Acknowledge" means to recognize or accept.]

4. Now you have been baptized (immersed) into Christ. **"For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ,"** Gal. 3:27. This means you have obeyed him who said, **"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned,"** Mark 16:16. The Bible also says: **"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.** If we have been united with him like

this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin . . . ," Rom. 6:3-6.

5. Children of God do not think, talk, act, or live like other people in the world ... like those people who do not follow Christ. We are to be different inside and outside. We are no longer like others in many ways. You are now a child of God! You are a Christians! This does not mean that you act as if you are better than others are or that you dress in some peculiar way. No! Christians live and act different than people in the world who are living for the wrong purpose and who continue in their sinful thoughts and sinful practices. The apostle Paul speaks out against those who say they are Christians but who continue living self-centered and sinful lives. He says,

"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? . . . Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life, and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness," Rom. 6:2, 11-13.

Gal. 5:19-21 lists many such sins (negative or wrong acts): **"The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like."**

Tip # 4: This is not a full list; more sins could have been listed. On page 4 you will find a summary of good and bad qualities listed in the NT.
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Page 3, Lesson 1

Some of the positive spiritual qualities we are to develop in our new life in Christ are listed before the list of negative qualities: **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law,"** Gal. 5:22, 23. There are other lists of positive and negative acts and attitudes.

Also, there is teaching about individual sinful acts and attitudes especially in Jesus' personal teaching and in the NT letters that are written to Christians.

Certain sins, through an unholy spirit, may have controlled our life in the days and years before we let Christ Jesus have control of our life through his Holy Spirit. Any and all sins and habits can be overcome. But, some are much harder to get rid of than others. This is also true in developing good habits.

The chorus of a Christian song says, "The fight is on, O Christian Soldier, and face to face in stern array, ... with armor gleaming, and colors streaming, the right and wrong engage today! The fight is on but be not weary; be strong and in his might hold fast; If God be for us, his banner o'er us, we'll sing the victor's song at last!"

God wants us free from the bondage and consequence of our sinful ways. Satan wants us to hold on to them and not give them up. You are the deciding person. A whole new way of life is now open before us as we let the Holy Spirit gain control of our life and tell Satan "Be Gone!" or "Good Bye!"

Other Scriptures telling about wrong things are 1 Cor. 5:11, Col. 3:5-9, 2 Tim. 3:1-5, and Rev. 22:15. Study all of these words so that you will know what God wants us all to avoid. Only then we can replace our bad thoughts, habits, and actions with good thoughts, habits, and actions. See Luke 11:24-28.

Now go to page ___ and answer the questions for Lesson One.

New Life – Things to Grow in us & Things to Go or get rid of:

Some Positives to grow

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Prayer | 19. Not rude; 20. Obedient; 21. Peaceful |
| 2. Content in whatever circumstances | 22. Patient, Long suffering; 23. Protects |
| 3. Bearing with each other | 24. Perseveres; 25. Prayer for persecutors; |
| 4. Compassionate | 26. Rejoice in the Lord; 27. Reverent |
| 5. Conversation full of grace/salt seasoned | 28. Sacrifice of self; 29. Serve one another |
| 6. Fair; 7. Faithfulness; 8. Forgiving | 30. Self-control; 31. Sincere |
| 9. Gentleness; 10. Giving to others needs | 32. Sing spiritual songs with gratitude |
| 11. Goodness; 12. Hope; 13. Humility | 33. Teach and admonish one another |
| 14. Joy; 15. Kindness | 34. Trusts; 35. Truthful and true |
| 16. Love your neighbor as yourself | 36. Willing to suffer |
| 17. Love your enemies; 18. Lover of God | 37. Work wholeheartedly |

"Finally, think on whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, praiseworthy...Phil. 4:8

Some Negatives to let go or get rid of

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Abusive; 2. Anxious, Worry | 32. Provoking others |
| 3. Boastful; 4. Brutal; 5. Conceited | 33. Proud; 34. Rash |
| 6. Debauchery or Lewdness | 35. Selfish ambitions or Rivalries |
| 7. Discord or Strife; 8. Discourage others | 36. Sexual immoralities; 37. Slanderous |
| 9. Disobedient (to parents, others) | 38. Sowing to the flesh or this world |
| 10. Dissentions or Divisions; 11. Drunkenness | 39. Swindling; 40. Treacherous |
| 12. Embitter; 13. Envy; 14. Factions or Sects | 41. Unforgiving; 42. Ungrateful |
| 15. Filthy language; 16. Fits of rage; 17. Greedy | 43. Unholy |
| 18. Hatred; 19. Holding grudges or Grievances | 44. Witchcraft, Sorcery, practicing magical arts |
| 20. Hypocrisy or Play actors; 21. Idolatry | 45. Without love |
| 22. Impurity; 23. Jealousy; 24. Judgmental | 46. Without self-control |
| 25. Lover of money; 26. Lover of pleasure | 47. Work to win favors |
| 27. Lover of self; 28. Lying; 29. Malice | 48. Worldliness |
| 30. Murderers; 31. Orgies or Revelings | 49. "and such like" |

"We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?" Rom. 6:2

[This is just a partial list of the negatives and positives found in the NT.]

Lesson 2 -- You Have a New Source of Authority!

Now that we are children of God--Christians--members of Christ's church, we have a Father in heaven who speaks to us through his Word called the Bible. Reading the Bible is like reading a letter from home. Now that we are children of God, heaven **is** our home. This is where our Father lives and where we plan to go, our permanent home. We are still living in this world, away from our real home and he has given us a job to do. But, through our Lord Jesus Christ, we are on our way to that home after of physical body is dead and we move on. Jesus said: "***I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me,***" Jn. 14:6.

The words of Christ are in the Bible, God's only book to mankind. These words show us the way, God's way. They guide us to the truth and direct us in the kind of life our Father would have us live. This is why we need to study the Bible intelligently, so that we may know the way, understand the truth, and be guided into the right kind of life and purpose for living day by day. "***All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work,***" 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

The Old Testament (OT) is the first and largest part of the Bible.

It contains 39 books and Bible students often divide it into five main parts:

Part 1. **Law** -- five books

Part 2. **History** -- twelve books

Part 3. **Poetry** -- five books

Part 4. **Major Prophet** -- five books

Part 5. **Minor Prophets** -- twelve books ('Major' and 'Minor' only in length)

Part 1. The first five books, classified as books of Law, are **Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy**. They are called "Books of Law" because they include what is often called the "Law of Moses." They are actually a mixture of law and history. Moses, that great man of God living about 1,500 years before Christ, recorded these books. They are sometimes called The Pentateuch, a Greek word meaning "five books" or "five tools."

Part 2. The next twelve books are called books of History. They are **Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther**. These books tell us about what happened to the people of Israel between about 1,500 and 400 years before Christ. These people were also called Hebrews and even later Jews. They are important because they were . . .

- a. chosen by God to live for the right purpose, to be his example to the rest of the world about how God's people should live and act, Isaiah 5:1-7.
- b. chosen to prepare the world for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Most of these people were not good examples of faithfulness to God but there were also some that were. Jesus was physically born a Hebrew, a Jew. But God sent him to open the door of heaven to all peoples. So that all who believe in him and obey him can be saved from their sins.

Part 3. Then there are five books called Books of Poetry. They are **Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon**. Most are poetic. They show these believers' devotion to God, dependence on God, and usually the true meaning and purpose of life on earth as revealed by God. They were written in the years before the coming of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

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Part 4. Now we come to the prophet's writings. The five longer books are called Major Prophets. They are **Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel** and **Daniel**. They were written by the prophets and named after

them except for Lamentations. Jeremiah also wrote Lamentations. Each of these books was written during the OT years of Israel's history from about 750 to 500 years before (BC) the birth of Christ, the Messiah. They can be best understood by remembering the period of Israel's history in which they were written. They include some of Israel's history. They also give us spiritual insights. They foretell many things about the coming of Jesus Christ including the reason for his coming to our world and about his kingdom that is now the church of the Christ.

Part 5. The last twelve books are called the **Minor Prophets**. They are called minor just because they are shorter in length. **Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.** They were written between 800 and 400 years before Christ (BC). These books give us a better understanding of spiritual conditions in and around the nation of Israel during these years. The prophetic books also contain many details about the coming of Jesus Christ (the long expected Jewish Messiah), our Lord and Savior. They tell us some things about Christ's spiritual kingdom, which he calls his church in Matt. 16:13-20. This brings to an end the first of the two major parts of the Bible. And, the OT gives us a background for all that is contained in the NT.

The New Testament (NT) is the second major part of the Bible and it has 27 books. It tells us about Jesus, the Christ, our Lord who came to open heaven's door to all people everywhere. He did this by dying on the cross in our place, for our sins and by being resurrected from the dead by God's power. He teaches us by what he says and does. The rest of the NT tells us about the beginning of Christ's church and shows what our purpose in life is to be and us how we, the church, are to live. The NT is usually divided into four parts. These parts are often referred to as:

Part 1. The **Gospels** ... "gospel" means "good news." There are four of them;
Part 2. A book of **History** ... called Acts or The Acts of the Apostles;
Part 3. The **Letters** ... There are 21. They are written to individual Christians, groups of Christians, or specific churches. Most were written by Jesus' apostles. These were actual eyewitnesses like John, Peter, and Paul;
Part 4. A book of **Prophecy** ... called Revelation. Rev. 1:1 tells us what it contains. Next we will look at each part in more detail.

Part 1. The **Gospels** are **Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.** These four books are about Jesus' life and teachings while here on earth. Almost all we can know for sure about Jesus' earthly life and ministry is found here. Additional details are mentioned in the rest of the NT books. From these books we learn by Jesus' living example and how he taught people to live and share his message of salvation--eternal life--with the entire world.

Part 2. Acts or **The Acts of The Apostles** is the main book on the beginnings of Christ's church. It gives us a brief history of the early church as well as the way early Christians lived and acted. It includes the spreading of the gospel until about 70 years after Jesus' birth. This was about 40 years after his death, burial, resurrection, and return to heaven. It also gives us actual examples of what people did to be saved from their sins which made them a part of the church, which is God's family even yet today.

Tip #5: The word "church" as used in the NT never refers to a building. It always refers to a group of people, an assembly or gathering of people for some specific purpose.

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Part 3. The **Letters** give instructions for personal Christian living, serving Christ and for working together as the church. The apostle Paul wrote most of these books. **Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians** are named after peoples or places, **1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon** are named after individuals. **Hebrews** is written to Jewish who became Christians. The writer of

Hebrews is not known for sure. The other letters are named after their authors. They are **James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John, and Jude**. These letters are written to individual Christians or a group of Christians.

Tip #6: The name of this next book is **Revelation**, not **Revelations**. The writer received many separate revelations from God but the title comes from the opening verse in the book.

Part 4. The **Book of Prophecy, Revelation**, was written by the apostle John and opens with these words: ***"The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to him (John) to show his servants what must soon take place,"*** Rev. 1:1. Much of this book is written as pictures painted in words or as word-pictures. The word-pictures stand for actual future situations or happenings. We believe they were written like a coded message so only Christians, not their enemies, would understand the message. Many well-meaning people misunderstand the messages in this book. Therefore, much study and care needs to be taken in drawing conclusions about the meaning of many things in this book. It should never be given any meaning that is opposed to other clear and plain teaching in the Bible.

Now, go back to take a second look at the separation the Bible makes between the OT and the NT. God's children of today are **not** to live by what is written in the OT. It is often referred to as "the Law of Moses." The **Old Testament** is to be looked upon as our helper, preparing us to understand Jesus Christ and his teaching as it is presented in the NT.

Tip #7: The word "testament" carries the same meaning as the words "will" or "covenant"

The apostle Paul wrote: ***"But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law,"*** Gal. 3:22-25. See also: Matt. 5:17-22, 27-28, 32, 34, 39, 44; 1 Cor. 10:1-13.

Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is ours now. So the Law (the OT) is not the rule or guide for our lives here on earth. Christ is! He is the guide for our life's purpose and meaning as he has been made known in the NT.

The will of Christ contained in the NT is complete and final. It was final with the death of the last of Christ's apostles, John, who died about 100 A.D. In the NT we learn how to be saved and the purpose of our lives. Also, how to serve (or worship) both God and our Lord Jesus Christ. No other guide is needed and no others are to be served and honored like our God and his Son.

Tip #8: The word **Worship** as it is used in the NT does not refer to acts or rites performed at certain times and places. Instead it refers to an inner personal attitude of mind which leads us to honor God and his Son by all we do, say and think. Being devoted to him and doing his wishes is to be the every day purpose of our life. It is all day of every day including but not limited to some things that are generally called worship on one day, Sunday, today.

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This way of faith has been given to us in the NT and we are not to add to it or take away from it. The Apostle John closed the last book, the last written message of God to man, by saying: ***"I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described***

in this book," Rev. 22:18,19.

The good news message of salvation through faith in Christ is complete! Jude 3 says: ***"Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints."***

As God's child, you must be studying the Bible for yourself, for it says to ***"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth,"*** 2 Tim. 2:15.

Now go to page ___ and answer the questions for Lesson Two.

Lesson 3 -- You Have a New Purpose for Living!

Yes, we have a new reason for living, a new objective or purpose for life here on earth. This new purpose for living is to do our Father's will. Now that we are children of God--Christians--members of Christ's church, we need to know what the Father's will is for any and all of his children for this life and beyond.

Tip #9: "will" – What does it mean? Here it refers to God's desire, purpose or wish for us. Notice that a word's meaning can usually be used without changing the meaning of the scripture.

Jesus said: ***"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"*** Matt. 7:21-23.

We learn the will of God from the Bible, our Father's book or message to us. It is given to guide his children in the right way. As children of God, we need to know about this new purpose for this life and this new reason for living. Even Jesus said of himself, ". . . ***I do not seek to please myself but him who sent me,***" Jn. 5:30. Note that the words "to please" are actually the words "the will of" in the original Greek NT. Three times on the night before Jesus' betrayal, mock trial, physical abuse, and crucifixion, he prayed these words to his Father, ***"Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will,"*** Matt. 26:39, 42, 43. He also urged his disciples to pray to God, ". . . ***your will be done,***" Matt. 6:10.

This is why the apostle Paul could say, ***"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me,"*** Gal. 2:20. Also, all of Romans, chapter six, helps explain this truth. Most people live to please themselves, some other person or some other persons.

This is why Paul says to the young Christians in Rome what follows. It is found in his message to Roman Christians: ***"Therefore I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will,"*** Rom. 12:1, 2.

People in OT times brought dead animal and bird sacrifices to God. Christ ended that system of sacrifice. All we can do as an expression of our gratitude to God is give God ourselves to him as a living sacrifice.

A. So, it is our Father's will for us to please him ... our purpose is to do what he wants us to do while we are here in this world.

How do we come to know the will of God, God's purpose for our life? Jesus is our perfect model. We cannot live perfectly as he did but we can learn from his life here on earth and his apostles' lives. We can see the example they set by the way they lived and what they tried to accomplish with their life on earth. It is impossible to summarize this important idea in a few pages but the central thought is that we no longer live to do what we want to do or just

how we want to live. We live to do what he (God) wants done and how he wants us to live. **He**, not **we**, becomes the center of our life on earth.

Jesus spoke again and again about what he wanted his most trusted followers to do after his resurrection and just before his return to be with his Father in heaven. His very last instructions to them at the time he left this earth were these, "... **you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**" Acts 1:8. In other words, you are to be an example others can see of what Christ wants a person to be. We show this by how we live, act, speak and what we do.

He spoke in a very similar way just before leaving this earth as recorded by two of the writers of the Gospels. Mark 16:15-16 says, "**He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach ('announce' or 'proclaim') the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.'**"

Tip #10: The word "**preach**" has been narrowed in meaning so today it just refers to a person called a preacher who delivers a sermon or a person who speaks in a tiresome way. "Preached" does not refer to any three point Sunday morning sermon. In the Bible it refers to the announcing or declaring of something publicly by any and every follower of Christ.

Matthew records these final instructions from Jesus to his chosen leaders, "**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go (or 'as you are going') and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age,**" Matt. 28:18-20.

Some of the things people do in our world—get an education, have a family, get material possessions, power, personal enjoyment, and success—may be good, but they fail to ask themselves, "What does God want me to do?" "Am I doing what he wants, wills or wishes?" We are to fulfill our desire for life's lasting or eternal meaning. A desire God places in our human heart or mind.

Most people fail to ask themselves, "What does God want me to do with my life here on earth?" Materialism or living for things in the present world, has become the passion of most in our day as has been true in the past. Others seek power. Some want to become famous. Such views of life do not ask our maker and creator, "**Where did I come from?" "Why am I here?" "Where am I going?" or "What should be the purpose of my life?"** Our goal in this study is to look at life from God's point of view, to ask ourselves, "**Am I doing his will? Am I doing what God wants me to do?"**

B. This thought of "doing his will" is based on our belief that there is eternal life ahead for us and it can be for everyone else.

Paul wrote the following to the Colossian Christians: "***We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints--the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you. . . .***" Col. 1:3-6. Please notice that he says their faith and love comes from or "**springs from**" their hope for eternal life after their physical death.

This hope is described as "**good**" in 2 Thess. 2:16, as "**blessed**" in Titus 2:13, and as "**living**" in 1 Pet. 1:3. When we see life from God's way of looking at things, our earthly life takes on a different meaning. We lose our interest in material things that are here today and gone tomorrow. So, our

goal for living is no longer personal enjoyment, power or honor. We see that, as good as it is to help others in a material or physical way, to help others

prepare for eternity is far better. Nothing can compare with eternal life.

The Christian should live with a real hope and confident expectation that God has an eternal purpose for his life and that of others. The Bible, and especially the NT, is filled with this hope. Our God is **"the God of hope,"** Rom. 15:13. A review of other major world religions will show their lack of such a hope. Their best is a return to some form of physical (and often lustful) enjoyment with all the limitations of our physical bodies.

A little later in the first chapter of the book of Colossians, Paul talks about ". . . **the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,**" Col. 1:27. The Christian's hope is ". . . **the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time . . .**," Titus 1:2. When we have this hope we cannot hold it in selfishly, we must share it with as many others and in as many ways as we can.

Titus 2:11-14 continues this theme: **"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope--the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good."**

See also Titus 3:4-7: **"But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life."**

Probably the most famous words of Jesus to his disciples are found in Jn. 14:1-3: **"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."**

The apostle Peter lived daily with this hope in his heart. He once said, **"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time,** 1 Pet. 1:3-5.

We must agree with Paul. There are two sets of things. **"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands,"** 2 Cor. 4:18-5:1.

The book of Hebrews was written to Jews who converted to Christianity from Judaism. It often contrasts the OT Jewish promises with the better NT Christian promises. It points out how the Jewish religion was only to be the forerunner of God's final message and covenant with mankind. It speaks about the better hope found in Christ, it says, **"The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing**

Its teaching about what is better reaches its peak in chapter eleven which begins with these words: **"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."** This chapter on faith ends by saying, **"These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us could they be made perfect,"** Heb. 11:1-3, 39, 40.

Hope is so much like trust that it is often translated as trust. Our Christian hope encourages us to be the kind of persons God wants us to be. John said, **"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. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure,"** 1 Jn. 3:2, 3.

Finally, the apostle Paul ends by saying that, **"If only in this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men,"** 1 Cor. 15:19. But we do not have to be pitied; we have an eternal hope called eternal life! Therefore, our life is filled with purpose, God's purpose made known to others through us.

May I challenge you to review the following passages of Scripture on "eternal life" as found in the apostle John's writings: see John 3:15; 4:36; 5:39; 6:54, 68; 10:28; 12:25; 17:2, 3; and 1 John 1:2; 2:25; 3:15; 5:11, 13, 20. Why these passages of Scripture on "eternal life?" This is the very center of the Christian faith.

Now go to page ___ and answer the questions for Lesson Three.

Lesson 4 -- You Have a New Fellowship!

The word fellowship carries the idea of a close, trusting and loving sharing togetherness or friendship. Fellowship is possible only if we have friends and as Christians we have many friends both here on earth and in heaven above.

The apostle Paul used the human body to give us the meaning of Christian fellowship. He said, **"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all the parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ... Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it,"** 1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27.

Just what do we mean here by 'fellowship'? We mean a close, caring relationship. This relationship gives us certain privileges or benefits as well as certain responsibilities.

First, because we are in Christ we have certain privileges. We are a part of Christ's body and he called this new fellowship the church. God **"placed all things under his feet and appointed him (Christ) to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way,"** Eph. 1:22, 23. To be in Christ is to be automatically in his church. He, not any human being, puts us there.

The church is also called God's house, or God's family. The apostle Paul wrote to the young preacher Timothy in order that we might **"know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth,"** 1 Tim. 3:15. The church belongs to Christ. The church belongs to God.

Tip #11 is a reminder, a repeat of **Tip #5:** The word "church" as used in the NT never refers to a building. It always refers to a group of people, an assembly or gathering of people for some specific purpose.

The church is made up of people who have believed and obeyed Jesus. Now these people belong to Jesus. Therefore, they also belong to God. In John 17:10, when Jesus prayed to God, he said everything that belonged to God also belonged to him. This means that the church is also God's people; it is God's household. So, this also means that the church is God's family, that we are now children of God by adoption, members of his family.

You **are** a child of God! You are a believing, repentant, person who has been baptized (immersed) into Christ. You are in the church of our Christ. The gospel, God's power to save, was first proclaimed as true and valid on the Pentecost following Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Those who listened and believed in Jesus as the Son of God as just described by Peter asked: **"What shall we do?"** Peter, as God's spokesman did not say raise your hand or pray this prayer. He said: **"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit,"** Acts 2:38. And, **"Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were**

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added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer," Acts 2:41,42. **"And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved,"** Acts 2:47.

If you have sincerely believed, really repented, and have been baptized (immersed) into Christ, you have automatically been added to the church--the same church--as these people. Some years later Peter also said this: ". . . **and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,**" 1 Pet. 3:21. You are a child of God, a Christian, a member of Christ's church. The church is the household, or family, of God. The family of God is the church.

As a child of God—we all now have our Father in heaven and we have Christ as our Lord and Savior. He is also our brother, because we all have the same Father. And, all the other children of God in the family, the church, are our brothers and sisters. See Matt. 12:46-50.

Second, There are many benefits in this fellowship, this family of God. Let it be said again, we have God as our heavenly Father and Jesus Christ as our older brother. All our sins are forgiven! Heaven's open door is before us! All other members of the church of Christ are our brothers and sisters. We are now members of the great spiritual family of God, the church. You too are a child of God. Things will never be the same again!

Third, we also have responsibilities in this fellowship as a part of the church, the family of God. Yes, responsibilities, just as in our own physical, earthly family. It is the mission of the church (1) to bring encouragement and guidance to other members of the family. (2) It is also the God given mission of the church to share the good news or gospel of Christ because it is God's power to save. First, we will look at what the Bible says about our being an encourager and guide within the church. Then we will look at our responsibility to others who are still lost in their sin. Remember, when we become a Christian we begin living our life with a new purpose.

In the first place, the early church took care of those among them who had physical needs. We need to remember that when many of these Jewish people became Christians their own people rejected them. Their families as well as their communities rejected them. This still happens to many people in some places today. Some lost their way of making a living. Also, many of them were in Jerusalem for this Jewish religious gathering called Pentecost. They were far from home. One simple but basic and clear evidence of having the Holy Spirit is when we can demonstrate a quality called "brotherly love," see Rom. 9-13, 1 Thess. 4:9-10, 2 Pet. 1:7. To meet this immediate need we have the following record of early Christian generosity: "***All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions were his own, but they shared everything they had. . . . There were no needy persons among them,***" Acts 4:32, 34.

Later a special need arose right in Jerusalem for widows. Some needy widows were not receiving enough food. There was no government agency or program to take care of them and possibly no family member who would accept them anymore because they had left the Jewish religion. When the problem became known to the apostles their needs were met, Acts 6:1-6. Later when a famine came to parts of the Roman Empire, Christians from other areas took up offerings to help them, see Acts 11:27-30; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15.

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In the book of James are these words: "***Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world,***" Jas. 1:27. The world today as back then can pollute us. Paul wrote as follows to the young Christians in Galatia, the central Turkey of today: "***Let us***

not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially those who belong to the family of believers," Gal. 6:9, 10.

Christians are to feed the hungry, visit the sick, care for the orphans and widows, and, in every way they possibly can, do good to all people everywhere. Jesus, who called himself "***the light of the world***" said before he left, now "***YOU are the light of the world,***" Matt. 5:14. What non-Christians see us doing and our total way of life can help lead them to Christ by their simply watching and listening to us.

Also, there are many **spiritual needs** we can meet **within** the church. Paul speaks of this in the following scripture, Eph. 4:7, 11-17: "***But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. . . . It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of fullness of Christ.***

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

When Paul was personally present with the elders, the local leaders of the Ephesian church, he said: "***Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood,***" Acts 20:28.

Much of what is written in the twenty-one NT letters is written to help individuals and churches grow spiritual maturity. These letters can be read and reread with great spiritual benefit.

In the second place, as was mentioned earlier, it is also the mission of the church to share the good news, the gospel of Christ, God's power to save. This is a **primary** mission or work of the church. Just before Jesus left this earth, after his resurrection, he said to his disciples: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age," Matt. 28:18-20.

<p>Tip #12: The word "go" in Matt. 28 above is more accurately translated, "as you are going." This responsibility does not belong to a few missionaries, evangelists or preachers. It is like the commands that follow it. It applies to all of us as Christians.</p>

No Christian or local church is obeying Christ fully unless it is concerned about sharing the gospel with people who are lost in sin--wherever they may be! The Lord's people must be participating in helping to save the lost that live nearby or far away. The good news of Christ must be made known all

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over the world. We should use every form of communication available to us. As a Christian, we too are to do our part so that the church where we are a member can do its God-given work.

The NT teaches us that all the *members* of the church must be involved in

spreading the gospel. The first church was in the city of Jerusalem. When the members of the church in Jerusalem were persecuted for Christ's sake, they were "scattered" across two nearby provinces, except for the apostles. The Scripture says, ***"Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went,"*** Acts 8:4.

Tip #13: The word "preach" has been narrowed in meaning so today it just refer to a person called a preacher who delivers a sermon or a person who speaks in a tiring way, making the listener sleepy. No, "Preached" does not refer to any three point Sunday morning sermon. This word, "preach" and the word "proclaimed" in the next verse simply means they were declaring or announcing or evangelizing by sharing "the word," the Good News about Christ, the Savior. (Repeat of Tip #10)

Also, back in NT times, no group of men were known as the "clergy" with the other members being called the "laity." In the churches we read about in the NT each *member* of the church was the same (equal) before God. Each member of the church had work to do for God according to the talents or abilities God had given them. Some, called evangelists, were especially gifted in this ability but all reached out to share the good news with others just as we share any good news with those we know today.

Acts 8:1, 4: **"On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. ... Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went."**

Neither the local church nor the individual Christian can be selfish, care only about one's own self. Our life as a Christian takes on a new purpose. The very spirit of Jesus Christ requires his people--the church—to carry his gospel, this good news, to a lost world because of our love for them and for Christ.

The first missionary was Jesus, sent by his and our Father who cared enough to send his only Son. The first persons to carry the message to Europe from Asia were just ordinary Christians who found out about the Savior as Jews when they were in Jerusalem, an Asian city, attending as special Jewish religious event. They brought the good news to Asian, African and even European cities like Rome. We must do the same.

Now go to page ___ and answer the questions for Lesson Four.

Lesson 5 -- You Must Develop a New Life Style!

Now that we are children of God—Christians—members of his church, the body of Christ, the way we live is very important. Our life lived before and with others daily, are God's best form of advertising ... of preaching. Our desires, goals, and aim in life should be changing. We now have a Father in heaven and Christ the Lord as our older brother. Therefore our life is changed and continues to change its purpose. Why? Because in certain ways children of God do not live like the non-Christian people in the world.

Those people do not follow Jesus as their Lord, their Master or King. Now that we are children of God, we should want to learn how to live so our lives give honor to, and a good report about, our heavenly Father. Also, to give a good report about our Lord to everyone who crosses our daily path in life.

Jesus was and in many ways always will be **"the light of the world,"** John 8:12. But he also said to his followers, **"You are the light of the world,"** Matt. 5:14, referring to us and the time to come after his ascension back into heaven and continuing on until he returns again at his "second coming".

The apostle Paul wrote the following instructions to the young Christians in Galatia (Galatia, as was mentioned earlier, is part of central Turkey today), ***"The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God,"*** Gal. 5:19-21.

To another church in today's Turkey, he wrote in Eph. 4:25-32: ***"Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 'In your anger do not sin'" Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.***

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

The same apostle added these words of guidance to the new Christians in what today would be southern Greece: ***"Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God,"*** 1 Cor. 6:9-11.

Paul hit a similar note as he wrote to the new Christians in what today is western Turkey when he said: ***"For he (God) has rescued us***

from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins . . . Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation--if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel," Col.1:13, 21-23.

Tip #14: You have probably noticed before now that you have seen some of these scripture passages and thoughts before. They are repeated because they are so important and are not taken seriously by many of today's professing Christians. Give them your serious consideration.

Jesus earthly ministry was to the Jews. These people already believed in God or at least professed to accept the moral teaching of the OT. Therefore Jesus does not speak out as often as Paul does on the above listed specific sins. Many of Paul's listeners are coming out of total paganism, out of idolatry.

But Jesus, in his "Sermon on the Mount" as it is often called, does refer to some of the most common types of sin among the Jews in Matt., chapters 5-7. Also, we have four records, called 'The Gospels,' which record many happenings and teaching sessions from Jesus' daily life. A study of what Jesus did, how he acted, his attitudes, and his conduct also teach us by example. Other Scriptures such as Col. 3:5-10, 2 Tim. 3:1-5, and Rev. 22:15 contain similar lists.

The message is clear. We are to change our way of living in many respects. Our mind is to dwell on other things. Our attitude is to be different. We are like a person being born all over again.

Now, if we change in all these areas of life, **with what are we to replace our old practices?**

The Apostle Peter wrote two special letters to guide Christians through this transformation. He says, **"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. . . . For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins,"** 2 Peter 1:5-9.

No explanation of our new life style would be complete without emphasizing the importance of true Christian love. This love is not an impulse from our feelings or our emotions. It is an intellectual (or mental) decision to express only the best of attitudes and actions toward others whether they love us in return or hate us. It is the kind of love that does not retaliate. It is like that love expressed by Jesus as he faced tremendous injustice and suffering on the cross. In spite of what was being done to him, he prayed, **"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing,"** Luke 23:34.

The apostle Paul recaptures this same love as he describes it in 1 Cor. 13. After telling us what this love is not, he lists some of its qualities in verses 4-8, 13: **"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily**

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angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but

always perseveres. Love never fails. . . . And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

A Jewish lawyer, still living in the OT covenant period, once asked Jesus this question in Matt. 22:37-40: **"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"** Here, *"the Law"* refers to the Law God gave the Israelites or Jews through Moses many centuries before Jesus came to earth. **"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hangs on these two commandments."**

Paul not only gave instruction about the ways of the old life style that Christians must get rid of but also about the new life style. Here is one example from Col. 3:12-15: **"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body (the church) you were called to peace. And be thankful."**

As a child of God, there are evil things which we must stop doing or avoid; as a child of God, there are things we must begin doing. What really counts is to remember all the time that Christianity is not just talk; it is doing, it is living a new style of life! The apostle John wrote: **"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth,"** 1 Jn. 3:18. This same man of God wrote again: **"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love,"** 1 Jn. 4:8.

Thus, as a child of God, our heart must be filled with love, toward both God and man. This love moves us to act, putting God above all, and then it moves us to follow the words of Jesus: **"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets,"** Matt. 7:12.

True, these standards are high, but as a child of God, when we fail, remember that all is not lost. John wrote these words for us: **"My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One,"** 1 Jn. 2:1. When we sin, we must repent, confess to God our one and only spiritual Father, and ask for forgiveness in our prayer because the Bible says in its message to Christians: **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness,"** 1 Jn. 1:9.

We can live the Christian life, with the help and forgiveness of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. May God bless you now, new child of God, as you live the Christian life.

Now go to page ___ and answer the questions for Lesson Five.

Lesson 6a -- You Have a New Set of Resources!

Or we could call them the...

"15 Spiritual Resources and How to Use Them"

Now that we are children of God—Christians—a part of Christ's church, we need to know what is available to help us in doing our Father's will. His will is his desire, his wish for us. Think back to Lesson #3 where it said – "You have a New PURPOSE, OBJECTIVE or REASON for Living." Our new purpose should be to do "our Father's will."

Remember that it was Jesus who said: *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven,"* Matt. 7:21; see also vs. 22-23.

So, just what is available to help us "do what our Father desires for us to do?" God did the planning and there are a number of great resources or helps always available to us. Some of the greatest resources you may not have heard much about or you may never have thought of them as resources. We are very familiar with what are called physical resources like coal, iron, water, food, vitamins, etc. Our first group of spiritual resources includes **God** himself, **Jesus Christ**, the **Holy Spirit**, the **Bible** or **Word of God** (which includes the apostles and prophets), **prayer** and **fasting**.

Each of the above resources is available to us through our new position as children of God. The dictionary definition of a resource is "...something that lies ready for use or that can be drawn upon for aid or to take care of a need."

Some resources even open the door to other resources. Two examples are **Prayer** (opening the door to heaven's help) and the **Bible**, see Eph. 6:17-18. Here Paul calls the word of God "the sword of the Spirit." The **apostles** and **prophets** are also available to us through the Bible. **Prayer** is a door that is always open. The **church** as a group as well as the church's leaders and individual Christians are available to us. This is true whenever the church assembles and whenever we make contact with Christians individually or in small groups.

Lesson 6a will briefly introduce you to each of these available resources. Lesson 6b will cover most of the other available resources. Not all of them are listed in their order of importance.

1. Our first great resource is GOD. First of all, our belief in God and in only one god is basic to everything. It is because of our faith in God that we believe everything he has revealed to us in the Bible from before the creation of this world until long after our created physical universe is gone.

The book of Hebrews says it this way: *"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him,"* Heb. 11:6. The OT psalmist says only...*"The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God,'"* Ps. 51:1.

Believing in no god or believing in many gods are the two extremes to which mankind has gone. The Bible clearly teaches that there is a god and only

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one, not many gods. See Deut. 4:16-19 and Rom. 1:21-15. We cannot be a Christian and continue to worship any other gods or no god at all.

Can we know what is God like? Does he care about us? Does he love us? Is he someone to be highly respected? Can we actually talk to him? The answer to all of these questions is, "YES!" He is not a physical person like us but he is just as real. God can and does both bless and punish. God is very patient but he will finally punish those who continue going against him. On the other hand, he does not want to punish anyone.

Peter said, ***"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promises, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance,"*** 2 Pet. 3:9.

Because he loves and cares about us, he has done everything he can (except the use of force) to save us from our sin and sin's consequences.

Jesus, speaking of his Father, said, ***"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life,"*** Jn. 3:16. Yes, we can speak to God in the name of (upon the authority of) God's son. Jesus authorized us to do so when he said, ***"In that day you will no longer ask me anything.*** (Jesus was about to physically leave his disciples after his crucifixion, burial, resurrection and resurrection appearances.) ***"I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete,"*** Jn. 16:23, 24. Other passages of Scripture, which also speak of our right to pray directly to God, are Jn. 14:13; 15:7, 16 and Matt. 6:5-15.

2. Our second great resource is Jesus Christ. We have already said many things about our Savior. He is an always-present personal spiritual resource as well as one from whom we can learn many, many things by studying his life and teaching as recorded in the Bible. Here we will look to him as he now personally works for us as our spiritual resource in heaven.

First, Jesus is in heaven preparing for our coming, ***"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am,"*** Jn. 14:2, 3.

Second, he is also listening in heaven when we call out to his Father (and our Father) in our prayers: ***"My dear children,"*** writes the apostle John when an elderly man, ***"I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One,"*** 1 Jn. 2:1. See also Rom. 8:34.

According to the Bible, Jesus and the Holy Spirit (whom we will study next) are the only two who can directly intercede for us before the throne of God. ***"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men,"*** 1 Tim. 2:5.

3. Our third great resource is the Holy Spirit. He has had a great part in bringing us to the Savior. Here we will be only looking at his ministry to those who are already the children of God.

His ministry of intercession is emphasized in Rom. 8:26, 27: ***"In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans***

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that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."

This is the same Holy Spirit whom Jesus himself said was not yet given to his

followers in the days of Jesus' earthly ministry, Jn. 7:37-39. But he was promised as a gift to all who accept Jesus as Savior and Lord. This gift was given when Peter proclaimed the first gospel (or "good news") message after Jesus' resurrection on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:14-36. This gift of the Holy Spirit to us is to continue to be available to us until Jesus returns again.

Peter's answer to the multitude (at that Jewish Pentecostal festival) who were convicted (vs. 37) of the sin of having killed Jesus was, ***"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call," Acts 2:38, 39.***

We need to notice in the above verses that the apostle refers to the gift, not the gifts, of the Holy Spirit. The gifts are referred to in other places such as *1 Cor. 12:1-11* and will be referred to in resources 13-15. The fruit or result of the Spirit living within us should be seen by changes within us. Note again the use of the singular fruit and not fruits as in ***Gal. 5:16-18, 22-26***. Developing this fruit indicates we now have the Holy Spirit and we are no longer to let ourselves be controlled by the flesh.

Here are the apostle Paul's words on this matter in ***Rom. 8:9-11: "You, however, are controlled not by the flesh but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you."*** [Note the different words and phrases used to describe the Holy Spirit.]

Jesus also promises that the Holy Spirit will be beside us to help us just as Jesus was beside his disciples to help them during his days on this earth. ***"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever--the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you," Jn. 14:16, 17.***

Paul adds this encouraging word in ***Eph. 3:16, 17, "I pray that out of his (God's) glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith."*** See also *Rom. 8:26*.

This lesson only refers to the basic ways the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit help us day by day. So much depends on us . . . on how open we are to their help and guidance.

4. Our fourth great resource is the Bible, and from it, the messages of the apostles and prophets. All of Lesson Two was on the Bible so here we include only a brief look at the apostles of Christ and the NT prophets. **Some have concluded** that every generation has to have living men who are present-day, Spirit-inspired apostles and prophets. The Bible does not support this idea. And, examining the words and works of those who profess to be prophets proves God's Holy Spirit does not inspire them.

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First of all, no one living today can meet the qualifications to be one of Christ's especially chosen apostles as recorded in ***Acts 1:21, 22*** or like the specially called apostle Paul, see ***1 Cor. 15:1-11***; also ***John 16:12-15***.

Second, special powers were promised and given to these apostles of

Christ. John chapters 13 and 14 are the beginning of Jesus' final teaching times with this select group of disciples who are also called apostles before his crucifixion. Two of the very important promises made to them were these:

- the Holy Spirit **would teach them** all they needed to know to carry out their work,
- and, the Holy Spirit **would remind them** of everything Jesus had said to them, John 14:25, 26:

"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you,"

Tip #15: The word "inspiration" simple means 'breathed in or into.' In other words, God breathed this message into them or God gave this message to them.

Here we are talking about what is usually called the **inspiration of Scripture**. Read what John wrote in **Rev. 22:18-19** many years later. These men had special powers and abilities as God's spokesmen and workers much like the OT prophets. God inspired both the prophets and the twelve apostles.

The apostle Peter speaks of this in **2 Pet. 1:12-21**. Note especially verses 19-21: ***"And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."*** Today some are trying to change this definition of prophecy and prophet to include all preaching by uninspired men and sometimes women.

The writer of the book of Hebrews, looking back on an earlier day, refers to the divine inspiration of the apostles of Christ saying that what, " . . . ***was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will,***" Heb. 2:3, 4.

The message of the Bible is a special, 'one of a kind' message. It was given special assistance by God to be above error or fault. Therefore, when we turn to the Bible and understand it as God intended, its message is as effective as if the prophets of the OT and the apostles of the NT were still living. This message and only this message is to be trusted as the Word of God.

The Bible says, ***"All (or 'every') Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work,"*** 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. [See also vs. 15 for the context, for a definition of "all."]

5. Our fifth great resource is Prayer. The early Christians were **people of prayer**. Jesus and his personal disciples were **people of prayer**. Prayer was a part of their life and practice since the very beginning of the church. God's faithful people of the OT period had also been **people of prayer**. [We are not talking about memorized prayer just repeated over and over.]

In Acts 2:42, at the church's beginning, it says, ***"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."***

We meet them as **'people of prayer'** many times in the book of Acts. But, please remember, praying is not a way to earn points with God or to impress others. Prayer is the simply way God has provided for us to express ourselves or to talk directly to him. Jesus and others spoke out against the abuse of prayer, see Matt. 6:5-15.

Our prayers can include any number of things. We can praise and thank God, share our troubles, raise our questions and make our requests to him. We can speak to him for others for whom we are concerned. And especially, we can ask for his forgiveness, mercy, patience and help. See also Acts 4:23-31 for an example.

1Tim. 2:1-4, 8 is one of the many places in Scripture where we are given directions for prayer. It tells us whom we should pray for and it also gives us one of the important purposes of prayer. It says, "***I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone--for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth ... I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer without anger or disputing.***"

6. Our sixth great resource is Fasting. Fasting is usually presented in Scripture along with prayer. When Jesus spoke out against the abuse of prayer, he followed it with corrective teaching about fasting in Matt. 6:16-18. The NT gives no word or direction about regular times of fasting.

Fasting is a resource approved by God to prepare a person or a group for serious and solemn occasions. See 1 Cor. 7:1-5. Jesus did not encourage his disciples to fast while he was with them on earth. He connected fasting with a time of mourning and not a time of joy. Food often loses its appeal at the time of a serious event or on receiving bad news about a close friend or family member. See also Matt. 9:14, 15 and Acts 13:1-3, 14:23.

We have looked at the first six main spiritual resources available to the Christian. Lesson 6b will continue our study of this topic.

Now go to page ___ and answer the questions for Lesson Six a.

"15 Spiritual Resources and How to Use Them"

Yes, we do "have a New OBJECTIVE or REASON or PURPOSE for Living." The new purpose should be to do "our Father's will." Here are nine more spiritual resources to help us on our way day by day.

This second group of spiritual resources includes **the church**, even our **difficulties** and **trials**, **music**, **Christian brothers and sisters** who teach and encourage us, **baptism** and the **Lord's Supper**, plus our **time**, our **talents or gifts** and our **treasures**. Even more could be added.

Remember again the definition of a resource is "...something that lies ready for use or that can be drawn upon for aid or to take care of a need."

7. Our seventh great resource is the Church. The church is not a building; in fact in the days of Jesus' apostles there is no mention of any church having a church building. Neither is there a history record of any church owning a building of their own until many, many years after the church began. Just as the church is not a building, neither is the church a large religious organization such as the Christian denominations of today. These divisions of professing Christians came long after the church of Christ came into being. In the NT we read nothing about great or powerful organizations directed from some earthly headquarters nor of powerful religious leaders like present day bishops, cardinals, etc. who rule over the people in the churches.

The only bonds which seems to have bound the churches of the NT period together seems to have been their common love and respect for the Lord Jesus Christ and their love for each other. This is the highest and most powerful bond that has ever existed. They saw each other as simply humble servants or slaves of Jesus Christ. Jesus warned his disciples against what is so common today by saying, ***"But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted,"*** Matt. 23:8-12.

Jesus promised he would build his church, Matt. 16:13-20. His apostles referred to themselves, (and all others who accepted Jesus as their Savior

and were obedient to him as their Lord) as the church. This began with the day of Pentecost following Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. The book of Acts is the record of the beginning and spread of the church. As children of God--a Christian--we are members of the early church, his church.

The apostle Paul compares the church and its relation to Christ as a marriage in Eph. 5:22-33. Here we come across statements like these: ***"Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior . . . Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless . . . for we are members of his body."***

The church assembled is the gathering of Christians who come together at least each Lord's Day (Sunday) to help, strengthen, and encourage each

other. Other spiritual resources are available to us at these meetings. **Songs** are sung to be helpful to each other and to express united praise to our God and his Son, Jesus Christ. **The Scriptures** are **taught** and **sermons** are presented to encourage, guide and instruct. **Prayers** are offered as a way of mentally or orally speaking to our God. **The Lord's Supper** or **Communion** is shared to help us remember the greatness of our salvation which required the breaking of Jesus' physical body and the shedding of his physical blood. **Offerings** of money or material things are collected as an expression of our gratitude to God and to help meet the physical and spiritual needs of others.

The church (which is us), living day-by-day in a community, is to be a living example for all people to see. We are to be a new kind of people, a people just called Christians. Individual Christians or small groups of Christians work together to assist and encourage each other or meet each other's needs as well as the needs of non-Christians.

Continued personal separation from the fellowship of other Christians often leads to discouragement and even the loss of faith in Christ. We can lose everything we have gained in Christ as the following Scripture warns: **"See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly until the end the confidence we had at first,"** Heb. 3:12-14.

As individual Christians and as a gathered body of believers, the church is a tremendous resource to help us to individually live and serve Christ.

Yes, our physical and spiritual resources are many. But, we need to be aware that we may lose some of our physical resources just because we are Christians. The apostles of Christ, believing they had given up everything to follow Christ, once asked Jesus about their loss of things. His answer is recorded in three of the four Gospel records. Mark's record is in Mk. 10:28-31: **"Peter said to him, 'We have left everything to follow you!' 'I tell you the truth,' Jesus replied, 'no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields--and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.'"**

Get a hundred times as much in this life, this present age? Yes, because now we are members of one of the largest families on earth, the family of God, the Christian family and on many occasions their help. What a grand resource!

8. Our eighth great resource can come from our Difficulties and Trials.

The Christian life is not a physical life in which we are promised everything will always happen just the way we want it to happen. Both Jesus and his apostles often remind us that we will face trials in this life. But, on the eternal end, the greatest blessings we can imagine are in store for us. Day by day we live in hope. The apostle Paul, writing to young Christians in Rome at the center of the ancient pagan Roman Empire, gave a great promise. But do not separate the promise – **"But we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose,"** Rom. 8:28 -- from the message which surrounds it vs. 18-39. This promise is an eternal promise set in the middle of his message about the physical sufferings, trials and even death some Christians will face.

The apostle James puts it this way, **"Consider it pure joy, my brothers,**

whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything,” James 1:2-4. See also James 1:12, Matt. 5:10-12; Heb. 10:32-39 and 12:4-11.

9. Our ninth great resource comes in the form of Music.

Who has not been blessed spiritually by the right song at the right time? Nothing in the area of religious music compares with Christian singing. God planned it this way. The OT often refers to God's people singing and the book of Psalms is full of such songs. The early Christians were singers too.

Paul encouraged the Ephesian and Colossian Christians to... **“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,”** Eph. 5:19-20. **“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom AND as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God,”** Col. 3:16. See also: Acts 16:25

10. Our tenth great resource is found in those who Teach us.

Teaching others was a responsibility given to those whom Jesus taught while on earth. He said, **“... and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you,”** Matt. 28:20. Paul says, **“It was he (Jesus) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ (the church) may be built up ... and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ,”** Eph. 4:11-13.

Tip #16: The words 'pastor' and 'teacher' originally seemed to refer to one type of person, one who teaches and also cares for or shepherds those he or she teaches.

Jesus was a pastor-teacher. He was an amazing spiritual resource to his disciples. His early disciples became pastor-teachers and this resource has continued from then until now as a key resource for growing Christians. In Col. 3:16 quoted above under Resource Number Nine, Paul called on Christians to **“...teach and admonish one another with all wisdom...”** He urged Timothy whom he had shepherded and taught to teach others: **“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others,”** 2 Tim. 2:2.

11 & 12. Two other spiritual resources are Baptism into Christ and the Lord's Supper. You might be asking, “How can these be spiritual resources for me, a young Christian?” They are resources for us because they remind us of two things we should never forget.

First, our baptism. Jesus was immersed in the River Jordan. All the apostles and others who became Christians in NT times were immersed in water. Peter and Paul both describe how our baptism is a resource to remind us that we died to our sins, buried them once and for all, and arose out of the water to our **New Life in Christ!** See Romans 6:1-14.

Peter says it this way as he compares our baptism to the great flood of Noah's day through which he and those with Noah **“were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has**

gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities

and powers in submission to him,” 1 Pet. 3:20-22.

Second, the Lord’s Supper. Jesus, who established this spiritual supper shortly before his crucifixion invites us. See the record of this event in Matt. 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-20.

There is a key word, which occurs in Luke, 22:19 and is explained in some detail by Paul in 1 Cor. 11:23-32. That word is **remember** or **“in remembrance of me”** (referring to Jesus death on the cross). We need this resource to help us remember the tremendous importance of what Jesus did for us on that cross even though it happened many years ago. This is our weekly opportunity to remember Jesus’ love and our heavenly Father’s love for each one of us. Remember again the words of John 3:16.

13, 14 & 15. The last three spiritual resources we will list here are our Time, our Talents, and our physical Treasures.

These three **spiritual gifts** might be included in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Such gifts and others are referred to in 1 Cor. 12:1-11 and other places.

Let’s look at time by itself for a moment. Most people think of the time they have on earth as something, which belongs to them. Time is a very real part of us but when we become Christians we no longer belong to ourselves. We belong to God. We have given up our right to use our time as we please as proof of our belief that he is going to give us time without end in heaven with him. We have made an **exchange**, an exchange, which affects all three of these resources. **They all now belong to God.**

We are what are called ‘stewards.’ A steward is defined as a trustee, an overseer, a manager, a supervisor, or an administrator. Such people **do not own** even a part of what they oversee or manage. They must report how they use what has been put in their care. The same is true with the Christian. This does not mean that some of each of the above three (time, talent, treasures) are not to be used to meet our needs for food, clothing, shelter, family, etc. This is part of our responsibility to our master who is God.

Jesus said, **“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money,”** Matt. 6:24. Jesus went on to say we should not worry over our basic physical needs, **“For the pagans run after all these things and your heavenly Father knows that you need them,”** vs. 32.

Again Peter and Paul make the teaching of Jesus very clear here. Peter, speaking about false prophets and teachers says of them, they will come to the point of **“...even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves,”** 2 Pet. 2:1. Paul says it this way, **“You were bought with a price. Therefore honor God with your body,”** 1 Cor. 6:20 and again in 7:23, **“You were bought at a price; do not become the slaves of men.”** Christians have been known to sing, “Now I belong to Jesus, ...” and then live as if they did not mean what they sang.

Conclusion

We have looked at fifteen of the main spiritual resources available to the Christian. They were: God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, Prayer, Fasting, the Church, Difficulties or Trials, Music, Teachers, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, plus our Time, Talents, and physical Treasures. Yes, we have many
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spiritual resources to help us in our Christian life. They are of value only as we use them and use them as God wants us to use them. But, on the other hand, let us not forget that the devil is out there too. Jesus and Simon Peter both knew this very well (Matt. 4:1-11 and Luke 22:31-32).

Many years later, Peter wrote, ***“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of suffering,”*** 1 Pet. 5:8-9.

God is good and has been good. He does not want us to perish but to have everlasting life (John 3:16).

So, now what? These lessons have told us about other changes we have made or are making or may still need to make. Let us review what these other changes are?

They are changes in our ...

Lesson 1. Self ... we have been born again, born again spiritually not physically.

Lesson 2. Source of Authority ... our primary or #1. source of authority; The person we go to for answers to our questions;

Lesson 3. Purpose for living ... our objective or goal for the of rest of our life;

Lesson 4. Friends ... who our closest circle of friends are and will be;

Lesson 5. Behavior ... our mental and physical conduct and behavior;

Lesson 6. The way we are to use what we have ... our resources; now all of

us belongs to him, to God! These resources are all ours to help us do what God wants us to do with the rest of our life.

Our new goals ... to serve God here on earth and be with him in heaven!

The Bible says we are a “new creation,” which means it is actually like being born all over again. Paul said, ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”*** 2 Cor. 5:17. Jesus said, ***“I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again,”*** John 3:3.

What are we now that we have become -- open, believing, repentant, baptized (immersed) believer? We are children of God. When we believed in Christ, repented of our past sins, confessed our trust in the supreme authority of Jesus Christ through his Word, the Bible, and were baptized into Christ, we became a Christian.

Yes, we now belong to Christ and we can wear his name, Christian. His name is not to be worn with any other name. We are not a Baptist Christian because we were baptized any more than we are a Pentecostal Christian because the church of Christ began on a Jewish holy day called Pentecost.

We are just Christians though not the only Christians. See 1 Cor. 1:10-15.

Jesus Christ is the only way to God. Jesus said: ***I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me,***” Jn. 14:6. As a Christian, we have entered into Christ who is the way to God – a choice we have made. Our present obedience and continuing obedience is the evidence of our faith.

Now go to page ___ and answer the questions for Lesson Six b.

A Summary of the Passages of Scripture on the Holy Spirit in the books of John and Acts

Introduction:

1. Names for the H.S. as used in the NT

God's Spirit, Spirit of Christ, Spirit of God, Spirit of Truth, the Spirit, Spirit of Jesus, the Comforter, and the Counselor.

2. When should a Bible translator use Spirit with a capital 'S' and when with a small 's'? This is hard to determine ... no such distinction is made in early Greek manuscripts.

3. Use of the word 'charismatic'. It comes from the word 'charisma' = grace. Thus, it simply means a 'gift of grace'.

A. Jesus' words to the 12 Apostles in John 13:1-16:15

{Note: 14:16 "I ask ... he will give..."}
}

B. Luke's record in the book of Acts

1. 1:5 -- "you" --- Who is the 'you'?
2. 1:8 -- "H.S. comes upon you... witnesses..."
3. 2:1-4 -- Who are 'they' in 1:12-14, 16, 21, 23?
Peter's quote in vs. 17 – 21; his sermon in vs. 32-33; the response to the sermon in vs. 37-39.
4. Ch. 4 – Peter and John arrested. See vs. 24-25 and 31
5. Ch. 5 – H. S. lied to. See vs. 3 & 32. Witness + given to the obedient.
6. Ch. 6-7 – the choosing of the 7 to serve. See vs. 3, 5
Vs. 10 – Stephen the preacher
Vs. 48 – 'houses made by men.' Also vs. 50, 55-56
7. Ch. 8 – Samaritans in vs. 14-19
8. Ch. 9 – Saul becomes the apostle Paul; vs. 17 and 31
9. Ch. 10 & 11 – Cornelius; vs. 44-47 and 11:17
Agabus in vs. 28
10. Ch. 13 – Antioch, Paul and Barnabas – vs. 2, 4, 9 and 52
11. Ch. 14 – vs. 3
12. Ch. 15 – proof of Gentile acceptance, vs. 8-9, 28
13. Ch. 16 – vs. 6
14. Ch. 19 – "did you receive the H.S. ..." vs. 1-2, 6
15. Ch. 20 – vs. 22-23 "compelled by..." and vs. 28 with elders
16. Ch. 21 – Ababus again in vs. 10-11
17. Ch. 22 – "baptism ... wash..." vs. 16 [just an added side note]
18. Ch. 23-27 – no mention found in my quick review
19. Ch. 28 – H.S. in Old Covenant period: see vs. 25